

STATE OF ALASKA

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SALE ANNOUNCEMENT

NORTH SLOPE AREAWIDE 2006 COMPETITIVE OIL AND GAS LEASE SALE

The Department of Natural Resources (DNR), Division of Oil and Gas (DO&G), gives notice under AS 38.05.945(a)(4) that it will offer lands for competitive oil and gas leasing in North Slope Areawide 2006 (NS 2006). NS 2006 will be held in Anchorage beginning at 8:30 a.m., on March 1, 2006, in the Wilda Marston Theater, Loussac Public Library, 3600 Denali Street. This sale was originally named North Slope Areawide 2005 and was scheduled for October 2005.

The North Slope Areawide sale area encompasses a gross area of approximately 5.1 million acres that are divided into 1,225 tracts ranging in size from 640 to 5,760 acres. These tracts are located entirely within the North Slope Borough between the Canning River and Arctic National Wildlife Refuge (ANWR) on the East and the Colville River and National Petroleum Reserve - Alaska (NPRA) on the West. The southern boundary of the sale area is the Umiat baseline. The northern fringe of the sale area is set back from the Beaufort Sea to exclude any tide or submerged lands. Activities resulting from this sale may affect the native villages of Barrow, Nuiqsut, and Kaktovik, and the community of Deadhorse.

DO&G has prepared a regional tract map that displays the location of all tracts within the sale area. Only State-owned lands and lands jointly-owned by the State of Alaska and Arctic Slope Regional Corporation (ASRC) that are available on January 5, 2006 may be leased in NS 2006 (see Tract Deletions). Acreage becoming available after that date will be offered in a future North Slope Areawide sale.

The exact amount of the net leaseable acreage in each tract will not be determined until after the bids are received. At that time DO&G will complete a comprehensive evaluation of the lands within the tracts that received bids to determine which lands are available for lease. Acreage not owned by the State, already subject to an oil and gas lease, or clouded by title claims will be excluded from the leased area.

State/ASRC Acreage

The State and ASRC executed a Settlement Agreement in 1991. In that agreement, the State and ASRC agreed to joint ownership for the purposes of oil and gas leasing within the settlement area. The boundary of the State/ASRC Settlement Agreement is shown on the regional tract map for NS 2006. The following jointly-owned acreage will be included in North Slope Areawide 2006:

Tracts 919, 922 thru 927, 936, 1043, 1048, 1051, 1054, 1145 thru 1150, 1152 and 1153 appear to have acreage that is not currently under lease.

Any other tracts containing jointly-owned acreage determined to be available as of January 5, 2006.

Tract Deletions

DO&G has deleted all or a portion of Tract 925, 936, 1145 and 1146, from NS 2006. All or a portion of the unleased acreage within these tracts is not fully conveyed under the State/ASRC Settlement Agreement. DO&G is actively working to resolve the title issues in order to offer this acreage in a future lease sale.

Note: The State reserves the right to delete any additional acreage or tract(s) from the sale at any time before the issuance of the lease.

Best Interest Finding and ACMP Consistency Determination

NS 2005 is an exempt sale held under Alaska Statute(s) 38.05.180(d)(1), and 38.05.035(e)(6)(F). Under these provisions the commissioner may annually offer oil and gas acreage that has been subject to a best interest finding issued within the previous 10 years, unless the commissioner determines that substantial new information has become available that justifies a supplement to the finding.

In support of North Slope Areawide Lease Sale 1998 (a.k.a. Lease Sale 87), the Director of DO&G issued a written final finding and decision under AS 38.05.035(e) and (g) on March 17, 1998. This finding sets forth the facts, policies, and applicable laws upon which he has based his determination that oil and gas lease sales on the North Slope of Alaska will best serve the interests of the State. In addition, a final coastal zone consistency determination was also made that oil and gas lease sales are consistent with the North Slope Borough and Alaska Coastal Management Programs (ACMP). DO&G has twice issued a Decision to Supplement that best interest finding, on August 15, 2000 and July 24, 2002.

On February 17, 2005, DO&G issued a Call for New Information regarding the proposal to re-offer available North Slope acreage in the year 2005. On August 16, 2005 DO&G issued a Call for New Information regarding the proposed North Slope Areawide 2006. The 1998 final finding and the final coastal zone management consistency determination were available for public review. Based upon the information received as a result of the February 17, 2005 and August 16, 2005 Calls for New Information DO&G is issuing a ***Decision of No Substantial New Information*** concurrently with this sale announcement.

Mitigation Measures

AS 38.05.035(e) and the departmental delegation of authority give the Director, DO&G, the authority to impose conditions or limitations, in addition to those imposed by law, to ensure that the disposal best serves the interests of the State. To meet this requirement, the director has adopted environmental and social mitigation measures that will be enforced throughout the duration of the lease. These mitigation measures are necessary to protect biological, cultural and archeological resources, and to mitigate social impacts of lease related activities. Enforcement will be imposed through approval of plans of operation, exploration and development and other permits. DO&G will review this plan for consistency with the ACMP the under 6 AAC 50. The lessee must obtain all the necessary permits and approvals otherwise required by law or regulation for the proposed activity. Additional restrictions may be imposed through the permitting process and the ACMP review process.

