

# News Release



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## Stiles Over Substance

*IPAMS Analysis: DOI Study Based on Nine Days of Field Work Ignores Seven-Year Planning Process*

(DENVER)- The Independent Petroleum Association of Mountain States (IPAMS) today released a detailed analysis of the leases from the December 2008 Utah sale recommended for removal and deferral by the Department of Interior (DOI). The analysis shows DOI circumvented the public process, disregarded scientific evidence, and second-guessed the agency's own professional land managers. DOI ignored sound justifications for leasing, including aggressive environmental protections included in the Resource Management Plans (RMP) that were designed with input from Utah stakeholders.

After Interior Secretary Ken Salazar withdrew seventy-seven leases from the December 2008 Utah lease sale, a hand-picked team of DOI and USDA Forest Service officials led by Forest Supervisor Mark Stiles conducted a review of the leases and recommended eight leases for removal and fifty-two for deferral. Spencer Kimball, IPAMS research analyst, conducted a detailed analysis of each parcel in an attempt to better understand the basis and rationale for Salazar's decision. The IPAMS analysis found no evidence to support the DOI decision.

The RMPs were the result of seven years of environmental analysis by the Bureau of Land Management (BLM), with detailed input from the State of Utah, Tribes, federal and state agencies, local governments, and citizen groups. The RMPs appropriately represent a balance of multiple uses from all segments of society and government, and the process resulted in critical environmental protections for air, water, wildlife, cultural, and other resources.

"IPAMS believes the Stiles Report and DOI's subsequent decision to support its recommendations demonstrate an unfortunate lack of regard for the seven-year public planning process that produced the RMPs," said Kathleen Sgamma, IPAMS Director of Government Affairs.

"It's a sad day when politics trumps the expertise of professional land managers and the hard work of citizens to develop economic and resource development plans that the community has embraced. If you're not listening to your land managers and the public, who are you listening to?"

IPAMS' analysis contains details for each parcel; the text from the Stiles Report; location details; wilderness status; lease stipulations from the RMP; and a summary of why the parcel is appropriate for leasing.

(more)

"Our analysis shows that all parcels are near existing wells and/or existing leases, and all but one are miles away from national parks. IPAMS believes that all seventy-seven leases were legitimately sold at the December 2008 sale, and should be reinstated to the winning bidders," said Sgamma.

The Stiles Report also failed to recognize the small and temporary impact of natural gas development, and the ability of operators to develop American energy resources while simultaneously protecting the environment.

"Utah is similar to other natural gas producing states in the Intermountain West – it produces an enormous amount of clean energy with a very small surface impact. Utah is the 8<sup>th</sup> largest natural gas producing state, but only 59,000 acres of BLM's 22.9 million acres are occupied with natural gas and oil activity, or 0.17% of federal lands," Sgamma concluded.

[Click here to view IPAMS Analysis of Removed and Deferred Leases from the December 2008 Utah Lease Sale.](#)

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#### **About IPAMS**

*The Independent Petroleum Association of Mountain States (IPAMS), founded in 1974, is a non-profit trade association representing more than 400 independent natural gas and oil producers, service and supply companies, banking and financial institutions and industry consultants committed to environmentally responsible oil and natural gas development in the Intermountain West. More information on IPAMS and its members is available at [www.ipams.org](http://www.ipams.org).*