



### By the Numbers

#### Permian Basin, Southeastern New Mexico

- Number of acres in the Basin: **10 million** (about the size of Maryland)
- Number of acres of public lands: **3 million**
- Number of barrels of oil produced in the basin annually: **62 million**
- Number of drivers that oil could fuel annually: **3.1 million**
- Number of cubic feet of natural gas produced in the Basin annually: **570 million**
- Number of homes that could be heated with natural gas production: **13 million**

**S**outheast New Mexico's sweeping mid-grass prairies host special wildlife populations, including species not seen anywhere else in the West. Each spring, lesser prairie chickens strut on booming grounds to attract mates. Nearby, rolling sand dunes hold vast stands of shinnery oak that provide habitat for the sand dune lizard. Public lands in the Basin also provide essential habitat for mule deer, pronghorn antelope, quail, and a host of other wildlife. Hunters come each fall to enjoy the area's abundant game. Statewide, more than 130,000 hunters spend over \$150 million each year on their sport.

The Permian Basin also hosts a unique geology—and a significant petroleum industry. Oil and gas are produced from 18 different formations in New Mexico alone, and major development has been ongoing since the 1920s. Producers range from small independents to major oil companies.

Since the 1920s, roughly 55,000 oil and gas wells have been drilled in southeast New Mexico. Today there are about 29,000 active oil and gas wells, of which about 15,000 are Federal. About 450 new wells are drilled and 150 wells plugged each year.

The BLM's Pecos District works with over 170 different oil companies, while typical BLM offices deal with 10 to 15 companies.

The BLM is monitoring the reclamation and restoration of 1,700 abandoned wells. More than 2,000 inactive or abandoned wells must also be reclaimed.

More than 6,000 miles of road were constructed for these wells, resulting in an expansion of invasive plant species (e.g., African rue and Russian knapweed); a decline in habitat for wildlife; degraded water quality; and extensive habitat fragmentation.

The goal of protecting the Basin's rich natural heritage is being accomplished

*Meeting both our energy and land health goals requires integrated, landscape-scale habitat protections and resource management. Our initiative combines investments in habitat protection with policy improvements that will protect 800 species, including the sage-grouse.*

Secretary Dirk Kempthorne

## What is the Healthy Lands Initiative?

Secretary of the Interior Dirk Kempthorne launched the Healthy Lands Initiative (HLI) in 2007 to accelerate land restoration, increase productivity, and improve the health of public lands in the Western United States. The goal of the Initiative is to preserve the diversity and productivity of public and private lands across the landscape. The Initiative will enable and encourage local BLM managers to set priorities across a broader scale and mitigate impacts to an array of resources in ways not previously available to them.

The President's 2009 budget includes an increase of \$10 million for HLI over the level enacted in Fiscal Year 2008. The effort has focused on landscape-level restoration effort on southwest Wyoming; northwest and southeast portions of New Mexico; south-central Idaho; southwest Colorado; Utah; and a three-corner area of Idaho, Oregon, and Nevada. In FY 2009, areas in northwest Colorado and parts of California would be added.



through BLM partnerships with the energy industry, ranchers, conservationists, recreational users, and local governments. Land is being restored and reclaimed on a landscape basis, which is helping maintain hunting opportunities and energy access to public lands. These efforts should also prevent Federal listing of sensitive species under the Endangered Species Act, such as the lesser prairie chicken and sand dune lizard, and enhance other wildlife populations.

## Goals

- Remove exotic plant species and reverse the expansion of invasive shrubs.
- Restore native habitat for fish, wildlife, and special-status species.
- Improve water quality and watershed health.
- Reduce habitat fragmentation from historic oil and gas development and ensure responsible energy development
- Reduce impacts from large-scale wildfire.

## Continuing the Momentum

In 2007, the BLM and its partners restored and reclaimed almost 120,000 acres of land in southeastern New Mexico. During each of the next two years, we plan to restore and reclaim up to 135,000 acres of public land.

## Getting Involved

There are many ways to get involved through **Restore New Mexico**, a statewide partnership to restore woodlands, grasslands, and riparian areas of New

Mexico to a healthy and productive condition. Landowners and other agency employees can contact the BLM's Pecos District Office or its partners for further information. Conservation groups are working with BLM on specific habitat improvement projects; contact the BLM or your group to see how you can participate or otherwise support their work.



## Partners

- U.S. Geological Survey
- USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service
- New Mexico Association of Conservation Districts
- Oil and gas companies
- New Mexico State Land Office
- New Mexico Department of Game and Fish
- Electric utility cooperatives
- Conservation groups, including Quail Unlimited
- National Fish and Wildlife Foundation
- Private landowners, including those holding BLM grazing permits

For additional information contact:  
 Bureau of Land Management  
 New Mexico State Office  
 Hanson Stuart  
[Hanson\\_Stuart@nm.blm.gov](mailto:Hanson_Stuart@nm.blm.gov)  
 505-438-7510

Pecos District Office  
 2909 W. Second Street  
 Roswell, NM 88201  
 575-627-0272

## Permian Basin New Mexico

