

**United States Department of the Interior  
Bureau of Land Management**

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**Amended Environmental Assessment**

**DOI-BLM-WY-050-EA11-71**

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**February 2011**

**Lease Parcel Review  
February, May, August 2010**

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Wind River/Bighorn Basin District  
101 South 23<sup>rd</sup> Street  
Worland, Wyoming 82401  
307-347-5100

**Amended Environmental Assessment  
February, May and August Lease Sales**



## **Chapter 1 Introduction**

### **1.1 Identifying Information:**

The Wyoming BLM State Office forwarded eighteen (18) parcels to be analyzed for potentially contributing to lands with wilderness characteristics. These parcels are from the February 2010 through August 2010 lease sales and are located in the Cody, Lander, and Worland Field Offices (CyFO, LFO and WFO respectively), Wind River / Bighorn Basin District. The parcels were made available for sale at formal lease sales; available parcels were subsequently sold and monies have been received with those parcels not sold made available for non-competitive sale. On July 30, 2010, Environmental Assessments DOI-BLM-WY-WR02-071-EA (CyFO), DOI-BLM-WY-R010-2010-0010-EA (WFO), and DOI-BLM-WY-050-2010-98-EA (LFO) with their associated FONSI and Decision Records were issued to further analyze nominated parcels dating from June 2008 through May 2010 lease parcel sales. On August 5, 2010, Environmental Assessments DOI-BLM-WY-R010-2010-0011-EA (WFO) and DOI-BLM-WY-R050-100-EA (LFO) with their associated FONSI and Decision Records were issued to further analyze nominated parcels from the August 2010 lease parcel sale.

The previous Environmental Assessments supported the issuance of twelve (12) parcels sold but not issued or made available for non-competitive sale and deferral of parcels after re-analysis from June 2008 through August 2010 and deferred issuance of six (6) parcels due to Sage Grouse core area screen in accordance with WY IM-2010-13, Oil and Gas Leasing Screen for Greater Sage-Grouse.

The following Amended Environmental Assessment (AEA) documents an additional review by the Cody, Lander, and Worland Field Offices of the twelve (12) parcels that were offered and sold, but have not yet been issued during Competitive Oil and Gas Lease Sales conducted during the time from February 2010 through August 2010. The six (6) parcels recommended for deferred issuance as analyzed in previous NEPA documents were provided by the Wyoming BLM State Office for analysis and are therefore listed in this document.

All parcels addressed in this AEA are under the administration of the Wind River / Bighorn Basin District's Cody, Lander, and Worland Field Offices. Please see Appendix A for the list of twelve (12) parcels covered by this AEA by field office and sale date and those six (6) parcels which were recommended to be deferred from being issued through decisions made from previous, tiered to EAs. This AEA addresses information that was not available at the time the parcels were sold, but became available prior to the issuance of lease agreements.

On December 22, 2010 Secretary of the Interior Ken Salazar, signed Secretarial Order 3310 (SO 3310) Protecting Wilderness Characteristics on Lands Managed by the Bureau of Land Management. SO 3310 provides direction to the BLM to maintain wilderness resource inventories on a regular and continuing basis for public lands under its jurisdiction. It further directs the BLM to protect wilderness characteristics through land use planning and project-level decisions unless the BLM determines in accordance with SO 3310, that impairment of wilderness characteristics is appropriate and consistent with other applicable requirements of law and other resource management considerations. This AEA addresses SO 3310 and analyzes Lands with Wilderness Characteristics (LWC). As such, this AEA represents a new analysis for Lands with Wilderness Characteristics and replaces all previous discussions/analysis of this topic as it relates to parcels previously addressed for the February, May and August 2010 sales. Analyses (See Section 1.3) of all other resources remain valid.

### **1.2 Title, EA Number, and Type of Project:**

February, May, and August 2010, Parcel Review, DOI-BLM-WY-050-EA11-71, evaluating lands with wilderness characteristics in accordance with new SO 3310.

