

DECEMBER 2008 BLM OIL AND GAS LEASE PARCEL SALE INFORMATION SHEET

Dry Mesa/Cache Valley/Colorado River Corridor Area:
Parcels: UT1108-217, UT1108-218

Description: Parcels are located on Dry Mesa immediately adjacent to the eastern boundary of Arches National Park, and within direct view shed of both the Windows section and the Delicate Arch section of Arches National Park. Parcels lie just north of (and overlooking) the Colorado River Corridor, just east of the Salt Wash confluence. Parcels lie within wilderness area proposed by America's Redrock Wilderness Act.

Resource Concerns:

River and water resources: Riparian, wildlife, scenic, and recreational values of the Colorado River corridor [all parcels]; parcels lie within a 100-year floodplain, which contains critical riparian habitat, springs, and public water reserves [218].

Species Habitat: Critical desert bighorn lambing grounds and migration corridors [all parcels], critical habitat and nesting sites for bald eagle [217], raptor species such as burrowing owl and ferruginous hawk [all parcels], and yellow-billed cuckoo [218], southwestern willow flycatcher [218].

Visual Resources: VRM Class II designation for high-quality visual resources along the scenic highway 128 corridor [217].

Recreational Resources: Developed recreational sites exist with federal recreational facilities, established recreational use, and recreation-related view shed [all parcels]. Potential light and sound pollution would negatively affect the experience of National Park visitors [all parcels].

Seasonal vulnerability: Fragile saline soils derived from Mancos Shale provide for potential winter watershed damage, compaction, rutting, topsoil loss, and other applicable damages [218].

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



P.O. Box 298 • Moab, Utah 84532 • 435-259-5640

For more information: www.redrockforests.org/blm_dec_2008_oil_and_gas_lease.htm