

NIM | SPORTSMEN FOR Responsible Energy Development

Bringing Balance to Oil and Gas Development in the West



New Mexico and the Rocky Mountain West are experiencing an unprecedented loss of fish and wildlife habitat due to unrestrained and irresponsible energy development. Many of the iconic landscapes and game species that make this region a paradise for sportsmen are retreating under a maze of roads, wells and pipelines — expedited by federal energy policy that prioritizes oil and gas development on our public lands. In the Rocky Mountain West, more than 26 million acres of big-game habitat, an area the size of Ohio, has already been leased for energy development by the Bureau of Land Management (BLM).

Sportsmen realize domestic energy development is important to our economy and our security; however, we believe development can be done in a responsible way that assures our fish and wildlife resources are conserved for present and future generations.

Sportsmen for Responsible Energy Development is a national grassroots campaign developed by hunters and anglers who recognize the system is broken, and it is our responsibility to fix it. We have set our sights on Congress and on reform legislation that ensures balance and respect for the traditions of the West. Please join us as we fight to protect our water, wildlife and way of life in the Rocky Mountains. With your help, Sportsmen for Responsible Energy Development can ensure future generations of sportsmen will continue to enjoy our outdoor heritage.

Visit www.Sportsmen4ResponsibleEnergy.org to speak up on behalf of our hunting and fishing heritage, and sign the Sportsmen for Responsible Energy Development Bill of Rights.

National Energy Policies Threaten New Mexico

Currently, the BLM does not require the energy industry to implement common-sense measures that allow development of oil and gas reserves while accommodating viable populations of fish and wildlife on our public lands. At the request of industry, BLM is leasing approximately 100,000 acres every three months in New Mexico alone. Expenditures by sportsmen and other related recreation activities contribute more than \$1 billion annually to New Mexico's economy. Recreational dollars, especially those generated by hunting and fishing, sustain many rural communities in the state. Irresponsible energy development could diminish the quality and magnitude of hunting and fishing and reduce recreational revenues, as well



Photo: John Gale

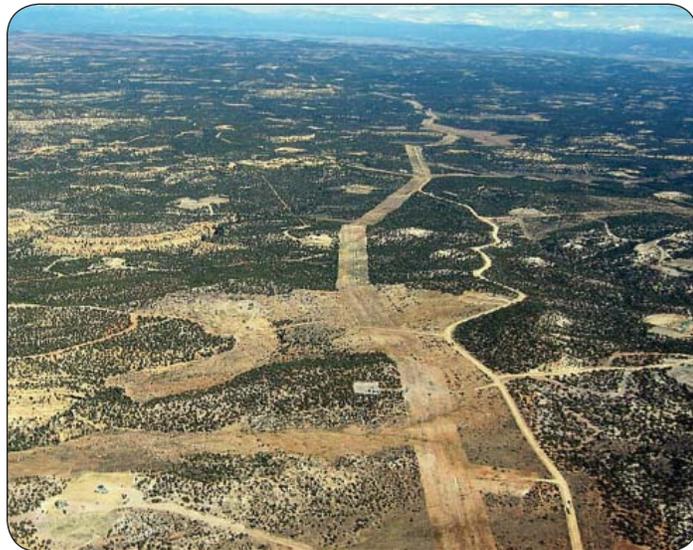


Photo: SKYTRUTH

- In New Mexico, 94 percent of hunters hunt on public land.
- Approximately 4.8 million acres of federal public lands in New Mexico (an area the size of Lake Ontario) have currently been leased for energy development.
- Between 2001 and 2006, close to 500 new oil and gas wells per year were drilled in big-game habitat, more than a 65 percent increase in wells drilled per year for the previous eight years.
- Under current regulations, energy companies have only limited responsibility to mitigate their impacts and, for the most part, are not required to reclaim the land.
- While drilling or exploring on public lands, energy companies are exempted from the Clean Water Act and are not required to control storm-water runoff that contains sediment and toxic substances. (These simple

policies are designed to protect our precious water and fish resources, and it is essential that energy companies follow the same rules as other industries in the state.)

