

## DECEMBER 2008 BLM OIL AND GAS LEASE PARCEL SALE INFORMATION SHEET

### Book Cliffs/Spruce Canyon WSA/Cottonwood Wash Area *Parcels: UT1108-209*

**Description:** Parcel lies along Cottonwood Wash immediately adjacent to the Spruce Canyon Wilderness Study Area, the Coal Canyon Wilderness Study Area, and the Flume Canyon Wilderness Study Area, and lies within wilderness area proposed by America's Redrock Wilderness Act and land within the 1998 BLM Wilderness Inventory. Portions of the parcel are located *within* the Coal Canyon Wilderness Study Area.

#### **Resource Concerns:**

River and water resources: Parcel lies within a 100-year floodplain, which contains critical riparian habitat, springs, and public water reserves.

Species Habitat: Critical habitat and breeding grounds for yellow-billed cuckoo, Gunnison sage-grouse, and southwestern willow flycatcher; critical winter habitat for deer and elk.

Visual Resources: VRM Class II designation for high-quality visual resources.

Seasonal vulnerability: Fragile saline soils derived from Mancos Shale on steep slopes provide for potential winter watershed damage, compaction, rutting, topsoil loss, and other applicable damages.

#### **Other considerations:**

The BLM has attempted in its RMP (Resource Management Plan) to mitigate the above concerns by placing stipulations intended for protection of habitat, viewshed, and prohibition or limitation of surface occupancy. However, these stipulations are not a replacement for a more protective "no lease" option. Each stipulation provides an "exception," allowing lessee a potential loophole around the intended protections. Only a handful of the 21 pages of stipulations expressly prohibit oil & gas from these exceptions. In addition, the BLM's provided stipulations fail to address cumulative effects of oil & gas leasing and the bigger picture of regional environmental protection.

Also keep in mind that if a parcel contains NSO (No Surface Occupancy) stipulations, the parcel must be drilled at from an *adjacent* parcel. The RMP does not adequately address the implications of this need, or the logistics of facilitating this type of drilling while upholding needed environmental protections.

For more information on stipulations or explanations of the new Visual Resource Management stipulations, please refer to a downloadable copy of the BLM's RMP (Resource Management Plan) found online at:

[http://www.blm.gov/ut/st/en/fo/moab/planning/final\\_rmp\\_eis.html](http://www.blm.gov/ut/st/en/fo/moab/planning/final_rmp_eis.html)



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