

**U.S. Department of the Interior
Bureau of Land Management
Butte Field Office
106 North Parkmont
Butte, Montana 59701-9701**

**Decision Record and Leasing Recommendation
Environmental Assessment DOI-BLM-MT-B070-2014-0029**

Decision:

It is my decision to implement Alternative B (the Proposed Action) as identified in the Butte Field Office (BFO) Oil and Gas Leasing Environmental Assessment (EA), DOI-BLM-MT-B070-2014-0029, in which 2 lease parcels in whole containing 520 federal surveyed mineral acres in whole or part would be offered for competitive and/or noncompetitive lease issuance at the October 21, 2014 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.

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):

Butte Proposed RMP/Final EIS (USDI BLM 2008a) (Butte RMP/FEIS)

Alternatives Considered:

Alternative A – No Action. The No Action Alternative would exclude both parcels within the BFO 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 both parcels covering 520 surveyed acres of federal mineral 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:

This EA was made available for a 30-day public comment period which ended on June 18, 2014. Comments were received after the 30-day comment period from the public and some modifications have been made to the EA. 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 Alternative B, the proposed 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 Butte Resource Management Plan and Record of Decision, April 2009 and its associated environmental impact statement (EIS).
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 BFO to address site specific resource concerns or new information not identified in the planning process.

Recommended by:



Scott Haight, Field Manager
Date 10/08/2014

Concurrence by:



Richard M. Hotaling, District Manager
Date 10/08/2014

Approved by:



Donato J. Judice, Acting Deputy State Director, Division of Energy, Minerals, and Realty
Date 10/16/2014