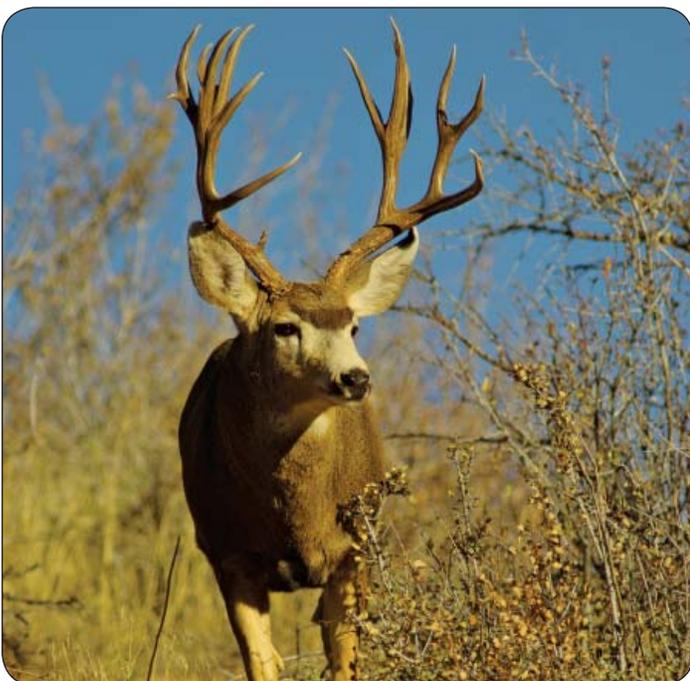
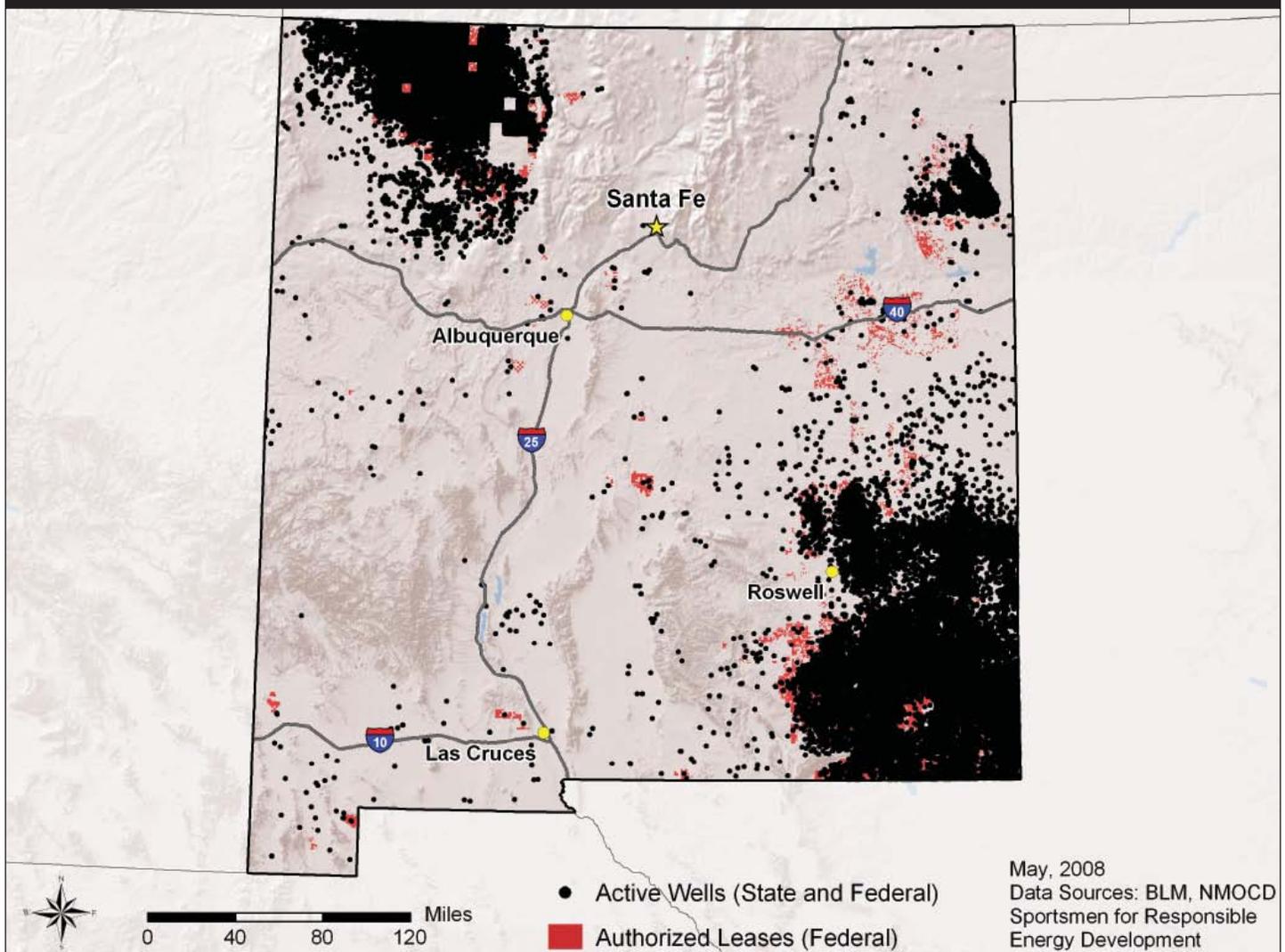
- In northwest New Mexico in 2006, the BLM Farmington office approved 948 drilling permits. Of those, 579 were approved by categorical exclusion, short-circuiting the public input process and ignoring threats to elk and mule deer wintering areas and other habitat concerns.
- Since 2000, the BLM approved almost 1,000 exceptions to allow oil and gas activity in areas closed to protect wildlife. Seasonal closures are supposed to conserve critical winter habitat or breeding periods for species like mule deer, elk, pronghorn antelope and lesser prairie chickens. Unfortunately, those protection measures are negated when the BLM grants exceptions to the closures.

