

Finding of No Significant Impact
for
August 2010
Competitive Oil and Gas Lease Sale EA

WY-040-EA10-126

July 2010

High Desert District - Rock Springs Field Office



FINDING OF NO SIGNIFICANT IMPACT
Environmental Assessment
WY-040-EA10-126

2010 August Competitive Oil and Gas Lease Sale

EA Number: WY-040-EA10-126

Project: 2010 August Competitive Oil and Gas Lease Sale

Legal Location: See Appendix 1 of the Environmental Assessment

Various Locations in Sweetwater County, Wyoming

INTRODUCTION

The Bureau of Land Management (BLM) has conducted an environmental analysis (**WY-040-EA10-126**) for a proposed action to conduct a competitive lease sale in the Rock Springs Field Office area in Sweetwater County. Twelve (12) parcels (10,106.88 acres) were nominated for 2010 August competitive Oil and Gas Lease Sale. The proposed action would be a recommendation to the State Director to sell and issue nine (9) leases that have been reviewed for oil and gas development containing approximately 6,659.42 acres in their entirety, two (2) modified parcels with a total of 1846.37 acres and one (1) deferred with a total of 1600.00 acres and removed from the 2010 August competitive Oil and Gas Lease Sale, of federal minerals administered by the Rock Springs Field Office.

The nine (9) parcels in their entirety would be included in the lease sale with the lease stipulations and lease notice. Parcel number, acreage, and location of parcels are listed in Appendix 1, with the attached stipulations.

- 1.) WY-1008-61 Lease stipulations – T19 R98, S-2, lots 6.
- 2.) WY-1008-62 Lease stipulations – T19 R98, S-2-SENE, S-2-lots 7.
- 3.) WY-1008-63 Lease stipulations – T19 R98, S-2-SWNE, S-2-lots 8.
- 4.) WY-1008-64 Lease stipulations – T19 R98, S-14 NENE.
- 5.) WY-1008-65 Lease stipulations – T16 R102, S-6-lots 1-6, S-6 E2SW,SE; S-18 LOTS 1-4, S-18 E2, E2W2.
- 6.) WY-1008-66 Lease stipulations – T17 R102, S-32-SWSW
- 7.) WY-1008-69 Lease stipulations – T16 R103, S-4-SE; S-10 ALL; S- 12 LOTS 1-4; S- 12 W2E2, W2; S-14 N2,SESW,SE; S-20-N2SW,SWSW, SESE.
- 8.) WY-1008-70 Lease stipulations – T16 R103, S22-W2,NESE, S2SE; S-27-SENE,S2S2, NESE; S- 28 ALL; S- 30 S2SE; S-31-S2SE; S-32-ALL.
- 9.) WY-1008-72 Lease stipulations – T20 R103, S2- Lots 1,2; S-2 SE.

The two (2) modified parcels would be included in the lease sale with the lease stipulations and lease notice. Parcel number, acreage, and location of parcels are listed in Appendix 1, with the attached stipulations.

- (1) WY-1008-67 Lease stipulations – T15 R103, S-5 LOTS 5,6,9; S-5-SWNE(199.27 acres)

Deferred: S-1-Lots 5-8, S-1-SWNE,S2NW, S2; S-2-Lots 9-14, S-2-S2S2; S-3 LOTS 6-10; S-3 SW,W2SE,SESE; NWSWS-4 LOTS 10-11; S-4 NESE,S2SE (1,526.08 acres).

(2) WY-1008-71 Lease stipulations – T16 R103, S33-Lots 1, 2; S-34-Lots 1, 4-6; S- 34 N2, N2SW (596.11 acres)

Deferred: S- 36-Lots 3,4; S-36-SW W2SE (320.29 acres)

The one (1) deferred parcel would be not be included in the lease sale. Parcel number, acreage, and location of parcels are listed in Appendix 1.

(1) WY-1008-68 Lease stipulations – T15 R103, S-9-E2; S-10-ALL; S-11 ALL.

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 by the Rock Springs Field Office to address site specific concerns or new information not identified in the land use planning process.

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

1. Issuing parcels resulting from 2010 August Lease Sale for 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 Lease Parcel List and EA (WY-040-EA10-126) are attached. A No Action alternative and a Proposed Action alternative were analyzed in the EA.

FINDING OF NO SIGNIFICANT IMPACT:

Based upon a review of the EA 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 Green River 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 Rock Springs Field Office boundaries and would have local impacts on the resources similar to and within the scope of those described and considered within the Green River Resource Management Plan and FEIS. The project is a site-specific action for nine parcels directly involving approximately 6,659.42 acres of BLM-administered land that by itself does not 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.

The Action/Alternatives would affect resources as described in the EA. Mitigating measures to reduce impacts to the various resources were incorporated in the design of the action alternatives in the form of lease stipulations. None of the environmental effects discussed in detail in the EA are considered significant, nor do the effects exceed those described in the Green River Resource Management Plan and FEIS.

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

The proposed action is designed to sell Parcels for lease issuance. No aspect of the Action/Alternatives 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.

None of the resources mentioned above are within the parcels to be sold. These characteristics have been deemed to be not affected by the Action/Alternatives with mitigating measures as attached to the lease parcels. The proposed action is designed to sell and issue the parcels for lease. No aspect of the Action/Alternatives would have an effect on cultural resources at the leasing phase. If the leases enter into a development stage, cultural resources would be further addressed through site specific NEPA.

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

Effects the quality of the human environment are not expected to be significant or highly controversial. Site specific NEPA will be conducted that addresses specific effects on resources at the time of development.

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 the EA. 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 environmental analysis did not reveal any cumulative effects beyond those already analyzed in the Green River RMP/FEIS. The interdisciplinary team evaluated the possible actions in context of past, present and reasonably foreseeable actions. Significant cumulative effects are not predicted.

- 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.**

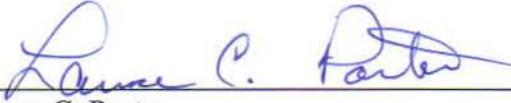
The parcels do contain properties that would be eligible or listed on the National Historic Register. No aspect of the Action/Alternatives would have an effect on districts, sites, highways, structures, or other objects listed in or eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places or may cause loss or destruction of significant scientific, cultural, or historical resources at the leasing phase. Mitigating measures to reduce direct impacts to cultural resources have been incorporated into the design of the action alternatives in the form of lease stipulations. If the leases enter into a development stage, cultural resources would be further addressed through site specific analysis and appropriate mitigation.

- 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 the BLM sensitive species list.**

Mitigating measures to reduce impacts to threatened or endangered species, wildlife and fisheries have been incorporated into the design of the action alternatives in the form of lease stipulations. Although listed species may occupy habitat within the project boundary, it has been determined that they will not be affected because surface use restrictions, including timing limitation stipulations (TLS), NSO stipulations, and controlled surface use (CSU) stipulations, as well as unavailable for leasing designations, have been applied to the lease parcels. Furthermore, post-lease actions/authorizations (e.g., APDs, road/pipeline ROWs), could be encumbered by TLS and CSU restrictions on a case-by-case basis, as required through project-specific NEPA analysis or other environmental review.

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.



Lance C. Porter
Field Manager
Rock Springs Field Office

7/29/2010

Date