

**U.S. Department of the Interior
Bureau of Land Management
North Dakota Field Office
99 23rd Avenue W, Suite A
Dickinson, ND 58601**

**Decision Record and Leasing Recommendation
Environmental Assessment DOI-BLM-MT-C030-2013-068-EA**

Decision:

It is my decision to implement the Proposed Action as identified in the North Dakota Field Office (NDFO) Oil and Gas Leasing Environmental Assessment (EA), DOI-BLM-MT-C030-2013-068-EA in which 36 parcels (4,454.46 acres of Federal minerals) would be offered for lease at the July 16, 2013 competitive sale. Competitive leases will be issued for parcels sold at the sale, and non-competitive leases may be issued for applications filed during the 2-year period following the sale.

Authorities:

The authority for this decision is contained in 43 CFR 3100.

Compliance:

Should the parcels be developed, monitoring may be required and would be addressed and analyzed under future NEPA documentation.

Terms, Conditions, and Stipulations:

For all parcels, standard terms and conditions, as well as the lease notices and stipulations identified by parcel in Appendix A of the EA, would apply and be attached to the lease parcel(s).

Plan Conformance and Consistency:

The proposed action and alternatives have been reviewed and found to be in conformance with the following BLM plans and associated Record of Decision(s): North Dakota RMP (April 1988) and its associated Environmental Impact Statement (EIS), the governing land use plan for the NDFO.

Alternatives Considered:

Alternative A – No Action. The No Action Alternative would exclude all 36 parcels within the NDFO from the lease sale. Surface management would remain the same and ongoing oil and gas development would continue on surrounding federal, private, and state leases.

Alternative B – Proposed Action. The proposed action would offer all 36 parcels of federal minerals, covering approximately 4,454.46 acres for competitive and/or noncompetitive lease issuance, in conformance with the land use planning decisions. The lease parcel number, size, and detailed locations and associated stipulations are listed in Appendix A of the EA. Standard terms and conditions, as well as stipulations identified in Appendix A of the EA would apply.

Public Comments:

The EA was made available for a 30-day public comment period which ended on March 12, 2013. No substantive comments were received during or after the 30-day comment period from the public.

Rationale for the Decision:

The decision to approve the BLM Proposed Action is based on the following: 1) consistency with resource management and land use plans; 2) national policy; 3) agency statutory requirements; 4) relevant resource issues; and 5) application of measures to avoid or minimize environmental impacts.

1. The decision is in conformance with the North Dakota RMP (April 1988) and its associated Environmental Impact Statement (EIS), the governing land use plan for the NDFO.
2. It is the policy of the Bureau of Land Management (BLM) as derived from various laws, including the Mineral Leasing Act of 1920, as amended [30 U.S.C. 181 *et seq.*] and the Federal Land Policy and Management Act of 1976, to make mineral resources available for disposal and to encourage development of mineral resources to meet national, regional, and local needs.
3. The decision is consistent with all federal, state, and county authorizing actions required for implementation of the Preferred Alternative.
4. Standard terms and conditions as well as special stipulations would apply. Lease stipulations (as required by Title 43 Code of Federal Regulations 3101.1-3) were added to each parcel as identified by the NDFO to address site specific resource concerns or new information not identified in the planning process.

Recommended by:



Richard A. Rymerson, Field Manager

Date: June 27, 2013

Concurrence by:



Diane M. Friez, District Manager

Date: July 10, 2013

Approved by:



Sandra S. Brooks, Acting Deputy State Director Division of Resources

Date: July 11, 2013