### **1.3 Location of Proposed Action:**

All parcels addressed in this EA are under the administration of the Wind River / Bighorn Basin District (Cody Field Office, Worland Field Office, and Lander Field Office).

### **1.4 Name and Location of Preparing Office:**

Lead Office - Wind River/Bighorn Basin DO and number LLWYR00000

### **1.5 Identify the subject function code:**

Subject Function Code – 1310 EI

### **1.6 Applicant Name:**

Parcels were nominated through Expressions of Interest for the February, May, and August 2010 Oil and Gas Competitive Lease Sale and subsequently sold, but not issued..

### **1.7 Purpose and Need**

The purpose of the action is to provide legal access to develop oil and gas resources. The need for the action is established by the BLM's responsibility under FLPMA and the Mineral Leasing Act to allow for development of resources in accordance with approved Resource Management Plans.

The purpose of this document is to analyze the impacts specific to lands with wilderness characteristics as prescribed in the implementation of SO 3310 prior to lease issuance of parcels sold at several previous competitive oil and gas lease sales. Lease issuance would allow private individuals or companies to explore for and develop oil and gas resources on public lands. The decision to offer parcels at previous competitive lease sales from February 2010 and May 2010 were supported by DNAs; however, given the passage of time and potential environmental issues that have arisen since those sales, BLM prepared Environmental Assessments, as address in the Introduction of this document, to analyze whether it remained appropriate to issue leases for these parcels.

**Decision to be Made:** The BLM will decide whether or not to issue the sold leases, and if so, under what terms and conditions.

## **Chapter 2 Proposed Action and Alternatives**

### **2.1 Description of Proposed Action**

A total of seven (7) parcels nominated from the February 2010 oil and gas lease sale, eight (8) from the May 2010 sale, and three (3) from the August 2010 sale to date have not been issued for lease. These parcels are being reviewed prior to issuance as a new analysis for Lands with Wilderness Characteristics was conducted and represents new information requiring analysis through this AEA. The review was

conducted in accordance with new SO 3310 and replaces all previous discussions/analysis of this topic as it relates to parcels previously addressed for the February, May and August 2010 sales. This section describes the alternatives considered for analysis.

Standard terms and conditions as well as special stipulations addressed in previous analysis would apply. Lease stipulations (as required by Title 43 Code of Federal Registration 3131.3) were added to each parcel as identified by the Field Offices to address site specific concerns as addressed in previous analyses.

## 2.2 Description of Alternatives Analyzed in Detail

Alternative 1- No Action Alternative. This alternative analyzes the effect of not issuing lease parcels as nominated. Under the No Action alternative, the BLM would not issue any of the leases that have been nominated. Surface management would remain the same and ongoing oil and gas development could continue on surrounding federal, private, and state leases.

The BLM NEPA Handbook (H-1790-1) states that for Environmental Assessments (EAs) on externally initiated proposed actions, the No Action Alternative generally means that the proposed action would not take place. In the case of a lease sale, this would mean that an expression of interest to lease (parcel nomination) would be denied or rejected, and a lease would not be issued for that parcel.

It is not expected that demand for energy oil and gas will go down, and a decision to not issue these leases would not prevent future leasing in these areas consistent with land use planning decisions, and subject to appropriate stipulations, identified in the Resource Management Plan. Therefore, it is anticipated that these parcels may be nominated and leased at a future date. While future leases may contain more restrictive lease terms, it is reasonable to consider that a substantial portion of the development possible under current planning decisions will be possible under future leases.

Alternative 2 – Issue leases with stipulations. Under Alternative 2, twelve (12) parcels, as detailed in Appendix A, would be recommended to the State Director to continue to offer for sale and subsequent oil and gas lease issuance with the stipulations recommended from previous analyses. This analysis does not change the decisions to recommend six (6) parcels to be deferred from being issued

## 2.3 Conformance

Pursuant to 40 Code of Federal Regulations (CFR) 1508.28 and 1502.21, this Amended Environmental Assessment (AEA) tiers to and incorporates by reference the information and analysis contained in the Grass Creek RMP 1998; Washakie RMP 1988; Cody RMP 1990; Lander RMP 1986 and Final Environmental Impact Statement and Record of Decision for each RMP.

