

ROCK SPRINGS FIELD OFFICE

Minerals

BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT WYOMING



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Proposed Oil and Gas -Trona Management Area

Information

On April 15, 2004, an outreach meeting for the public and industry was held at the BLM Rock Springs Field Office in Rock Springs, Wyoming. A proposed solution to the conflict between oil and gas, and trona resource recovery in the Known Sodium Leasing Area (KSLA) was described. BLM will create a special management area. The preferred course of action is to administer the area exclusively for trona extraction until conventional trona mining is complete. Oil and gas leasing and development are prohibited in the management area.

Justification

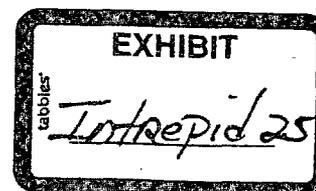
Consideration of the technical and safety aspects of co-development of the resources have been ongoing for nearly 11 years. BLM has worked with the industries, the regulatory agencies, and the other land owners during this period to develop the best resolution to issues surrounding recovery of overlapping resource values. The conclusion from the deliberations is that oil and gas development and trona mining are basically incompatible because of the exposure of the underground workforce to risks associated with nearby high-pressure gas wells. The conclusions reached by BLM are:

- Though technically feasible, oil and gas development and trona mining in close proximity would result in added risk to the employees of both industries.
- Because of the nature of underground mining, mine employees are particularly vulnerable to potential hazards created by concurrent development of the two resources.
- There is no way to entirely eliminate the risk to underground miners posed by the presence of a nearby oil and gas well.
- Minimizing potential interactions between the two industries to the greatest extent possible would place an unacceptable burden or risk upon one or both industries.
- BLM would not authorize activities that place resource recovery above health and safety.

Update

To better reflect the current state of the planning process, the Oil-Gas-Trona Management Area (OGTMA) is now referred to as the Mechanically Mineable Trona Area (MMTA). The name change is meant to communicate that no decision has yet been made on the management of the oil and gas, and trona resources within the boundary. This is a component of the NEPA planning process now taking place during the revision of the Kemmerer Resource Management Plan.

BLM received a number of letters concerning the proposed MMTA boundary. Of these, two presented substantive arguments for adjusting the boundary to safeguard trona important to the future mining. Two other letters expressed support for BLM's preferred course of action. The remaining comments expressed consideration more suited for the Kemmerer RMP revision process. BLM would like to thank the respondents for their interest in helping formulate the MMTA. The next opportunity for comment on the boundary is publication of the description of the MMTA in the Federal Register.



As a result of the comments received, the boundary was adjusted. A map illustrating the modified boundary can be downloaded from the following link:

[Revised_MMTA.DWF](#)

The maps can be viewed and plotted using a free DWF viewer available from Autodesk's website at <http://usa.autodesk.com>.

On Wednesday, July 14, 2004, a notice was published in the Federal Register requesting public input on the establishment of the Mechanically Mineable Trona Area (MMTA).

BLM encourages all interested parties to keep informed on the progress of the Kemmerer RMP revision and the potential amendment to the Green River RMP, and become involved in their development. The internet is an excellent source of information on land use planning at the Kemmerer Field Office (www.wy.blm.gov/kfo) or the Rock Springs Field Office (www.wy.blm.gov/rsfo).

Contact

For more information, please contact Jeff Clawson at 307-352-0323.

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www.wy.blm.gov/rsfo/tronamgtarea.htm

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