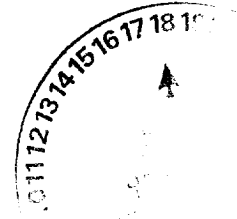




United States Department of the Interior

BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT

Roswell Field Office
2909 West Second Street
Roswell, New Mexico 88202



IN REPLY REFER TO

3162.4

NM-69369

30-015-29072

Sonat Exploration Co-Midland
Attn: Laura Clepper
110 W. Louisiana, Suite 500
Midland, TX 79701

SEP 14 2000

Exp Int

Dear Ms. Clepper:

Your Application for Permit to Drill (APD), approved July 15, 1996, along with the extension approved August 18, 1998, for the Sotol Federal #9, located 1650' FSL & 330' FEL, Section 1, T24S-R31E, Eddy County, New Mexico, Lease No. NM-69369 has expired because drilling has not commenced within one year of the approval date as stated in the General Requirements for Oil and Gas Operations on Federal Leases.

If drilling operations have commenced on the referenced well, please contact this office at (505) 627-0272 and send all necessary reports (spud, casing/cementing, etc., 1 original and 5 copies) so we may correct our records.

If the well has not been spudded, but site construction activities have occurred, please contact this office at the above telephone number for surface reclamation instructions.

If you wish to drill this well at a later date, please submit a complete application (1 original and 5 copies). Since the original APD has expired, the resubmitted APD will be subject to all the processing requirements including the 30-day posting requirement. Please note on the resubmitted APD that it was previously approved and we will review the expired file for information which will help expedite the processing.

Sincerely,

Linda A. Askwig

Linda A. Askwig
Legal Instruments Examiner

cc: BLM-I&E (CFO)
NMOCD (Artesia)
L Denniston (CFO)