Issuance of leases would not be in conflict with any local, county, or state plans.

This AEA tiers to the following Environmental NEPA documents and incorporates by reference the following informational documents:

### Cody Field Office

Action	Document	Date Signed
February 2010 parcels	Determination of NEPA Adequacy	10/28/2009
May 2010 parcels	Determination of NEPA Adequacy	1/27/2010

Previously Sold Lease Parcels June 2008 - May 2010	Environmental Assessment DOI-BLM-WY-WR02-071-EA	7/30/2010
	Wilderness Characteristics Inventory Forms: Consolidated Form 1	2009 Inventory
	Analysis of Wilderness Study Areas, a Final Inventory Report	May 1981

### **Worland Field Office**

Action	Document	Date Signed
Previously Sold Lease Parcels June 2008 - May 2010	Environmental Assessment DOI-BLM-WY-R010-2010- 0010-EA	7/30/2010
Competitive Oil and Gas Lease Sales August 2010	Environmental Assessment DOI-BLM-WY-R10-2010-0011- EA	8/5/2010
	Wilderness Characteristics Inventory Forms: Consolidated Form 1 and individual Form 2s	2009 Inventory
	Analysis of Wilderness Study Areas, a Final Inventory Report	May 1981

### **Lander Field Office**

Action	Document	Date Signed
February 2010 parcels	Determination of NEPA Adequacy	10/22/2009
May 2010 parcels	Determination of NEPA Adequacy	1/21/2010
Previously Sold Lease Parcels June 2008 - May 2010	Environmental Assessment DOI-BLM-WY-050-2010-98-EA	7/30/2010
Competitive Oil and Gas Lease Sales August 2010	Environmental Assessment DOI-BLM-WY-R050-100-EA	8/5/2010
	Wilderness Characteristics Inventory Forms: Consolidated Form 1	Inventory conducted as part of the RMP revision Analysis of the Management Situation dated July 20, 2009
	Analysis of Wilderness Study Areas, a Final Inventory Report	May 1981

## **Chapter 3 Affected Environment**

This section describes the environment that would be affected by implementation of the alternatives described in Section 2. Aspects of the affected environment described in this section focus on relevant major resources and issues. All relevant major resources and issues, except for LWC, are adequately described in previous NEPA documents. Certain critical environmental components require analysis

under BLM policy. Only those aspects of the affected environment that are potentially impacted are described in detail as described in the Introduction to this AEA.

### **3.1 Lands with Wilderness Characteristics (LWC)**

Wilderness characteristics are resource values that include naturalness, outstanding opportunities for solitude, and outstanding opportunities for primitive and unconfined recreation. Areas evaluated for wilderness characteristics generally occur in undeveloped locations of sufficient size (5,000 acres or larger) to be practical to manage for these characteristics. Smaller areas may be considered if they are contiguous with designated Wilderness or WSAs, or in rare circumstances, are of a manageable size in accordance with FLPMA.

An inventory containing the project area occurred in 1980 and is documented in Wyoming Wilderness Study Areas, a Final Inventory Report. Page 9, Phase I – Inventory states “The inventory phase had two parts: initial and intensive. Its overall purpose was to identify public lands administered by the BLM which had wilderness characteristics as defined by the Wilderness Act of 1964 (Public Law 88-577).

BLM began the initial inventory in the fall of 1978 and was completed through review of information already available in the BLM offices and through consultation with industry, State government, conservation groups, individual citizens and private organizations. Of the 17.8 million acres of public lands under the jurisdiction of BLM Wyoming, 1.04 million acres in 86 inventory units were recommended for further inventory. The proposed initial inventory decisions were announced by the Wyoming State Director on February 7, 1979. A 90-day public comment period followed. The final decision on the initial inventory was released on July 15, 1979. Approximately 16.6 million acres of public land in Wyoming was released from wilderness consideration at that time. BLM announced that 1.2 million acres in 83 units would be advanced to the intensive inventory.

