

**United States Department of the Interior
Bureau of Land Management
Bakersfield Field Office**

Decision Record

**Innex California, Inc.
Four Applications for Permit to Drill in Kettleman Middle Dome
DOI-BLM-CA-C060-2022-0071-EA**

Introduction

On 03/31/2022, Innex California Inc. (Innex) submitted four (4) Applications for Permits to Drill (APD) to drill Wells: KMDU 33-30, 42-30, 45-30, and 53-30 on federal Mineral leases CAS0019275A & CAS0019275C in Section 30, T23S, R19E, Mount Diablo Base Meridian (MDBM) in Kings County, CA. The proposed project would occur on private lands containing Bureau of Land Management (BLM) administered mineral estate within the Kettleman Middle Dome Oilfield. Project implementation would include the clearing and grading of two existing well pads and existing access roads, the installation of associated power poles and pipelines, and the drilling of four new wells.

The purpose of the proposed action is to respond to the APDs submitted by Innex to drill four new oil wells and stage associated facilities required to increase production on federal mineral leases CAS0019275A & CAS0019275C.

The need for the action is established by BLM's responsibility under the Mineral Leasing Act of 1920 as amended, the Mining and Minerals Policy Act of 1970, the Federal Land Policy and Management Act of 1976, the National Materials and Minerals Policy, Research and Development Act of 1980 and the Federal Onshore Oil and Gas Leasing Reform Act of 1987 to allow reasonable access to develop a federal oil and gas lease.

Decision

I have reviewed the recommendations on the proposed action addressed in this environmental assessment. I find this action to be in conformance with applicable land use plans, to effectively serve the public, and to not cause unnecessary or undue degradation. It is therefore my decision to approve the proposed action (the clearing and grading of two existing well pads and existing access roads, the installation of associated power poles and pipelines, and the drilling of four new wells on federal mineral leases (CAS0019275A & CAS0019275C) in the Kettleman Middle Dome Oilfield), which is subject to the Design Features/Conditions of Approval identified for the proposed action in the Environmental Assessment.

Alternatives Considered but not Selected

A No Action Alternative that would deny the application was considered, but not selected.

Decision Rationale

The decision to approve the Applications for Permit to Drill on BLM administered subsurface minerals in the Kettleman Middle Dome Oilfield best meets the purpose and need of BLM by Innex California Inc. to expand production on federal mineral leases CAS0019275A & CAS0019275C, pursuant to the

Federal Land Policy and Management Act of 1976, the Mineral Leasing Act of 1920, as amended, and 43 CFR 3160.

Title 43 CFR 1610.5 requires resource management authorizations and actions conform to the approved resource management plan. The proposed action has been reviewed for conformance with the Bakersfield Resource Management Plan approved on December 22, 2014. The BLM has determined the proposed action conforms with the land use plan as the proposed action is specifically provided for in the land use plan objective MM-O-1 “Facilitate reasonable, economical, and environmentally sound exploration and development of leasable minerals while minimizing impacts to other resources” (BLM, 2014; pg 75). The proposed action is located on leases CAS0019275A & CAS0019275C, which was issued prior to the 2014 Bakersfield RMP. The 2014 Bakersfield RMP recognizes all valid existing rights (BLM, 2014; pg 1).

Consultation and Coordination

Public Involvement

The BLM posted notification that it was considering these NOSs/APD's on the E-Planning public website on April 18th, 2022. This notice initiated the 30-day scoping period. The BLM also posted copies of the Application for Permit to Drill (APD) in the front lobby of the Bakersfield Field Office for that 30-day period. Comments from the Center of Biological Diversity and Earth Justice were received. Comments have been addressed in this EA.

Biological Consultation

Formal consultation with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service was initiated in 2016. The Fish and Wildlife Service issued their “No jeopardy” biological opinion on December 22, 2017 (Programmatic Biological Opinion on Oil and Gas Activities on Bureau of Land Management Lands in the San Joaquin Valley, 08ESMF00-2016-F-0683). The 2017 Oil and Gas Programmatic Biological Opinion provides take coverage for authorization of individual projects occurring on surface and subsurface lands administered by the BLM in the San Joaquin Valley that disturb less than 10 acres of habitat or that encompass linear actions less than 10 miles long. This project occurs in Kings County and disturbs 0.00 acres of habitat, thus satisfying both requirements for coverage under the 2017 Oil and Gas Programmatic Biological Opinion.

Plan Consistency

Based on information in the EA, the project record, and recommendations from BLM specialists, I conclude that this decision is consistent with the Bakersfield RMP; the Endangered Species Act; the National Historic Preservation Act; the Paleontological Resources Preservation Act; other cultural resource management laws and regulations; Executive Order 12898 regarding Environmental Justice; and Executive Order 13212 regarding potential adverse impacts to energy development, production, supply and/or distribution.

Administrative Remedies

Administrative remedies may be available to those who believe they will be adversely affected by this decision. Appeals may be made to the Office of Hearings and Appeals, Office of the Secretary, U.S. Department of Interior, Board of Land Appeals (Board) in strict compliance with the regulations in 43 CFR Part 4. Notices of appeal must be filed in this office within 30 days after publication of this decision. If a notice of appeal does not include a statement of reasons, such statement must be filed with this office

and the Board within 30 days after the notice of appeal is filed. The notice of appeal and any statement of reasons, written arguments, or briefs must also be served upon the Regional Solicitor:

U.S. Department of the Interior
Office of the Solicitor, Pacific Southwest Region
2800 Cottage Way, Room E-1712
Sacramento, CA 95825-1890

The effective date of this decision and the date initiating the appeal period will be the date of approval by the authorized officer.

Assistant Field Manager- Minerals

Date