



United States Department of the Interior

BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT

Washington, D.C. 20240

<http://www.blm.gov>



FEB 16 2011

In Reply Refer To:
1610/3100 (210/310) I

Memorandum

To: State Director – Utah

From: Director *Robert Colby*

Subject: Oil and Gas Leasing Reform – Approval of the Utah Leasing Reform Implementation Plan

I sincerely appreciate the time and effort you and your staff have dedicated to developing your Implementation Plans, changing your lease sale process, and assessing lands within your state to identify those warranting more extensive analysis through a Master Leasing Plan (MLP). Your efforts will greatly improve protections for land, water, and wildlife as well as reduce potential conflicts that can lead to costly and time-consuming protests and litigation of leases.

I am approving your state Leasing Reform Implementation Plan with the understanding that your first lease sale, to be completed in full conformance with the Leasing Reform Policy, Instruction Memorandum (IM) 2010-117, issued May 17, 2010, will be held in May 2011. Now that I have approved your plan, you are no longer subject to the leasing briefing paper process set forth in the memorandum from the Acting Director dated February 13, 2009.

I also concur with your MLP assessments and proposal to complete MLP analyses for Book Cliffs Divide-Grand Valley-Cisco Desert in eastern Utah; Glen Canyon-San Juan River in southeastern Utah; San Rafael River in east-central Utah; Vernal Eastern Uinta Basin-Northeastern Utah (includes Dinosaur Lowlands and Eastern Book Cliffs); and Moab in east-central Utah. When working on the Vernal MLP analysis, please coordinate with BLM Colorado to ensure management consistency across field office boundaries to the extent practical.

Within the next 60 days, please provide more details about your plans for accomplishing the MLP analyses and a timeline for completing them. Please send this information to the Assistant Director for Minerals and Realty Management, WO-300.

The Washington Office is developing further guidance for incorporating MLPs into ongoing planning efforts. A draft of that guidance is attached. While most of your RMPs have already

been revised and your MLP analyses will be conducted through the plan amendment process, you may find the draft guidance to be helpful when analyzing your standalone MLP areas.

Please respond to the external parties that have submitted MLP proposals to your office using the attached template letter for your response. You may edit the template where appropriate to fill in additional details. In your response, please avoid the use of the word “decision” because some groups may mistakenly believe our assessment of their MLP recommendations is appealable.

If you have any questions or comments, please do not hesitate to contact Michael D. Nedd, Assistant Director, Minerals and Realty Management, at (202) 208-4201.

2 Attachments

- 1 – External Party MLP Response Letter Format (1 p)
- 2 – Incorporating Master Leasing Plan Analysis into Ongoing Planning Efforts - Draft (7 pp)

cc: State Director - Colorado