Per SO 3310, the BLM has undertaken a review of these previous inventories to determine whether or not conditions have changed, and whether or not issuance of these parcels complies with SO 3310. As directed by the SO 3310, the BLM first undertook screening process to determine whether or not the parcels, and the area around the parcels would qualify according to size and naturalness.

None of the aliquot parts of the twelve (12) parcels under review in this AEA were identified to be within areas identified as containing lands with wilderness characteristics in previous NEPA documents. Approximately 320 acres of the nominated 1200 acres of preliminary parcel number 085 (final parcel number 54) was partially deferred in the initial review under WFO Environmental Assessment DOI-BLM-WY-R10-2010-0011-EA so as not to preclude the analysis of 0016DH wilderness characteristic area in the RMP process for the Bighorn Basin. This AEA specifically analyzes the 880 acres as recommended in the August 3, 2010 Competitive Oil and Gas Lease Sale.

Sale and subsequent issuance of the parcels under review in this AEA would not affect lands with wilderness characteristics, or preclude BLM evaluation of wilderness characteristics in the RMP Revision.

## **Chapter 4 Environmental Analysis**

### **4.1 Wilderness Characteristics:**

#### **Alternative 1: No Action**

Under the No Action Alternative, the twelve (12) sold parcels would not be issued. No resulting effects on lands with wilderness characteristics would be expected to occur.

#### **Alternative 2: Proposed Action:**

While the act of issuing a lease would have no direct adverse impacts to the affected environment, in this AEA wilderness characteristics, it is unknown if, when, or where future development on the parcels may be proposed. Detailed site specific analysis of individual wells or roads would occur when a proponent submits an Application for Permit to Drill (APD) or at the stage of full mineral resource development.

Review and inventory of the twelve (12) parcels that have either been sold and not yet issued or not sold and are available for sale and issuance as a non-competitive parcel were screened for their proximity to areas that may contain wilderness characteristics as addressed in SO 3310 and draft BLM Manuals 6300-1 and 6300-2. As directed, the BLM will continue to conduct environmental analysis for project proposals in a conscientious and thorough public process based on sound science with the consideration of wilderness characteristics being part of that environmental analysis, consistent with SO 3310, multiple-use management, and valid existing rights.

As a result, the twelve (12) parcel acreages have been analyzed using the criterion provided in current guidance for screening whether the acreage being analyzed contributes or does not contribute to current guidance criterion for inventorying landscape wilderness characteristics. These characteristics must first include 5,000 acres of contiguous BLM lands. The inventory evaluates wilderness characteristics as defined in Section 2(c) of the Wilderness Act of 1964, and incorporated in FLPMA. In order for an area to be classified as an LWC, it must possess sufficient size, naturalness, and outstanding opportunities for either solitude or primitive type of recreation and unconfined recreation. In addition, it may also possess supplemental values. All of these characteristics were evaluated for the acreage associated with the parcels.

All parcel acreages were adequately screened in accordance with current guidance and found not be within areas that demonstrate wilderness characteristics. One parcel from the August 2, 2010 sale, final parcel number 54, preliminary parcel 085, abuts the 0016DH wilderness character area. Lease issuance of the parcel acreage of 880 acres outside of the boundary of the area currently being analyzed for wilderness characteristics through the Bighorn Basin RMP, is determined to not impact wilderness characteristics as Manual 6300-1 directs to not to create a setback or buffer from the physical edge of the imprint of man.

Issuance of any or all of the twelve (12) sold leases would not preclude the BLM from exercising its discretion to designate an LWC or a portion of an LWC as a Wild Land.

## **Chapter 5 Tribes, Individuals, Organizations, or Agencies Consulted**

A BLM Interdisciplinary Team reviewed all twelve (12) parcels in accordance with SO 3310 and draft Manuals 6300-1 and 6300-2. No other entities were consulted in the development of this Amended Environmental Assessment.

