Decision:

It is my decision to select Alternative B ("Proposed Action") as described and considered in the Environmental Assessment (EA), as modified by the use of State Director discretion to defer additional parcels described in the FONSI. My decision is to offer (and subsequently issue, should a successful bid be received by the BLM) 159 lease parcels comprised of approximately 193,919.59 acres of Federal fluid mineral estate administered by the BLM, as identified in the EA and as further described below, at the June 26, 2018 Competitive Oil and Gas Lease Sale. Adopting a modified Alternative B results in the offering (and leasing, should successful bids be received by the BLM) of 85% of the lands nominated and reviewed by the BLM for this sale.

One hundred and seventy-eight (178) parcels, containing 227,502.319 acres, were nominated and reviewed for the June 26, 2018 competitive lease sale. One (1) whole parcel and a portion of three (3) other parcels containing 2,317.69 acres in the RFO (see Appendix A), are located in Greater Sage-Grouse Core Areas identified in Version 4 of the State’s Core Area Map (See State of Wyoming Executive Order 2015-04), and are not within Priority Habitat Management Areas in the BLM GSG ARMPA ROD (2015). The BLM has determined that based on its Planning Regulations (43 CFR 1610) a Land Use Plan Amendment process is required for the BLM Wyoming to consider incorporation of Version 4 of the Core Area Maps into the applicable RMPs. BLM Wyoming Instruction Memorandum 2016-024 directs that “Until the subsequent planning process is completed, parcels nominated for oil and gas lease sales in these areas should be deferred until completion of the plan amendment process.” These parcels or portions of parcels are not analyzed in detail in this EA and will not be discussed further.

Following response to public comments, a potential conflict with two preliminary parcels, 116 and 117, was discovered. As a result, the remaining portion of parcel 116 and all of parcel 117 (1,402.220 total acres) are deferred under State Director discretion pending completion of the Rawlins RMP amendment.

In response to new information, three parcels (preliminary parcels 159, 160 and 163/final parcel numbers 143, 144, and 147 respectively), containing approximately 4,669.28 acres, are also deferred under State Director discretion pending a final evaluation of two Citizen Wilderness Proposals submitted to the Rock Springs Field Office. The decision to defer these additional parcels was provided to the public via an Information Notice dated June 22, 2018.

In summary, a total of 6 whole parcels and portions of two more, containing approximately 8,389.19 acres, are deferred under State Director discretion.

Lands associated with 11 whole parcels and portions of two parcels containing approximately 25,483.84 acres, were deleted from this sale because the lands are closed to fluid mineral leasing.

Parcels available for lease were reviewed by the appropriate field offices and District Office,
including interdisciplinary review, field visits to nominated parcels (where appropriate), review of conformance with the Resource Management Plan (RMP) decisions for each planning area, and preparation of an Environmental Assessment (EA) documenting National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) compliance.¹

This DR addresses BLM’s final decision to offer 159 parcels, containing approximately 193,919.59 acres, or 85% of the originally nominated acreage, at the June 26, 2018 Competitive Lease Sale as described in the Sale Notice.

A Finding of No Significant Impact² (FONSI) has determined the selected alternative, Alternative B (the “Proposed Action” Alternative) analyzed in DOI-BLM-WY-D000-2018-0001-EA, does not constitute a major Federal action that will adversely impact the quality of the human environment. Therefore, an EIS is unnecessary and will not be prepared.

Authorities:
The authority for this decision is contained in 43 CFR 3100.

Compliance and Monitoring:
No monitoring would be required in the offering of the lease parcels for sale or for issuance of the leases, should a successful bid be received. Should the parcels be leased and developed, monitoring may be required by the BLM and would be considered under future documentation of National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) compliance, and in conformance with the respective RMP ROD, as amended (2015).

Terms/Conditions/Stipulations:
All parcels are subject to standard lease notices 1-3 and the Special Lease Stipulation for cultural resources. They are also subject to the Threatened and Endangered and Sensitive Species Stipulation (BLM-Washington Office Instruction Memorandum No. 2002-174, as updated by IM No. 2010-117) and the Migratory Bird Species-Interim Management Guidance Policy (BLM Washington Office Instruction Memorandum No. 2008-050). Individual parcels are subject to specific stipulations for wildlife resources, paleontological or cultural resources, Visual Resource Management (VRM), and other resources or land uses. Please refer to the June 26, 2018 Competitive Oil and Gas Lease Sale Notice for a complete description of the stipulations and lease notices applied to each parcel.

