



August 13, 2012

Bureau of Land Management
New Mexico State Office
301 Dinosaur Trail
Santa Fe, NM 87508
therrell@blm.gov

Re: Bureau of Land Management Draft Order of the Secretary on Oil and Gas and Potash Development Within the Designated Potash Area, Eddy and Lea Counties, NM.

VIA EMAIL DELIVERY

Dear Mr. Herrell:

The New Mexico Mining Association (NMMA) on behalf of our Board of Directors, Member Companies, and specifically our Potash Members, submit these comments in response to the Department of the Interior, Bureau of Land Management notice of availability entitled, "Draft Order of the Secretary on Oil and Gas and Potash Development Within the Designated Potash Area, Eddy and Lea Counties, NM." published at 77 Fed. Reg. 41442 on July 13, 2012.

The NMMA is a Trade Association organized in 1939 and incorporated in 1968. Its membership is composed of (a) companies that explore for, produce and refine metals, coal and industrial; (b) companies that manufacture and distribute mining and mineral processing equipment and supplies and individuals engaged in these various phases of the mineral industry. Our members include two Potash Companies in Eddy County and one Potash Company in Lea County.

New Mexico's Potash Companies currently employ approximately 1300 people in Eddy and Lea Counties and they anticipate that spending will be at approximately \$400 million in 2012. This is a significant impact to the economies of Eddy and Lea Counties as well as the entire State of New Mexico. Also, the U.S. having a domestic supply of Potash by ensuring Potash mining permits are not in competition with Oil and Gas drilling permits will help alleviate future potash price fluctuations. This will then help protect the U.S. food supply and reduce food price fluctuations.

The NMMA fully supports the Draft Order's precedence of Potash Mining over Oil and Gas drilling in areas where potash reserves are present. We recognize the importance of Oil and Gas extraction to New Mexico and the United States, but the limited supply of potash coupled with its importance to agriculture and price vulnerabilities emphasize the importance of preserving the New Mexico region for potash extraction.

We sincerely appreciate the opportunity to comment on the draft order and look forward to continuing to work with your office in the future.

Sincerely,


Mike E. Bowen
Executive Director