## **Chapter 6 List of Preparers**

Stuart Cerovski, District Resource Advisor - Preparer  
Cody Field Office BLM Staff  
Worland Field Office Staff  
Lander Field Office Staff

Reviewers:

David Seward, NRS, Cody Field Office  
Holly Elliott, NRS, Worland Field Office  
Debbie Larsen, LLE, Lander Field Office  
Caleb Hiner, P&EC, Wind River/Bighorn Basin District

## Appendix A

### Parcels Sold and Not Yet Issued

Serial Number	Final Parcel #	Sale Date	Jurisdiction	Preliminary Parcel #
WYW 178962	PAR 43;	02/01/10	CODY FO	PAR 050
WYW 178938	PAR 19;	02/01/10	LANDER FO	PAR 021
WYW 178949	PAR 30;	02/01/10	LANDER FO	PAR 032
WYW 179183	PAR 73;	05/10/10	CODY FO	PAR 086
WYW 179184	PAR 74;	05/10/10	CODY FO	PAR 087
WYW 179167	PAR 57;	05/10/10	LANDER FO	PAR 062
WYW 179168	PAR 58;	05/10/10	LANDER FO	PAR 066
WYW 179169	PAR 59;	05/10/10	LANDER FO	PAR 067
WYW 179170	PAR 60;	05/10/10	LANDER FO	PAR 068
WYW 179287	PAR 56;	08/02/10	LANDER FO	PAR 087
WYW 179289	PAR 58;	08/02/10	LANDER FO	PAR 089
WYW 179285	PAR 54;	08/02/10	WORLAND FO	PAR 085

### Parcels Previously Recommended to be Deferred from Issuance

Serial Number	Final Parcel #	Sale Date	Jurisdiction	Preliminary Parcel #
WYW 178957	PAR 38;	02/01/10	LANDER FO	PAR 040
WYW 178958	PAR 39;	02/01/10	LANDER FO	PAR 043
WYW 178959	PAR 40;	02/01/10	LANDER FO	PAR 044
WYW 178960	PAR 41;	02/01/10	LANDER FO	PAR 041
WYW 179181	PAR 71;	05/10/10	CODY FO	PAR 083
WYW 179182	PAR 72;	05/10/10	CODY FO	PAR 084

**United States Department of the Interior  
Bureau of Land Management**

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**Finding of No Significant Impact  
Amended Environmental Assessment  
DOI-BLM-WY-050-EA11-71**

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**March 2011**

**Lease Parcel Review  
February, May, and August 2010**

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Wind River/Bighorn Basin District  
101 South 23<sup>rd</sup> Street  
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307-347-5100



**FINDING OF NO SIGNIFICANT IMPACT**  
**Amended Environmental Assessment**  
**DOI-BLM-WY-050-EA11-71**

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**Lease Parcel Review**  
**February, May, and August 2010**

**INTRODUCTION:**

The Bureau of Land Management (BLM) has conducted an environmental analysis (DOI-BLM-WY-050-EA11-71) for a proposed action to address backlogged lease parcels in the Cody, Lander, and Worland Field Offices. The Wyoming BLM State Office forwarded eighteen (18) parcels to be analyzed for potentially contributing to lands with wilderness characteristics. The project would be a recommendation to the State Director to issue twelve (12) leases for oil and gas development of federal minerals administered by the Cody, Lander, and Worland Field Offices. Previous NEPA documents deferred issuance of six (6) parcels due to Sage Grouse core area screen in accordance with WY IM-2010-13, Oil and Gas Leasing Screen for Greater Sage-Grouse and therefore were not analyzed in the AEA. Standard terms and conditions as well as special stipulations analyzed through previous, tiered to EAs, continue to be applicable. Lease stipulations (as required by Title 43 Code of Federal Registration 3131.3) were added to each parcel through analysis in previous, tiered to EAs, as identified by the Cody, Lander, and Worland Field Offices to address site specific concerns or new information not identified in the land use planning process. This AEA addresses new information provided through the issuance of Secretarial Order 3310 on December 22, 2010.

