

Research to Improve Access to Public Lands for Oil and Gas Operations Interagency Agreement

DE-IA26-01NT15237

Program

This project was selected as part of an Interagency Agreement through a Memorandum of Understanding between DOE and the Bureau of Land Management (BLM) Federal Lands Technical Partnership.

Project Goal

The goal is to conduct research that will improve access to public lands for oil and gas exploration and development.

Performer

*Bureau of Land Management
Denver, CO*

Project Results

Research is continuing, and a number of final reports are expected before yearend.

Benefits

Research under this program is expected to better BLM's performance with respect to oil and gas leasing, National Environmental Policy Act functions, and land management responsibilities. It also is expected to improve access to oil and gas resources, with responsible environmental protection, as part of the National Energy Plan.

Background

One of the biggest hurdles to increasing America's onshore oil and gas production is the welter of permitting roadblocks involving environmental issues on federal lands. A comprehensive research effort is needed to resolve some permitting issues in key oil and gas producing issues, especially in the Western states.

Project Summary

The scope of work consists of the following tasks:

- Develop a Model to Assess the Impacts of Coalbed Methane Development On Wildlife Habitat In the Powder River Basin, WY.
- Oil and Gas/GIS Database and Analytical Programs, Wyoming State Office Reservoir Management Group.

BLM Research Projects

NPRA Air Containment Study

Land Application and Soil Study of CBM Produced Water

Largo Canyon Erosion/Sedimentation Study

Wildlife Habitat Impact Study

Ammonia Inventory for Wyoming*

Scientific Project Design*

Determine Response of Mountain Plover Breeding Population to O&G Exploration, Development, and Operations

Site Evaluation for Disposal of CBM Produced Water

Reducing Visual Impacts (Camouflage Study Project)

Response of Greater Sage Grouse to Habitat Fragmentation by Fluid Mineral Development

Soil and Vegetation Recovery Timeframes from Historical Geophysical Exploration

Oil and Gas Access Road Drainage Design Standards in Highly Erosive Soils*

Conservation Planning for Sage Grouse and CoalBed Methane in the Powder River Basin of Wyoming and Montana

(*Denotes completed projects)

- Wyoming Mountain Plover Study.
- Site Evaluation for Disposal of Coalbed Methane Produced Water.
- Reducing Visual Impacts of Oil and Gas Development.
- Developing a Web-Based Decision Support System for the Land Use Planning Procedures.
- Soil Recovery Timeframes from Disturbance Resulting from Geophysical Exploration in Southeast Utah.
- Oil and Gas Road Drainage Design Standards in Highly Erosive Soils in the Southwest.

Research projects still in progress or completed are shown in the accompanying table.

Current Status (July 2005)

Most of the research will be completed by the end of 2005. A few projects were combined with other approved projects in order to provide a more comprehensive analysis.



Sage grouse hen at nest.



Land application of CBM produced water in the Powder River Basin, WY

Publications

Road-Related Erosion Issues on Bureau of Land Management-Administered Lands in Northwestern New Mexico.

Ammonia Emission Inventory for the State of Wyoming.

Environmental Policy and Regulatory Constraints to Natural Gas Production.

Newspaper and magazine articles in the New York Times, Denver Post, Audubon Magazine, Casper Tribune, The Spokesman-Review (Spokane, WA), Land Letter (Washington, D.C.), Sage Sense, Wyoming Wildlife Magazine.

Project Start: August 14, 2001

Project End: September 13, 2005

Anticipated DOE Contribution: \$1,000,000

Performer Contribution: \$350,000 (26% of total)

Other Government Organizations Involved

Alaska Cold Regions Research and Engineering Laboratory

Lawrence Berkeley National Laboratory

Argonne National Laboratory

Montana Bureau of Mines and Geology

New Mexico State University

University of Montana

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