

# - ANNOUNCEMENT -

## **2009 Oil, Gas, and Geothermal Development Environmental Best Management Practices Awards Program**

United States Department of the Interior  
Bureau of Land Management

The U.S. Department of the Interior, Bureau of Land Management (BLM) announces the third annual Oil, Gas, and Geothermal Development Environmental Best Management Practices (BMP) Awards Program to promote and showcase the finest examples of responsible fluid mineral resource development on BLM-managed public lands, other Federal agency lands, Indian Trust lands, or on Federal split estate lands where the surface is privately owned and the BLM manages the mineral estate. The 2009 BMP awards will recognize oil, gas, geophysical, and geothermal operators and their partners who demonstrate leadership and creativity in reducing the impacts of oil, gas, and geothermal development. The BMP Awards Program will serve as an important component of the BLM's overall approach to ensuring that energy development is conducted in an environmentally responsible manner. For current information on the Awards Program, visit: <http://www.blm.gov/bmp>

### **What are BMPs?**

Environmental BMPs are state-of-the-art mitigation measures applied on a site-specific basis to reduce, prevent, or avoid adverse environmental or social impacts. By reducing the area of disturbance, adjusting the location of facilities, and utilizing various other techniques to minimize environmental effects, the BLM and oil, gas, and geothermal operators are significantly reducing impacts to wildlife, soil, water, air, and scenic quality that may be associated with new energy development.

Typical BMPs that have been used on a case-by-case basis include:

- Constructing the smallest well pads and access roads needed to safely develop and access the well. Unnecessarily large well pads and roads contribute to greater loss of vegetation and wildlife habitat. Where it has been determined to be appropriate, some operators are now using small, two-track roads, resulting in significant reductions in the loss of vegetation.
- Reshaping and revegetating producing oil or gas well locations through extensive use of interim reclamation to restore wildlife habitat, protect soils, and maintain scenic quality. With standard interim reclamation, operators have typically reduced the size of producing well locations by half. For a new producing well pad, the BMP is to reshape more of the well pad to blend it with the surrounding topography, cover it with topsoil, and revegetate nearly the entire well pad. This still allows the operator to set up future workover operations on the remaining flat area and over the new vegetation when necessary.

- Reshaping plugged and abandoned well locations and access roads to the original contour or a contour that blends with the surrounding topography, replacing the topsoil, and revegetating the sites so that they blend with the landscape over time. In 5 to 20 years, it will be increasingly difficult to identify where many of these wells and roads were located as the planted and local native vegetation recolonize the sites.
- Where appropriate, burying pipelines in or adjacent to the road to reduce the loss of native vegetation and scenic resources, rather than burying cross-country or laying pipelines on the surface.
- Many operators are burying power lines to hide them from view and to prevent raptor electrocution or raptor perching and preying on other sensitive species.
- Where possible, centralizing production facilities and using telemetry to monitor wells in important wildlife habitat to reduce the need for all-weather roads and vehicle trips that disturb wildlife. For example, one operator in Wyoming estimated that by centralizing its production facilities offsite, it will eliminate up to 25,000 truck trips per year in important wildlife habitat.

### **Leadership in the Use of Oil, Gas, or Geothermal Environmental BMPs**

Awards will be presented to one or more fluid minerals operators and its partners, as applicable, to publicly recognize environmental leadership and stewardship through the use of environmental BMPs in oil, gas, or geothermal operations and development. These awards recognize continuous achievements in utilizing BMPs to successfully meet or exceed Federal, state, or local environmental protection requirements with minimal oversight. Those eligible for the BMP award include oil, gas, or geothermal operators or partnerships entered into by operators. Nominees must clearly demonstrate a commitment to excellence by putting into practice outstanding examples of BMPs for minimizing impacts to the land, resources, or communities. Nominations will be accepted until **December 1, 2008**. BMPs must have been implemented in 2007 or 2008. It is anticipated that awards will be presented at a Fluid Minerals Conference in 2009.