The underlying need for the proposal would be met while accomplishing the following objectives:

1. Issuing parcels resulting from several competitive oil and gas leasing sales to allow private individuals or companies to explore for and develop oil and gas resources on public markets

The parcel issuance AEA DOI-BLM-WY-050-EA11-71 is attached. A No Action alternative and Proposed Action alternative were analyzed in the AEA.

**FINDING OF NO SIGNIFICANT IMPACT:**

Based upon a review of the AEA and the supporting documents, I have determined that the project is not a major federal action and will not significantly affect the quality of the human environment, individually or cumulatively with other actions in the general area. No environmental effects meet the definition of significance in context or intensity as defined in 40 CFR 1508.27 and do not exceed those effects described in the Cody, Lander, Washakie, and Grass Creek RMP/FEIS. Therefore, an environmental impact statement is not needed.

This finding is based on the context and intensity of the project as described:

**Context:**

The Action would occur within the Cody, Lander, and Worland Field Office boundaries and would have local impacts on the resources similar to and within the scope of those described and considered within the Cody, Lander, Washakie, and Grass Creek Resource Management Plan FEIS/Records of Decision. The project is a site-specific action directly involving issuance of lease parcels and analysis potential impacts to lands with wilderness characteristics in accordance with SO 3310 and does not include lands that have international, national, regional, or state-wide importance.

**Intensity:**

The following discussion is organized around the Ten Significance Criteria described in 40 CFR 1508.27 and incorporated into resources and issues considered (includes supplemental authorities Appendix 1 H-1790-1) and supplemental Instruction Memorandum, Acts, regulations and Executive Orders.

The following have been considered in evaluating intensity for this proposal:

**1. Impacts may be both beneficial and adverse.**

Design features or mitigating measures to avoid impacts to LWCs were incorporated in the design of the action alternatives, i.e., exclusion of LWCs from lease parcels. None of the environmental effects discussed in detail in the AEA are considered significant, nor do the effects exceed those described in the Cody, Lander, and Worland Resource Management Plans and their respective FEIS/Records of Decision.

**2. The degree to which the selected alternative will affect public health or safety.**

The proposed action is designed to address backlogged lease parcels. No aspect of the Action/Alternatives as analyzed in the tiered to EAs or the AEA would have an effect on public health and safety. If the leases enter into a development stage, public health or safety would be further addressed through site specific NEPA.

**3. Unique characteristics of the geographic area such as proximity to historic or cultural resources, park lands, prime farm lands, wetlands, wilderness, wild and scenic rivers, or ecologically critical areas.**

The only unique characteristics analyzed in the AEA are lands with wilderness characteristics. These characteristics have been deemed to be not affected by the Action/Alternatives. These characteristics were adequately analyzed through previous, tiered to, EAs as identified in the AEA and are being re-analyzed to be in compliance with the Secretarial Order 3310 signed on December 22, 2010 by Secretary of the Interior Ken Salazar. SO 3310 provides direction to the BLM to maintain wilderness resource inventories on a regular and continuing basis for public lands under its jurisdiction. Issuance of any or all of the twelve (12) sold leases would not preclude the BLM from exercising its discretion to designate an LWC or a portion of an LWC as a Wild Land.

**4. The degree to which the effects on the quality of the human environment are likely to be highly controversial.**

Controversy in this context is considered to be in terms of disagreement about the nature of the effects— not political controversy or expressions of opposition to the action or preference among the alternatives analyzed within the AEA. Although sale of the parcels have been protested, BLM considers that the AEA, in conjunction with its protest response has addressed disagreements about the nature of the effects. This decision only addresses new information as brought forward in SO 3310. The effects of leasing and subsequent development are relatively certain and there is little to no disagreement about the nature of the effects on LWCs.

