

Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs)

In addition to the restrictions on leasing authority contained in the Geothermal Steam Act, the Mineral Leasing Act, RMPs, and other established law or regulation, as described in Chapter 1, the following SOPs set forth in the CRMP (BLM, 2001) define the approach to managing leasable mineral exploration and development in the CCDO management area. The SOPs common to all resources in the CCDO management area are also listed.

Standard Operating Procedures for Fluid Mineral Resource Management Actions

1. Oil, gas, and geothermal exploration and production upon BLM land are conducted through leases with the Bureau and are subject to terms and stipulations to comply with all applicable federal and state laws pertaining to various considerations for sanitation, water quality, wildlife, safety, and reclamation. Stipulations may be site specific and are derived from the environmental analysis process.
2. Geophysical exploration permits for oil, gas or geothermal resources may be obtained prior to leasing of the lands. Mitigation of any resource conflicts identified in the review process will be stipulated in the permit.
3. Wilderness Study Areas are closed to mineral leasing.

Standard Operation Procedures Common to All Resource Management Actions

1. An environmental review (i.e., environmental assessment) will be prepared before projects are developed except when they are covered by categorical exclusion or previous analysis deemed adequately through a Determination of NEPA Adequacy (DNA) so that implementation, modification, or abandonment of the project may be considered depending on identified impacts.
2. Permanent roads will not be constructed into temporary project sites. Existing access roads, off road travel, or temporary roads which will be rehabilitated after construction activity will be used.
3. Application of herbicides on proposed treatment areas will be in accordance with procedures established in Bureau Manual 9011 and 9015 and the Final Environmental Impact Statement and Record of Decision, Vegetation Treatment on BLM Lands in Thirteen Western States (1991). Herbicide use on BLM lands in California is covered by California Vegetation Management Final Environmental Impact Statement (1988).
4. All areas of new surface disturbance will be rehabilitated, where such action is necessary and practical, to replace ground cover and prevent erosion.
5. Construction of all fences (except in cases of public safety) will conform to the objectives and specifications in Bureau Manual 1737 to minimize impacts to wildlife, wild horses, recreation, and visual resources.
6. The clearing of vegetation from all project sites will be restricted to the minimum amount necessary.

7. All construction, maintenance, or rehabilitation activities on public lands will use every reasonable means to minimize erosion and soil damage, including but not limited to, construction of water bars, cross ditches, or other structures as required by the authorized officer.
8. Authorized public land users will remove or dispose of all waste in accordance with a plan approved by the authorized officer and in a manner consistent with federal, state and local laws and regulations.
9. Activities in key fish and wildlife areas will, when necessary, be restricted during periods of breeding, nesting, spawning, lambing, or calving activity, and during major migrations of fish and wildlife.
10. All operations by authorized public land users will be conducted in such a manner as will avoid: (a) permanent blockage of any drainage system; (b) changing the character, or causing the pollution or siltation, of rivers, streams, reservoirs, ponds, water holes, or springs; and (c) damaging fish and wildlife resources and habitats.
11. Authorized public land users will take such measures as are necessary to assure unrestricted passage and movement of fish and wildlife. No artificial structure or stream channel alteration that would cause a blockage to the movement of fish will be allowed.
12. Authorized public land users will comply with construction practices and mitigating measures established by 33 CFR 323.4, which sets forth the parameters of the “nationwide permit” required by section 404 of the Clean Water Act. If the proposed action exceeds the parameters of the nationwide permit, the holder will obtain an individual permit from the appropriate office of the Army Corps of Engineers and provide the authorized officer with a copy of the same. Failure to comply with this requirement will be cause for suspension or termination of their authorization.
13. Authorized public land users will rebuild or repair roads, fences, and established trails that may be destroyed or damaged by construction, operation, or maintenance of the authorized project and build or maintain suitable crossings for existing roads and significant trails that intersect the project.
14. Benefit/cost analysis will be performed on improvements required to implement new AMPs and other appropriate activity plans subsequent to the EIS. The benefit/cost analysis will be performed in compliance with Bureau policy.
15. During the pre-construction and construction periods, the Bureau will make modifications to any land use authorization necessary to maintain stability of geologic materials, fish and wildlife habitats, the environment, and the public interest.
16. The Bureau will, if necessary, suspend any construction maintenance activity if there is an immediate threat to life (including wildlife and aquatic life), property, or the environment.
17. Public land users will abate any conditions, created by implementation of their project, that could potentially cause irreparable harm or damage to any person or property.
18. Revegetation of disturbed areas will be required as specified by the Bureau. The appropriate seed mixture and proper planting techniques will be specified by the Bureau.
19. Authorized public land users will construct, maintain, operate, and/or modify structures or facilities as directed by the Bureau to protect and minimize adverse effects upon raptors and other wildlife.
20. Authorized land users will comply with state and federal laws applicable to the authorized use and such additional state and federal laws, along with implementing regulations, that may be enacted and issued during the term of their authorization.

21. Authorized public land users will ensure that activities in connection with the authorization will not violate applicable water quality standards or related facility siting standards established by or pursuant to applicable federal or state laws.
22. Authorized public land users will prevent or control damage to scenic, aesthetic, cultural and environmental values (including damage to fish and wildlife habitat), damage to federal property and hazards to public health and safety.
23. Authorized public land users will comply with state standards for public health and safety, environmental protection and siting, construction, operation