

# DRAFT ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT STATEMENT

## Oil and Gas Leasing Sioux Ranger District, Custer National Forest Harding County, South Dakota

<b>Lead Agency:</b>	<b>Joint Lead Agency:</b>	<b>For Further Information Contact:</b> Laurie Walters-Clark, Project Lead
USDA Forest Service	USDI Bureau of Land Management	Sioux Ranger District
Custer National Forest	Montana/Dakotas State Office	605-707-4432
<b>Forest Service Responsible Official:</b>	Bureau of Land Management Responsible Official:	<b>Submit Comments to:</b>
Nancy T. Curriden,	Martin C. Ott, State Director	Tetra Tech FW, Inc.
Forest Supervisor	Bureau of Land Management	Atten: Wendy Hill
Custer National Forest	Montana State Office	3947 Lennane Dr. Suite 200 Sacramento, CA 95834
1310 Main Street Billings, MT 59105	5001 Southgate Drive	
	Billings, MT 59107	

### ABSTRACT

This Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) documents the analysis of the potential effects of implementing each of three alternative leasing scenarios for management of the federal oil and gas estate on lands administered by the Custer National Forest, Sioux Ranger District, Harding County, South Dakota. The EIS documents the existing condition of environmental resources in and around areas considered for lease, and potential impacts to those resources as a result of implementing the alternatives. The alternatives considered in detail are: (1) No Action - No New Leases; (2) Lease with Forest Plan Stipulations; and (3) Lease with Additional Stipulations to Protect Forest Resources.

The Sioux Oil and Gas Leasing Draft Environmental Impact Statement is available for public comment and review 60 days from the date of publication of the notice of availability in the Federal Register. A copy can also be found on the Internet at <http://www.fs.fed.us/r1/custer/>.

Your written comments must be postmarked 60 days from the date of publication of the notice of availability in the Federal Register. The notice of availability is expected to be published in the Federal Register May 9, 2003. Please submit and address your written comments to the Environmental Consultant: Tetra Tech FW, Attention: Wendy Hill, 3947 Lennane Drive, Suite 200, Sacramento, CA 95834-1973 by July 8, 2003.

### NOTE TO REVIEWER

Reviewers should provide Foster Wheeler or the Forest Service with their comments during the review period of the draft environmental impact statement. This will enable the Forest Service to analyze and respond to the comments at one time and to use the information acquired in preparation of the final environmental impact statement, thus avoiding undue delay in the decision making process. Reviewers have an obligation to structure their participation in the National Environmental Policy Act process so that it is meaningful and alerts the agency to reviewers' position and contentions. Vermont Yankee Power Corp. v. NRDC, 435 U.S. 519, 533 (1978). Environmental objections that could have been raised at the draft stage may be waived if not raised until after completion of the final environmental impact statement. City of Angoon v. Hodel (9th Circuit, 1986) and Wisconsin Heritages, Inc. v. Harris, 490 F. Supp. 1334, 1338 (E.D. Wis. 1980). Comments on the draft environmental impact statement should be specific and should address the adequacy of the statement and the merits of the alternatives discussed (40 CFR 1503.3).