

San Rafael Desert Master Leasing Plan

INTRODUCTION

In an effort to accelerate completion of Master Leasing Plans (MLPs), BLM-Utah will be starting the planning process for the San Rafael Desert MLP in late summer 2015. In the coming months, the BLM will also begin conducting class I and II cultural resource work—funded by the BLM—to facilitate decisions that balance responsible energy development and resource protection. The BLM plans to begin the public scoping process for an environmental assessment before the end of the year.

BACKGROUND

In 2010, the BLM initiated an aggressive plan to reform its oil and gas leasing program. Under leasing reform, the BLM uses Master Leasing Plans (MLPs) to conduct in-depth, planning-level reviews of areas with oil and gas development potential that are or may be opened up to leasing. The MLP process creates certainty for developers by providing the thorough analysis required to support BLM's oil and gas leasing determination for lands within MLP planning boundaries.

The plans establish frameworks for how future development could proceed in a given area when oil and gas drilling and rights-of-way permit applications are received. As such, MLPs facilitate the responsible exploration and development of oil and gas resources, while ensuring protection of the area's resources and resource uses.

Once the in-depth MLP process is complete, new oil and gas leasing and development projects can move forward and the American people can be confident that energy resources on public lands are being developed responsibly in the right ways and the right places.

By accelerating its efforts to complete MLPs in several key areas in eastern Utah, the BLM is striving to deliver on the promises made by leasing reform—to provide certainty for developers and to ensure that America's energy resources are responsibly developed.

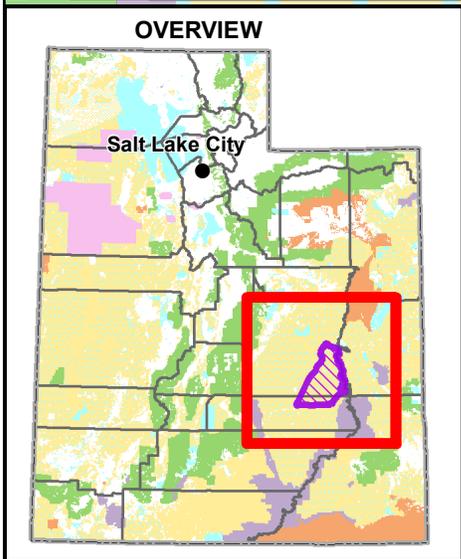
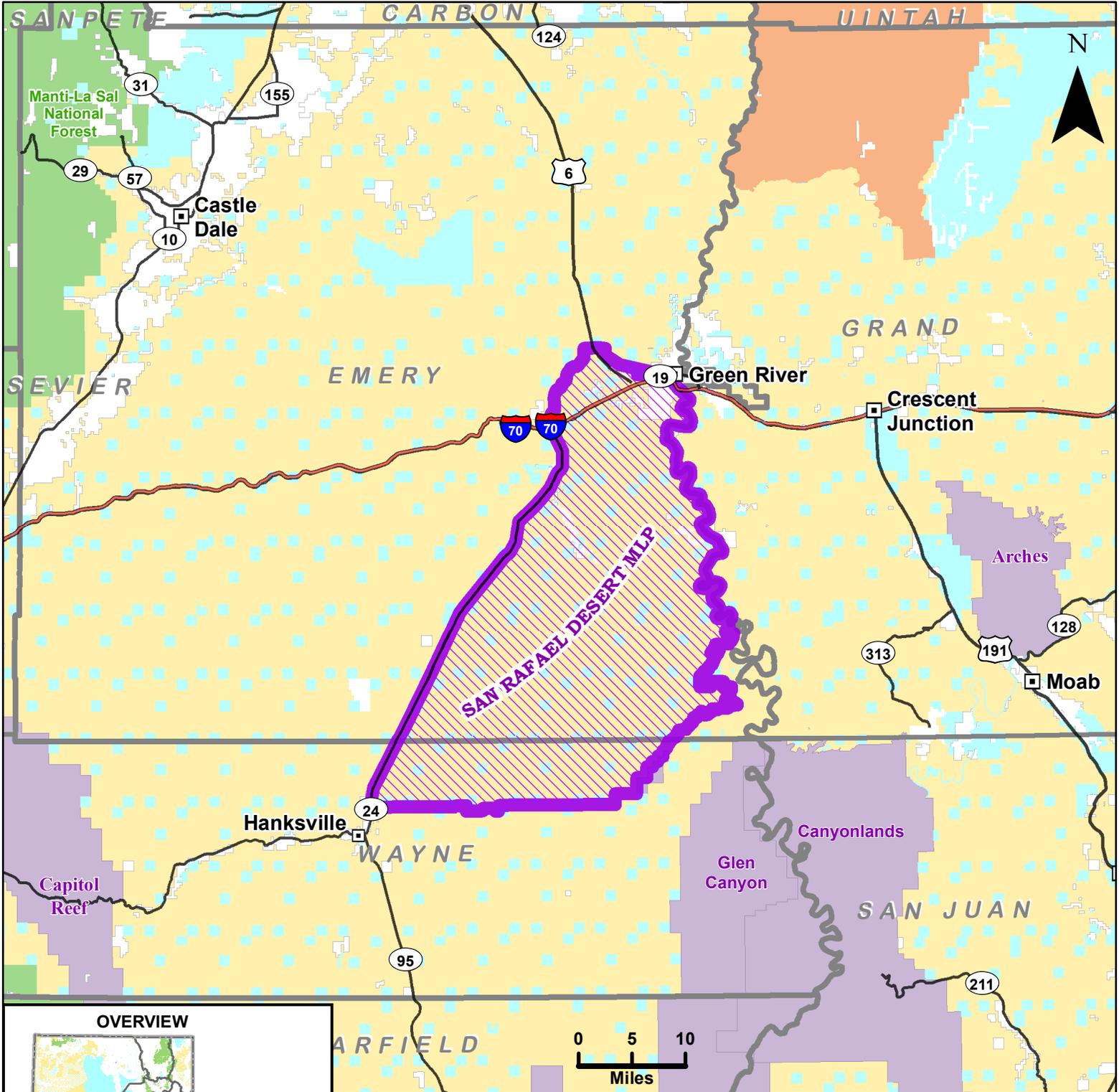
SAN RAFAEL DESERT MLP AT A GLANCE

- The San Rafael Desert MLP consists of 524,854 acres in Emery and Wayne Counties in eastern Utah. Completing this MLP may resolve long-standing lease protests and provide “curative NEPA” for leases which were placed in suspension due to litigation.
- By providing this “curative NEPA” and also offering certainty to developers, the San Rafael Desert MLP—once completed and implemented—will support the long-term, environmentally responsible development of energy resources in the planning area.
- Environmental analysis for the San Rafael Desert MLP will be supported by completion of an environmental assessment (EA) prepared by the Price and Richfield Field Offices.
- The public and stakeholders, including cooperating agencies, will be afforded extensive opportunities for participation and engagement in the planning process.
- The San Rafael MLP/EA would consider whether to amend leasing decisions in the 2008 Price and Richfield Field Office Resource Management Plans.
- As with other MLPs in Utah, oil and gas leasing nominations for lands within MLP boundaries have been deferred pending MLP completion.



San Rafael Desert Master Leasing Plan (MLP) U.S. Bureau of Land Management - Utah

July 2015



LEGEND

 San Rafael Desert Master Leasing Plan

 County Boundary

Surface Land Status

 Bureau of Land Management (BLM)

 BLM Wilderness Area

 US Forest Service (USFS)

 USFS Wilderness Area

 National Park Service

 Indian Reservation

 State

 Private

