

United States Department of the Interior

BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT

Montana State Office
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October 26, 2007

EMAIL TRANSMISSION - 10/26/07
Instruction Memorandum No. MT-2008-008
Expires: 9/30/09

To: Field Managers (Montana only)
From: State Director
Subject: Guidance on Coordination with Montana Fish, Wildlife and Parks
During Oil and Gas Lease Parcel Reviews

Program Areas: Oil and Gas Leasing, Fluid Minerals and Biological Resources.

Purpose: This instruction memorandum provides guidance regarding coordination with the Montana Fish, Wildlife and Parks (MT FWP) during the parcel review process and identifies timeframes for the tentative sales scheduled for calendar year 2008.

Policy/Action: Attached are the procedures (Attachment 1) that the Field Offices should use to ensure coordination with the MT FWP during the parcel review process.

Timeframe: This IM is effective immediately.

Budget Impact: Procedures previously in place and being used by the Field Offices have included contacting the MT FWP, so impact to the budget should be minimal.

Background: The procedures identified in Attachment 1 were presented and discussed at the May 8, 2007, meeting with the BLM State Director, the MT FWP Director and Staff Specialists from each agency. These procedures were developed through coordination with the Field Offices prior to the May 8 meeting with the FWP. At the coordination meeting between the BLM and FWP in Bozeman on September 26, 2007, these procedures were discussed and finalized with two changes. The MT FWP Director requested that the lease review time for the FWP be extended to 15 days instead of 10 days. They also asked that in addition to sending the lease parcel, appropriate lease stipulations and parcel map to the appropriate FWP Field Office under procedure 3, that you also send the same to Mr. T. O. Smith with FWP. We agree to the changes and added 5 extra days to the overall lease review time. Mr. Smith's address and e-mail address are listed in the attached lease review procedures.

ENCLOSURE 2

The Field Offices in Montana should follow the attached procedures to ensure that coordination with the MT FWP occurs prior to the Field Office providing a leasing decision in a Documentation of Land Use Conformance and NEPA Adequacy (DNA) to the State Office. The DNA must list those applicable mitigation measures including lease stipulations and notices that were identified, analyzed, and approved in the applicable Resource Management Plan (RMP) or RMP amendment and associated NEPA documents. These mitigation measures are either listed in the body of the DNA or on an attachment for each nominated parcel addressed by the DNA. The DNA must include a statement that the Field Office consulted with the FWP on the lease parcel(s) covered by the DNA.

The Field Office should return worksheets/DNAs to the State Office within 35 days from the date that the worksheet was electronically mailed to the Field Office for leasing recommendation. Completed worksheets and stipulations should be returned to the State Office via electronic mail.

Attached is a schedule reflecting the tentative dates for the competitive sales in 2008 (Attachment 2). The schedule reflects the sale dates, the mandatory 45-day posting date and the last day (cut-off date) that the reviewed nominated parcels can be placed on the upcoming competitive sale.

As requested by Mr. T. O. Smith, the State Office will continue to provide him with the final Competitive Sale Notices and GIS Shapefiles.

Manual/Handbook Sections Affected: Montana State Office Handbook 3101-1 - Issuance of Leases.

Coordination: All Montana Field Offices and the MT FWP were contacted for input regarding the attached coordination procedures.

Contact: Karen Johnson, Chief, Fluids Adjudication Section,
(406) 896-5098.

Signed by: Gene R. Terland

Authenticated by: Kathy Ray (MT 922)

2 Attachments

- 1-MT FWP Coordination Procedures (1 p)
- 2-Sale Schedule/Cut-Off Dates (1p)

Distribution (w/attms.)

WO(310), LS, Rm. 501

WO(210), LS, Rm. 1075

FM, Dickinson

FM, South Dakota

Asst. FM Glasgow

Asst. FM Havre

SOMT

Jeff Hagener, Montana Fish, Wildlife & Parks, P.O. Box 200701, Helena, MT
59620-0701

T. O. Smith, Montana Fish, Wildlife & Parks, P.O. Box 200701, Helena, MT
59620-0701

**Procedures for Lease Parcel Review Coordination
Between BLM and Montana Fish, Wildlife and Parks
October 11, 2007**

The following process only applies to lease parcels in Montana and does not apply to North and South Dakota. The exchange of wildlife data between BLM and FWP is an ongoing process. The following procedures are developed to ensure FWP has an opportunity to provide any wildlife concerns or information to BLM that is not included in the database shared by both agencies and improve the flow of wildlife information between the two agencies.

1. The BLM State Office receives a nomination letter or presale offer from the public for oil/gas leasing. If it is determined the minerals are available for leasing, a request is sent to the affected BLM Field Office (FO) for leasing recommendation with a response requested within 35 days.
2. Upon receipt of the leasing request from the State Office, the FO will identify appropriate lease stipulations based on current land use plans for each lease parcel, using in-house resource data and the wildlife database shared by both agencies.
3. Upon identification of appropriate stipulations for each parcel request, the stipulations applied to each parcel along with the parcel map or GIS layer will be forwarded to the appropriate FWP field office and to T. O. Smith, Planning and Energy Coordinator, P. O. Box 200701, Helena, MT 59620-0701 (email: tosmith@mt.gov) for review.
4. FWP will complete its review of the lease parcel stipulations and provide comments to BLM FO within 15 days from receipt of the completed lease parcel list from BLM.
5. The BLM FO will incorporate appropriate FWP comments and submit the completed lease parcels with stipulations and DNA to the BLM State Office. The DNA must include a statement that the FWP has been consulted on the lease parcel.
6. If there are any comments provided by FWP that are not incorporated by BLM, the BLM FO must discuss the comments with FWP. If the BLM FO decides not to incorporate the comment in the lease parcel, the rationale must be documented with a response to FWP.
7. BLM State Office will continue to send a copy of the final lease sale list and appropriate map(s) showing the lease parcels to the FWP in Helena.

MONTANA STATE OFFICE

COMPETITIVE OIL & GAS LEASE TENTATIVE SALE DATES

2008

<u>SALE DATE</u>	<u>POSTING DATE</u>	<u>CUT-OFF DATE</u>
January 29, 2008	December 14, 2007	October 25, 2007
April 8, 2008	February 22, 2008	January 3, 2008
June 17, 2008	May 2, 2008	March 13, 2008
August 26, 2008	July 11, 2008	May 22, 2008
November 4, 2008	September 19, 2008	July 31, 2008