### **How do I nominate a company for an award?**

Operators, regulatory authorities, surface management agencies (such as the BLM, U. S. Forest Service, and state agencies), tribes, trade organizations, landowners, individual Indian mineral owners, and members of the general public may nominate operators for these awards. Company officials and employees may nominate their own operations for recognition.

Nominations must contain all of the information listed in the “What should the nomination contain?” section of this announcement and indicate the award category for the nomination. Nominations must be sent to the BLM State Office with jurisdiction for public lands in the state where the operation is located. Nominations will be accepted by the BLM State Offices until **December 1, 2008**. The addresses for these State Offices and areas of their jurisdiction are shown in the following table.

BLM State Office and Mailing Address	Area of Jurisdiction
Alaska State Office Bureau of Land Management Energy Minerals Section 222 West 7th Avenue, # 13 Anchorage. AK 99513-7599 907-271-5960	Contact: <b>Greg J. Noble</b>  Alaska
Arizona State Office Bureau of Land Management Renewable and Mineral Resources Group 1 North Central Avenue Phoenix, AZ 85004-2203 602-417-9200	Contact: <b>Paul Buff</b>  Arizona
California State Office Bureau of Land Management Branch of Energy and Minerals 2800 Cottage Way, W1834 Sacramento, CA 95825 916-978-4400	Contact: <b>Jim Haerter</b>  California
Colorado State Office Bureau of Land Management Fluid Minerals 2850 Youngfield Street Lakewood, CO 80215-7093 303-239-3600	Contact: <b>Ken (Hugh) McMurrough</b>  Colorado
Eastern States State Office Bureau of Land Management Energy and Minerals 7450 Boston Boulevard Springfield, VA 22153 703-440-1600	Contact: <b>Benjamin Martin</b>  Subsurface Federal Lands in Alabama, Arkansas, Connecticut, Delaware, Florida, Georgia, Illinois, Indiana, Iowa, Kentucky, Louisiana, Maine, Massachusetts, Maryland, Michigan, Minnesota, Mississippi, Missouri, New Hampshire, New Jersey, New York, North Carolina, Ohio, Pennsylvania, Rhode Island, South Carolina, Tennessee, Vermont, Virginia, West Virginia and Wisconsin
Idaho State Office Bureau of Land Management Minerals 1387 South Vinnell Way Boise, ID 83709-1657 208-373-3884	Contact: <b>Karen Porter</b>  Idaho

<p>Montana State Office  Bureau of Land Management  Branch of Fluid Minerals  5001 Southgate Drive  Billings, MT 59101  406-896-5004</p>	<p>Contact: <b>Pas Laborda</b>   Montana, North Dakota and South Dakota</p>
<p>Nevada State Office  Bureau of Land Management  Fluid Minerals Team  1340 Financial Boulevard  Reno, NV 89502  (P.O. Box 12000, Reno, NV 89520-0006)  775-861-6400</p>	<p>Contact: <b>John Menghini</b>   Nevada</p>
<p>New Mexico State Office  Bureau of Land Management  Oil and Gas Program  1474 Rodeo Drive  Santa Fe, NM 87505-0115  505-438-7400</p>	<p>Contact: <b>Jay Spielman</b>   Kansas, New Mexico, Oklahoma and Texas</p>
<p>Oregon State Office  Bureau of Land Management  Fluid Minerals  333 SW 1<sup>st</sup> Avenue  P.O. Box 2965  Portland, OR 97208-2965  503-808-6001</p>	<p>Contact: <b>Eric Hoffman</b>   Oregon and Washington</p>
<p>Utah State Office  Bureau of Land Management  Branch of Fluid Minerals  440 West 200 South  Suite 500  P.O. Box 45155  Salt Lake City, UT 84145-0155  801-539-4001</p>	<p>Contact: <b>Al McKee</b>   Utah</p>
<p>Wyoming State Office  Bureau of Land Management  Fluid Minerals Section  5353 Yellowstone Road  P.O. Box 1828  Cheyenne, WY 82003  307-775-6256</p>	<p>Contact: <b>Darryl Watts</b>   Wyoming and Nebraska</p>