Plan Conformance and Consistency:
The proposed action and alternatives have been reviewed and found to be in conformance with the following Bureau of Land Management (BLM) Resource Management Plans (RMP) and the associated decision(s):

- Pinedale Proposed RMP and FEIS, August 22, 2008
- Pinedale Proposed RMP and ROD, May 26, 2008

¹ https://eplanning.blm.gov/epl-front-office/eplanning/planAndProjectSite.do?methodName=dispatchToPatternPage&currentPageId=125997

² Since the RMP EISs have already evaluated potentially significant impacts arising from the BLM’s land use planning decisions, the BLM anticipates a “finding of no new significant impacts.” See 43 CFR 46.140(c).
Alternatives Considered in the Applicable EA:

**Alternative A – No Action:** Under the No Action Alternative BLM Wyoming would not offer any of the parcels available for lease at the June 26, 2018 lease sale. This would mean that the Expressions of Interest (EOIs), i.e. parcel nominations, to lease would be denied or rejected and all available lease parcels would be withdrawn from lease sale. Surface management would remain the same and ongoing oil and gas development would continue on surrounding federal, private, and state leases.

**Alternative B -- Proposed Action:** Of the parcels determined to be available for leasing under the referenced RMPs (as amended, 2015), BLM Wyoming would offer 163 whole parcels as described in the June 26, 2018 EA. The offered parcels are available for oil and gas leasing under the Pinedale, Kemmerer, Rock Springs and Rawlins RMPs/RODs (as amended 2015). Standard terms and conditions/stipulations would apply. Lease stipulations have been added to each of the 163 parcels analyzed in the EA, as identified by referenced RMPs, as amended (2015), to address site specific concerns. These stipulations can be found in the 2nd Quarter 2018 Sale Notice.

**Public Comments:**
The EA was posted on the BLM Wyoming Oil and Gas Leasing webpage for a 30-day public review and comment period. Comments contained within letters and/or emails received by the BLM along with BLM response are included in Appendix E attached to the EA. Corresponding changes were made to the EA as appropriate, which were then posted to the BLM’s public internet site as “Version 2.” The BLM response references changes made to the EA.

**Rationale for Decision:**
The decision to approve the proposed action, as modified by my State Director discretion, is based upon the following: 1) consistency with resource management plans and land use plans; 2) national policy; 3) agency statutory requirements; 4) relevant resource and economic issues; 5) application of measures to avoid or minimize environmental impacts; 6) meeting the purpose and need for the project. A modified Alternative B is identified as being the most environmentally sound alternative that meets the purpose and need.
1. This decision is in conformance with the Pinedale, Kemmerer, Rock Springs, Lander and Rawlins RMPs.

2. It is the policy of the BLM as derived from various laws, including the Mineral Leasing Act (MLA) of 1920, as amended (30 U.S.C. 181 et seq.) and the Federal Land Policy and Management Act of 1976 (FLPMA), to make mineral resources available for disposal and to encourage development of mineral resources to meet national, regional, and local needs.

3. The decision is consistent with all Federal, state, and county authorizing actions required for implementation of the decision.

4. Economic indicators derived from implementation of the proposed action that were considered important have been analyzed in the EA.

5. Standard terms and conditions as well as special stipulations would apply. Lease stipulations were added to each parcel as identified by the Pinedale, Lander, Kemmerer, Rock Springs and Rawlins Field Offices to address site specific concerns.

6. The decision meets the stated purpose and need in the EA by providing areas for the potential exploration and development of additional oil and gas resources to help meet the nation’s current and expanding need for energy sources while protecting other resource values in accordance with guiding laws, regulations, and Land Use Planning decisions through application of lease stipulations.

Appeal Information:
This Decision May be appealed to the Interior Board of Land Appeals, Office of the Secretary, in accordance with the regulations contained in 43 CFR, Part 4 and Form 1842-1 (copy attached). If an appeal is taken, your notice of appeal must be filed in this office within 30 days from your receipt of this Decision. The protestor has the burden of showing that the Decision appealed from is in error.

If you wish to file a petition for a stay of the effectiveness of this Decision during the time that your appeal is being reviewed by the Board, the petition for a stay must accompany your notice of appeal. A petition for a stay is required to show sufficient justification based on the standards listed on the attached document. Copies of the notice of appeal and petition for a stay must be submitted to the Interior Board of Land Appeals and the appropriate Office of the Solicitor (see 43 CFR §4.413) at the same time the original documents are filed with this office. Copy of the notice of appeal and petition for a stay must also be submitted to each adversely affected party named in this decision at the same time the original documents are filed with this office. If you request a stay, you have the burden of proof to demonstrate that a stay should be granted.
Standards for Obtaining a Stay:

Except as otherwise provided by law or other pertinent regulations, a petition for a stay of a decision pending appeal shall show sufficient justification based on the following standards:

(1) The relative harm to parties if the stay is granted or denied,
(2) The likelihood of the protesters' success on the merits,
(3) The likelihood of the immediate and irreparable harm if the stay is not granted, and
(4) Whether the public interest favors granting the stay.

Wyoming State Director

Date

6/25/18