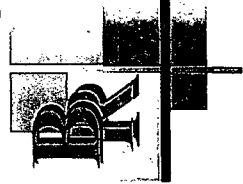
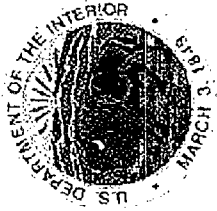


Meeting with local BLM and NMOCD representative

- **Meeting was held on July 29, 2004**
- **The following people attended**
 - ◇ Frank Chavez with NMOCD
 - ◇ David Mankiewicz with BLM
 - ◇ Jim Lavato with BLM
- **BLM and NMOCD supported the application**



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NEWS

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Office of the Secretary

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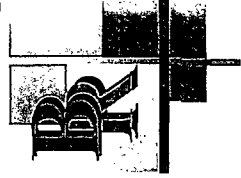
John Wright, 202-208-6416

CHEYENNE, Wyo. -- Rebecca Watson, assistant secretary of the Interior for Land and Minerals Management today announced a new policy initiative designed to enhance the Bureau of Land Management's ability to protect the environment and reduce long-term impacts on the land from oil and gas activity.

"We want to protect wildlife and landscapes while working to develop our badly needed domestic sources of energy," Watson said. "The focus of the new initiative is smart upfront planning and solid implementation of best practices to reduce environmental impacts on public and private lands and resources."

Watson noted that the new policy guidelines will require BLM project managers to consider incorporating Best Management Practices (BMPs) into all Applications for Permits to Drill (APDs) and associated rights-of-way. Additionally, the policy encourages oil and gas, geothermal, and helium operators to meet with BLM field office staff during project planning to incorporate BMPs at the earliest possible stage of the permit application process.

"It is important to note that BMPs are neither minimum nor mandatory standards and that they will be applied on a site-specific, case-by-case basis," said Watson. "BLM project managers will work with operators early in the process to explain how BMPs may fit into each development proposal and how they can be implemented with the least economic impact."



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Typical Best Management Practices include:

- Selecting appropriate color, shape, size and/or location for facilities to reduce visual contrast.
- Reducing the "footprint" of roads and well heads by choosing the smallest safe standard and best location for facilities, and by employing interim reclamation.
- Discouraging raptor predation on sensitive species by installing perch-avoidance structures or burying power lines on the lease area.
- Reducing wildlife disturbance by centralizing or automating production facilities to reduce frequency of travel to each well head.
- Using common utility corridors or burying flowlines in a roadway or an adjacent right-of-way.

Final reclamation of all disturbed areas, including access roads, to either their original contours or a contour that blends with the surrounding topography is a BMP that planners should consider in nearly all circumstances.

Watson noted that BLM planners will avoid the 'one size fits all' approach to applying BMPs. "BMPs are by their very nature dynamic and should be flexible enough to respond to new data, technological advances and market conditions." She said that BLM field offices will monitor, evaluate, and modify BMPs as necessary for future permit evaluations.

To encourage widespread adoption of BMPs and to recognize good environmental stewardship through their use, BLM is establishing an annual "Best Management Practices" awards program. Annual awards will recognize industry and BLM offices that best incorporate BMPs into their oil and gas activities. Recipients will be selected by a panel including representatives from government, industry, and environmental and wildlife conservation groups.