**5. The degree to which the possible effects on the human environment are highly uncertain or involve unique or unknown risks.**

The project is not unique or unusual. The BLM has experience implementing similar actions in similar areas. The environmental effects to the human environment are fully analyzed in previous, tiered to EAs. There are no predicted effects on the human environment that are considered to be highly uncertain or involve unique or unknown risks.

**6. The degree to which the action may establish a precedent for future actions with significant effects or represents a decision in principle about a future consideration.**

This project neither establishes a precedent nor represents a decision in principle about future actions. The actions considered in the selected alternative were considered by the interdisciplinary team within the context of past, present, and reasonably foreseeable future actions. Significant cumulative effects are not predicted.

**7. Whether the action is related to other actions with individually insignificant but cumulatively significant impacts – which include connected actions regardless of land ownership.**

The interdisciplinary team evaluated the possible actions in context of past, present and reasonably foreseeable actions. Significant cumulative effects are not predicted. Design features or mitigating measures to avoid impacts to LWCs were incorporated in the design of the action alternative, i.e. exclusion of LWCs from lease parcels. Therefore no cumulative impact to LWCs would result.

**8. The degree to which the action may adversely affect districts, sites, highways, structures, or other objects listed in or eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places or may cause loss or destruction of significant scientific, cultural, or historical resources.**

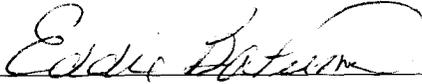
There are no features within the project area listed or eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places.

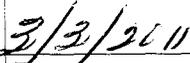
**9. The degree to which the action may adversely affect an endangered or threatened species or its habitat that has been determined to be critical under the Endangered Species Act of 1973, or the degree to which the action may adversely affect: 1) a proposed to be listed endangered or threatened species or its habitat, or 2) a species on BLM's sensitive species list.**

Mitigating measures to reduce impacts to wildlife and fisheries have been analyzed through the previous, tiered to EAs referenced in the AEA and incorporated into the design of the action alternatives. The AEA addresses only new information provided through the issuance of SO 3310 on December 22, 2010.

**10. Whether the action threatens a violation of a federal, state, local, or tribal law, regulation or policy imposed for the protection of the environment, where non-federal requirements are consistent with federal requirements.**

The project does not violate any known federal, state, local or tribal law or requirement imposed for the protection of the environment. In addition, the project is consistent with applicable land management plans, policies, and programs.

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Authorized Officer

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

**United States Department of the Interior  
Bureau of Land Management**

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**Decision Record  
Amended Environmental Assessment  
DOI-BLM-WY-050-EA11-71**

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**March 2011**

**Lease Parcel Review  
February, May, and August 2010**

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Wind River/Bighorn Basin District  
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**DECISION RECORD**  
**Amended Environmental Assessment**  
**DOI-BLM-WY-050-EA11-71**  
**Lease Parcel Review February, May, and August 2010**

It is my decision to implement Alternative B -- the Proposed Action, and recommend the issuance of twelve (12) parcels that were offered and sold, but have not yet been issued as identified in Amended Environmental Assessment (AEA) - DOI DOI-BLM-WY-050-EA11-71. The Wyoming BLM State Office forwarded eighteen (18) parcels to be analyzed for potentially contributing to lands with wilderness characteristics. Previous NEPA documents deferred issuance of six (6) parcels due to Sage Grouse core area screen in accordance with WY IM-2010-13, Oil and Gas Leasing Screen for Greater Sage-Grouse, and therefore were not analyzed in the AEA.

**Authorities:** The authority for this decision is contained in 43 CFR 3100.

**Compliance and Monitoring:**

No monitoring would be required in the issuance of the lease parcels. Should the parcels be developed, monitoring may be required and would be analyzed under future NEPA documentation.