## **What should the nomination contain?**

Each nomination must include the following:

Cover sheet containing:

- Name of the nominated company.
- Name and location of the project area(s), if applicable.
- Contact information for the person or company or organization representative making the nomination including name, affiliation, address, telephone number, and email address.
- Contact information for the oil, gas, or geothermal company, if different from above.

Narrative description that includes:

- Description of the specific BMP activity or practice, including specifics, where applicable, on leadership, creativity, problems, solutions, extent of BMP use, approximate costs, partnering, land ownership, and unusual circumstances.
- History of why the BMP was selected, including whether it was required by the agency or voluntarily proposed by the operator.
- Short- and long-term benefits of the BMP(s) to the environment or community.
- Effectiveness of the work, quantified where possible.
- Transferability of the work or value of the accomplishments to other oil, gas, or geothermal operations.
- A list of references, including telephone numbers of individuals who can validate the successful use of the BMP(s).
- Statement summarizing why the award is deserved.

Photographs (highly encouraged):

Photographs on a CD are highly encouraged, particularly if the photographs will help to document the success of the nominated activity. Not all nominated activities can be photographed, but pictures should be included whenever available. Photographs may be 8" by 10" or smaller and include a description explaining what is illustrated and the approximate date the photo was taken. Photos submitted on a CD as jpegs, along with a signed statement that the photographs are released for public use, are appreciated.

Format:

Submit three copies of the nomination on 8½” by 11” paper. Please limit nominations to 10 pages or less of typed text. There is no limit on the number of photographs.

Supporting documentation, such as letters of recognition from regulators or community officials or newspaper articles, is not required but may be submitted with the nomination.

**How will the award winners be selected?**

Each BLM State Office will review the nominations submitted to that office and verify the information contained in the nomination and that the operation or program complies with applicable regulations and permits. All nominations will be accompanied by a Statement of Findings prepared by the BLM State Office and will be forwarded to the BLM Washington Office for referral to a panel of judges.

The panel of judges may be composed of energy industry and natural resource experts including individuals from Federal agencies, academic institutions, trade and conservation groups, and/or the public. Each judge will rate each application based on the following or similar criteria:

<b>Criteria</b>	<b>Maximum Points</b>
Effectiveness of the project or program	25
Transferability of the technique, practice, or program	20
Short- and long-term benefits of the BMP(s) to the environment or community	20
Difficulty presented by the problem addressed by the project or program	20
Extent to which the project or program exceeds regulatory requirements or public expectations	10
Clarity and thoroughness of the nomination	5

The judges’ scores will be tallied and the finalists selected. The judges will use their personal experiences when evaluating the unique aspects of each application. There may be situations where the categories above do not adequately capture all of these unique characteristics, and therefore, the judges may modify the criteria by consensus. The judges determine the award winners. There is no minimum or maximum number of awards that may be granted in any one year.

**Important Dates:**

Nominations for the 2009 awards program must be filed with the BLM State Offices by December 1, 2008. The BLM State Offices will review and forward all nominations to the BLM Washington Office by January 5, 2009. It is anticipated that results will be formally announced at a Fluid Minerals Conference in 2009.

**For Additional Information:**

- BLM – Bryce Barlan, Natural Resource Specialist, Division of Minerals (WO-310), [bryce\\_barlan@blm.gov](mailto:bryce_barlan@blm.gov) , or by telephone at 202-452-5197; or
- U.S. Forest Service – Tracy Parker, Energy Minerals Program Manager, [tparker03@fs.fed.us](mailto:tparker03@fs.fed.us) , or by telephone at 703-605-4796.