In addition, some proposed lease activities may be subject to local land use regulations.

Bidding Method

On all State and State/ASRC tracts – cash bonus bidding with a minimum bid of ten dollars (\$10) per acre. ***Bids for less than the minimum bid will be rejected.***

Note: Under 11 AAC 82.445, a bid will not be considered unless supported by the bid deposit and the information required in the “Instructions to Bidders”, unless any omission is determined by the commissioner or his designee to be immaterial or due to excusable inadvertence, and the omission is corrected within one week following receipt of a notice of deficiency.

Primary Term of Lease

Tracts 919, 922-927, 1043, 1048, 1051, 1054, 1146-1150, 1152 and 1153 – seven (7) years.

All tracts south of NS royalty line – seven (7) years.

All other tracts north of NS royalty line – five (5) years.

Royalty Rates

All tracts south of NS royalty line – a fixed royalty rate of twelve and one-half percent (12.5%).

All tracts north of NS royalty line – a fixed royalty rate of sixteen and two-thirds percent (16.66667%).

Lease Forms

Leases on State acreage will be executed on Form DOG 200204 (rev. 10/2003).

Leases on State/ASRC acreage will be executed on Forms DOG 200204AS (rev. 10/2003).

Rental

Annual rental will be \$1.00 per acre for the first year, \$1.50 per acre for the second year, \$2.00 per acre for the third year, \$2.50 per acre for the fourth year, and \$3.00 per acre for the fifth and following years.

Bonding

Before beginning lease operations, an oil and gas lease bond of a minimum of \$10,000 per operation is required under 11 AAC 83.160. In the alternative, a statewide oil and gas lease bond of a minimum of \$500,000 for operations conducted on more than one lease may be filed. These bonding provisions do not affect the commissioner's authority to require additional unusual-risk bonds as may be necessary. In addition, the Alaska Oil and Gas Conservation Commission (AOGCC) requires a bond of at least \$100,000 for a single well or a bond of at least \$200,000 to cover wells statewide before drilling operations will be permitted by AOGCC (20 AAC 25.025). Additional bonding may be required under 11 AAC 82.465, 11 AAC 82.600, 11 AAC 83.390 and 11 AAC 96.060.

Sale Information

Copies of the final finding and supplements are available at the following locations: Nuiqsut Public Library, North Slope Borough Library Media Center, North Slope Borough Offices, Tuzzy Consortium Library in Barrow, City of Barrow Municipal Offices, Kaveolook School Library in Kaktovik and Loussac Public Library in Anchorage. The Regional Tract Map will also be available at these locations. Complete details regarding NS 2006, including the following documents, are on the DO&G's Webpage at:

<http://www.dog.dnr.state.ak.us>:

- Sale Announcement with Mitigation Measures
- Instructions to Bidders with Attachment A (Estimated acreage figures) and Bid form
- Final Finding and Supplement (August 2000 and July 2002)
- Decision of No New Information
- Tract map (January 2006)

Paper copies of these documents are available by contacting Anna Motschenbacher by phone (907) 269-8814; email at am@dnr.state.ak.us. or mail, DO&G 550 West 7th Avenue, Suite 800, Anchorage, AK 99501

Appeal Procedures

A person affected by this decision who provided timely written comment or public hearing testimony on this decision may request reconsideration, in accordance with 11 AAC 02. Any reconsideration request must be received by February 1, 2006 and may be mailed or delivered to Michael Menge, Commissioner, Department of Natural Resources, 550 W. 7th Avenue, Suite 1400, Anchorage, Alaska 99501; faxed to 1-907-269-8918, or sent by electronic mail to dnr_appeals@dnr.state.ak.us. If reconsideration is not requested by that date or if the commissioner does not order reconsideration on his own motion, this decision goes into effect as a final order and decision on February 13, 2006. Failure of the commissioner to act on a request for reconsideration within 30 days after issuance of this decision is a denial of reconsideration and is a final administrative order and decision for purposes of an appeal to Superior Court. The decision may then be appealed to Superior Court within a further 30 days in accordance with the rules of the court, and to the extent permitted by applicable law. An eligible person must first request reconsideration of this decision in accordance with 11 AAC 02 before appealing this decision to Superior Court. A copy of 11 AAC 02 may be obtained from any regional information office of the Department of Natural Resources.

The State of Alaska, DNR, DO&G complies with Title II of the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990. This publication will be made available in alternative communication formats upon request. Please contact Anna Motschenbacher, at (907) 269-8814, to make any necessary arrangements.



William Van Dyke,
Acting Director