When Sportsmen Speak Up, We Win

Valle Vidal

Northeastern New Mexico's Valle Vidal is home to abundant populations of elk, wildlife and Rio Grande cutthroat trout. It has long been a top sportsmen's destination. In 2002, however, industry officials asked the U.S. Forest Service to open the Valle Vidal to gas exploration. Fortunately, a broad and diverse coalition of sportsmen and local citizens organized and spoke up against the proposed exploration. In late 2006, after countless phone calls, newspaper articles and trips to Washington D.C., sportsmen celebrated when Congress passed legislation permanently banning oil and gas development in the Valle Vidal.

OIL AND GAS DEVELOPMENT IN NEW MEXICO



Caballo Mountains

The Caballo Mountains of southern New Mexico are home to a rare and recently discovered self-starting population of desert bighorn sheep. The New Mexico Department of Game and Fish (NMDGF) is currently evaluating this population to determine exactly how the sheep are utilizing this previously unoccupied habitat. In April 2008, BLM offered 60,000 acres adjacent to the Caballos Mountains in its quarterly lease sale. Some of the leases encompassed potentially suitable bighorn Caballos Mountain habitat, and energy development in this area could imperil the species' propagation. In response, the NMDGF and sportsmen filed a protest over concerns that leasing and subsequent development in the area could impact future range expansion and migration corridors of the species. The BLM subsequently withdrew all of the parcels in the area until further environmental review could be completed.

Important Habitat Still at Risk in New Mexico

Otero Mesa

In a remote area of southern New Mexico, south of the Sacramento Mountains and east of the Guadalupe Mountains, is a majestic desert grassland known as Otero Mesa. This 2,400-square-mile area includes 1.2 million acres of public lands. Otero Mesa is home to New Mexico's largest population of native pronghorn antelope and is revered for its trophy pronghorn. Small populations of mule deer, oryx and Barbary sheep are scattered throughout the area. It hosts more than 1,000 species of wildlife, including the rare Aplomado falcon. Hidden below Otero Mesa's grassland is a large reserve of groundwater known as the Salt Basin aquifer.

Despite its natural beauty and unique hunting opportunities, Otero Mesa is in danger of becoming an industrial oil and gas field. The BLM recently green-lighted energy leasing throughout the region. The energy industry nominated 250,000 acres for leases in Otero and Sierra counties. Over the last 40 years, oil and gas development in nearby Eddy County has significantly fragmented habitat and affected wildlife. In some areas of Eddy County, oil and gas wells are less than 10 acres apart.

San Juan Basin

New Mexico's northwest corner offers some of the best trophy mule deer hunting anywhere in the West. In addition, the San Juan River below Navajo Dam brings anglers from around the world to chase huge rainbow trout in its cold, clear waters. Unfortunately, extensive oil and gas development, including projects sited along the canyon rim and wells only a few hundred yards from the river, is becoming commonplace.

Other prized but less visible rivers, such as the Animas and Los Pinos, are jeopardized by reckless development as well because the San Juan Basin is being subjected to unprecedented lease sales and drilling. The BLM's Farmington field office granted exclusions to almost 600 new wells on existing leases in 2006. By granting categorical exclusions for permits to drill, the Farmington BLM field office failed to consider the needs of wildlife, neglected to seek input from the Fish and Game agency and, most importantly, disregarded sportsmen's concerns regarding mule deer winter range and migration corridors.



Be Part of the Solution

Sportsmen across the Rocky Mountains are banding together to ensure that oil and gas development is done right on our public lands. We know it is possible to develop these resources while conserving vital fish and game habitat. We recognize that our country needs energy, but we believe that sacrificing our wildlife, water and wild country to get it is unfair. The time has come for a new national energy policy, one that develops domestic energy responsibly, considers all the uses of our lands and keeps our Western hunting and fishing heritage alive.

Please join Sportsmen for Responsible Energy Development and support the campaign to bring balance to oil and gas development in the West.

Visit us at

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