

DECEMBER 2008 BLM OIL AND GAS LEASE PARCEL SALE
INFORMATION SHEET

Bartlett Wash/Tusher Canyon/Courthouse Pasture Area

Parcels: UT1108-180, UT1108-181, UT1108-182, UT1108-183, UT1108-184, UT1108-185,
UT1108-186, UT1108-196, UT1108-197

Description: This large and important scenic and recreational area of parcels is bordered by Blue Hills Road to the north, Dubinky Well Road to the west, Highway 313 (to Canyonlands) to the south, and Highway 191 to the east. Recreationally, this area contains many popular mountain biking trails including the Bartlett Wash Slickrock trail system, the Tusher Canyon Slickrock trail system, the Monitor & Merrimac Trail system, and the Mill Canyon Dinosaur Trail system. Scenically, this area comprises the Determination Towers, Echo Pinnacle, and Aeolian Tower.

Resource Concerns:

River and water resources: Parcels lie within a 100-year floodplain, which contains critical riparian habitat, springs, and public water reserves [180,181,183,185,196,197].

Species Habitat: Critical habitat and nesting sites for yellow-billed cuckoo [180,181,183,185,196,197], raptor species [180,181,182,183,185,186,196,197], and southwestern willow flycatcher [180,196,197], lambing grounds and migration corridors for desert bighorn [181,182,183,184,185,186,196,197], and sensitive habitat for relict vegetation [185,196,197].

Visual Resources: VRM Class II designation for high-quality visual resources [186], VRM Class II for visual resources along the scenic 191 corridor [196,197].

Seasonal vulnerability: Fragile saline soils derived from Mancos Shale provide for potential winter watershed damage, compaction, rutting, topsoil loss, and other applicable damages [180,181,183,196].

Recreational Resources: Developed recreational sites exist with federal recreational facilities, established recreational use, and recreation-related view shed [196].

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



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