**Terms / Conditions / Stipulations:**

For all parcels, Standard Oil and Gas lease stipulations, standard terms and conditions as well as Special Cultural Resource Lease Notices 1-3 and lease notices Washington Office: Threatened and Endangered Species Stipulation (included within Instruction Memorandum No. 2002-174); Migratory Bird Species-Interim Management Guidance Policy (included within Instruction Memorandum No. 2008-050); BLM Sensitive Species, Raptors, Migratory Birds, and Prairie Dog Surveys; Biological Survey; and other Washington Office and state guidance would apply and be attached to any parcel that is issued for lease.

**PLAN CONFORMANCE AND CONSISTENCY:**

The proposed action and alternatives have been reviewed and found to be in conformance with one or more of the following BLM Land Use Plans and the associated decision(s):

Pursuant to 40 Code of Federal Regulations (CFR) 1508.28 and 1502.21, this Amended Environmental Assessment (AEA) tiers to and incorporates by reference the information and analysis contained in previous, tiered to EAs, and Grass Creek RMP 1998; Washakie RMP 1988; Cody RMP 1990; Lander RMP 1986 and Final Environmental Impact Statement and Record of Decision for each RMP.

**Alternatives Considered:**

**Alternative A: No Action** --Under the No Action alternative, the BLM would not issue the twelve (12) parcels that have been sold. Surface management would remain the same and ongoing oil and gas development would continue on surrounding federal, private, and state leases.

**Alternative B: Proposed Action** --The Proposed Action would be a recommendation to the State Director to issue twelve (12) of the eighteen (18) leases parcels provided by the Wyoming BLM State Office that have been sold for oil and gas development of federal minerals administered by the Cody, Lander, and Worland Field Offices. Previous NEPA documents deferred issuance of six (6) parcels due to Sage Grouse core area screen in accordance with WY IM-2010-13, Oil and Gas Leasing Screen for Greater Sage-Grouse and therefore were not analyzed in the AEA. Standard terms and conditions as well as special stipulations that have been applied based on previous, tiered to documents, would continue to

apply. Analysis was conducted to address new information concerning lands with wilderness characteristics as provided in Secretarial Order 3310.

**Rationale for Decision:**

The decision to approve the proposed action is based upon the analysis in the AEA, the associated FONSI, and the following: 1) consistency with resource management plan and land use plan; 2) national policy; 3) agency statutory requirements; 4) relevant resource and economic issues; 5) application of measures to avoid or minimize environmental impacts. Alternative 2 was chosen as being the most environmentally sound alternative.

1. This decision is in conformance with the Lander, Cody, Washakie, and Grass Creek Resource Management Plans.
2. It is the policy of the Bureau of Land Management (BLM) as derived from various laws, including the Mineral Leasing Act of 1920, as amended [30 U.S.C. 181 *et seq.*] and the Federal Land Policy and Management Act of 1976, to make mineral resources available for disposal and to encourage development of mineral resources to meet national, regional, and local needs
3. The decision is consistent with all federal, state, and county authorizing actions required for implementation of the Proposed Action.
4. Economic benefits derived from implementation of the proposed action considered important and have been analyzed in previous, tiered to EAs.
5. Standard terms and conditions as well as special stipulations would apply. Lease stipulations (as required by Title 43 Code of Federal Registration 3131.3) were added to each parcel as identified in previous, tiered to EAs, to address site specific concerns or new information not identified in the land use planning process.

**Appeal Language:**

Under BLM regulation, this decision is subject to administrative review in accordance with 43 CFR 3165. Any request for administrative review of this decision must include the information required under 43 CFR 3165.3 (b), including all supporting documentation. Such a request must be filed in writing with the State Director (920), Bureau of Land Management, PO Box 1828, Cheyenne WY 82003, within 20 business days of the date such notice of decision was received or considered to have been received. This decision will be considered to have been received seven (7) business days from the date it is mailed. The decision of the State Director may be appealed to the Interior Board of Land Appeals, Office of the Secretary, in accordance with the regulations contained in 43 CFR 3150.2, 43 CFR 3165.4, and 43 CFR 4. Each adverse party to any such appeal must be provided with all documentation in accordance with 43 CFR 4.413.

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Authorized Officer

3/3/2011  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

**Attachments:** None.