

**U.S. Department of the Interior  
Bureau of Land Management  
HiLine District Office  
1101 15th Street North  
Great Falls, MT 59401**

**Decision Record and Leasing Recommendation  
Glasgow Field Office  
DOI-BLM-MT-M020-2013-0008-EA**

**Decision:**

It is my decision to implement the Preferred Alternative as identified in the HiLine District Office Oil and Gas Leasing Environmental Assessment (EA) EA-DOI-BLM-MT-M020-2013-0008-EA, in which 4 of 257 parcels containing approximately 880.15 acres of federal minerals would be offered for lease at the October 22, 2013 competitive sale. Competitive leases will be issued for parcels sold at the sale, and noncompetitive leases may be issued for applications filed during the 2-year period following the sale. The remaining 253 parcels containing approximately 103,652.62 federal mineral acres in whole or part would be deferred due to valuable wildlife habitat and are pending further review in the HiLine Resource Management Plan.

**Authorities:**

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

**Compliance and Monitoring:**

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): Phillips Management Framework Plan (MFP) (1977), and the Oil & Gas Environmental Assessment of BLM Leasing Program – Lewistown District September 1981. Although the Judith-Valley-Phillips (JVP) Resource Management Plan (RMP), as amended, was approved in 1994, it did not make decisions relative to leasing of fluid minerals due to a protest on the 1992 Final RMP that called for a supplemental EIS to address an alternative that would avoid oil and gas leasing in areas with valuable wildlife habitat.

**Alternatives Considered:**

No Action Alternative. The No Action Alternative would exclude all 257 parcels within the HiLine District 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.

BLM Preferred Alternative. The preferred alternative would be to offer 4 of 257 parcels containing approximately 880.15 acres of federal minerals for competitive and/or noncompetitive lease issuance. The lease parcels to be offered are located within the Glasgow Field Office and are dispersed across Valley County. Standard terms and conditions, as well as stipulations identified in Appendix A of the EA would apply.

Alternatives Considered, but eliminated from further analysis: 253 parcels containing approximately 103,652.62 federal mineral acres in whole or part would be deferred from the upcoming lease sale. More specifically, the 253 lease parcels have been found to contain valuable wildlife habitat and are being analyzed in the ongoing HiLine RMP effort.

**Public Comments:**

This EA was made available for a 30-day public comment period which ended on June 19, 2013. Few substantive comments were received after the 30-day comment period from the public; modifications have been made to the EA to reflect concerns addressed by public comments. Changes made to the analysis are noted with gray-scale shading and/or strikeout so the modifications to the EA can easily be identified. Refer to Chapter 5 of the updated EA for a summary of public participation and changes made to the EA.

**Rationale for the Decision:**

The decision to approve the BLM Preferred Alternative 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 Phillips Management Framework Plan (MFP) (1977), and the Oil & Gas Environmental Assessment of BLM Leasing Program – Lewistown District September 1981. Although the Judith-Valley-Phillips (JVP) Resource Management Plan (RMP), as amended, was approved in 1994, it did not make decisions relative to leasing of fluid minerals due to a protest on the 1992 Final RMP that called for a supplemental EIS to address an alternative that would avoid oil and gas leasing in areas with valuable wildlife habitat
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 Glasgow Field Office to address site specific resource concerns or new information not identified in the planning process.

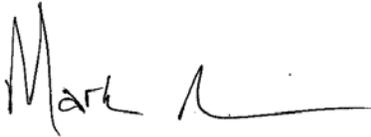
Recommended by:



Patrick Gunderson, Field Manager

Date October 17, 2013

Concurrence by:



Mark K. Albers, District Manager

Date October 17, 2013

Approved by:



James A. Albano, Acting Deputy State Director, Division of Resources

Date October 21, 2013