

NEWS RELEASE

USDA Forest Service

Santa Fe National Forest

For Immediate Release



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SANTA FE NATIONAL FOREST OIL-GAS DECISION SIGNED

[Decision provides for increased protection for resources]

(SANTA FE, NM)--Santa Fe National Forest Supervisor, Daniel Jiron signed a Record of Decision (ROD) on August 15, 2008, amending the Santa Fe National Forest Plan to protect or minimize resource impacts to National Forest System lands and surface resources on portions of the Cuba and Coyote Ranger Districts (2% of the Forest). The Environmental Impact Statement includes specific oil and gas lease stipulations of No Surface Occupancy, Controlled Surface Use, and Timing Limitations. Stipulations or terms and conditions included in the leasing amendment:

- **Standard** lease terms and conditions
- **No Surface Occupancy** of steep slopes and roadless areas, and two National Register of Historic Places sites
- **Controlled Surface Use** in riparian areas and wetlands, and heritage and high visual quality areas
- **Timing Limitations** for Northern goshawk, peregrine falcon, deer and elk winter range, and deer fawning and elk calving areas

The Final Environmental Impact Statement included both Oil-Gas Leasing and Roads Management. The Oil-Gas Leasing part applies to approximately 197,550 acres on the Cuba and Coyote Ranger Districts of the Santa Fe National Forest. The area is within the easternmost part of the 5.8 million acre San Juan Basin oil-gas resource and outside the most productive oil-gas bearing formations. The decision on the Roads Management part of the project is pending.

The Amendment does not affect valid oil-gas leases unless a lease expires, or is relinquished or terminated. The Amendment does not authorize any ground disturbing oil-gas activities but does allow the USDI Bureau of Land Management to address the current Expressions of Interest in leasing NFS lands for oil-gas resources. Proposals to conduct oil-gas exploration and/or development will require separate site-specific NEPA analysis and disclosure. The Amendment was determined to be non-significant based on the EIS environmental analysis, public involvement, and current Forest Plan management direction.

Copies of the Record of Decision and Final Environmental Impact Statement are available upon request from the Santa Fe National Forest Supervisor's Office, 1474 Rodeo Road, P.O. Box 1689, Santa Fe, NM 87504-1689. These documents are also available on the Forest website at:

<http://www.fs.fed.us/r3/sfe/>

