



THE SECRETARY OF THE INTERIOR
WASHINGTON

ORDER NO. 3354

Subject: Supporting and Improving the Federal Onshore Oil and Gas Leasing Program and Federal Solid Mineral Leasing Program

Sec. 1 Purpose. This Order is intended to ensure that quarterly lease sales are consistently held and to identify other ways the Department of the Interior (Department) may promote the exploration and development of both Federal onshore oil and gas resources and Federal solid mineral resources.

In administering 700 million acres of the Federal mineral resources, the Bureau of Land Management (BLM) has a responsibility to make both Federal oil and gas resources and Federal solid mineral resources available for the benefit of citizens of the United States. Multiple quarterly Federal onshore oil and gas lease sales have been postponed or cancelled since 2009. The Mineral Leasing Act of 1920 requires that oil and gas lease sales “be held for each State where eligible lands are available at least quarterly and more frequently if the Secretary of the Interior determines such sales are necessary,” 30 U.S.C. § 226. In issuing this Order, I am taking corrective action as a responsible public steward to strengthen American energy security and create American jobs.

Sec. 2 Authorities. This Order is issued under the authority of section 2 of Reorganization Plan No. 3 of 1950, 64 Stat. 1262, as amended. Other statutory authorities for this Order include, but are not limited to, the following:

- (a) Mineral Leasing Act of 1920, 30 U.S.C. §§ 181-287;
- (b) Mineral Leasing Act for Acquired Lands, 30 U.S.C. §§ 351-359; and
- (c) Federal Land Policy and Management Act, 43 U.S.C. §§ 1701-1785.

Sec. 3 Directive. Consistent with principles of responsible public stewardship entrusted to this office, with due consideration of the critical importance of American energy security, job creation, conservation stewardship, and the economies of affected states, the following actions shall be taken by BLM:

- (a) support and improve the implementation of the oil and gas quarterly lease sale provision found in the Mineral Leasing Act;
- (b) identify options to improve the Federal onshore oil and gas leasing program and the Federal solid mineral leasing program, as well as identify additional steps to enhance exploration and development of Federal onshore oil and gas resources and Federal solid mineral resources; and

(c) develop an effective strategy to address permitting applications efficiently and effectively as well as develop clear and actionable goals for reducing the permit processing time.

Sec. 4 **Implementation.**

(a) The Assistant Secretary – Land and Minerals Management (ASLM) and the Director, BLM, shall report to the Counselor to the Secretary for Energy Policy within 45 days of the date of this Order on:

(1) progress made to support and improve the quarterly lease sales in the Federal onshore oil and gas leasing program and a timeline for doing so, if not already completed;

(2) options identified to improve the Federal onshore oil and gas leasing program and the Federal solid mineral leasing program to enhance Federal onshore oil and gas and Federal solid mineral exploration and development as required by section 3 above; and

(3) a strategy to process the large number of currently pending permitting applications and improve the permitting process. (As part of this process, the ASLM and Director, BLM, shall consult with the U.S. Department of Agriculture and U.S. Forest Service.)

(b) In addition, the other Assistant Secretaries and heads of bureaus/offices within the Department are hereby directed to:

(1) identify any provisions in their existing policy and guidance documents that would impede BLM's plans to carry out quarterly oil and gas lease sales or its efforts to enhance exploration and development of Federal onshore oil and gas resources and Federal solid mineral resources; and

(2) provide to the Counselor to the Secretary for Energy Policy within 45 days of the date of this Order a report on progress made to eliminate the identified policy or guidance impediments and a timeline for eliminating them, if not already completed.

Sec. 5 Effect of the Order. This Order is intended to improve the internal management of the Department. This Order and any resulting reports or recommendations are not intended to, and do not, create any right or benefit, substantive or procedural, enforceable at law or equity by a party against the United States, its departments, agencies, instrumentalities or entities, its officers or employees or any other person. To the extent there is any inconsistency between the provisions of this Order and any Federal laws or regulations, the laws or regulations will control.

Sec. 6 **Expiration Date.** This Order is effective immediately. It will remain in effect until it is amended, superseded, or revoked.

/s/ Ryan K. Zinke

Secretary of the Interior

Date: 5 Jul 17