

Osage County Oil and Gas EIS



U.S. Department of the Interior
Bureau of Indian Affairs
Eastern Oklahoma Region

April 2016

BIA Reinitiating Public Scoping for the Osage County Oil and Gas Environmental Impact Statement

The United States (US) Department of the Interior Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA) Eastern Oklahoma Regional Office will be revising the Osage County Oil and Gas Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS) that was released in November 2015. After the public comment period for the DEIS, the BIA determined that it should be revised in order to address comments received and take into consideration additional information. The BIA will work with cooperating agencies and others to gather additional information and work to prepare a revised DEIS. To help accomplish this, the BIA is inviting the public to offer written and oral comments at a public meeting on April 28, and to submit comments via mail or email during a public comment period.

For project updates and previously released documents, visit the project website at <http://www.bia.gov/WhoWeAre/RegionalOffices/EasternOklahoma/WeAre/Osage/OSAGEOilGasEIS/>.

Public Scoping

As part of the Oklahoma, Kansas, and Texas Joint EIS/Resource Management Plan scoping period, the BIA held a public scoping meeting on January 15, 2014 in Pawhuska, Oklahoma. The BIA's proposed action under consideration for the Osage County Oil and Gas EIS—oil and gas development in Osage County—was part of this scoping effort. To aid information-gathering efforts and preparation of the revised Osage EIS, the BIA will hold an additional public scoping meeting on April 28, 2016. The public scoping comment period will end on May 8, 2016.

The scoping period provides the public with an opportunity to learn about the Osage County Oil and Gas EIS, help

Purpose of and Need for the BIA's Action

Under the Osage Allotment Act of 1906, the US reserved all rights to the mineral estate in Osage County for the benefit of the Osage. The mineral estate is held in trust, and the BIA approves oil and gas leases, applications for permits to drill, and other site-specific permit applications in Osage County under the authority of the 1906 act, as amended, and 25 CFR Part 226.

The BIA, under delegation from the Secretary of the Interior, administers the development of oil and gas resources in Osage County for the benefit of the Osage. The federal actions, including approving leases and issuing permits, are needed for the BIA to fulfill a portion of its trust responsibility to the Osage and to promote the development of the mineral estate.

The purpose of the BIA's action is to promote oil and gas production in a manner that is efficient, that prevents pollution, and that is consistent with the mandates of federal law, in coordination with the Osage Minerals Council. Through this action, the BIA also intends to streamline the permitting process and provide certainty to developers about permit conditions and restrictions.

identify issues and concerns to be addressed in the EIS, and provide input in developing alternatives. Specifically, the BIA would appreciate comments from the public on:

- ◆ The range of reasonable alternatives for implementing the proposed action and issues to be addressed in the revised EIS, and
- ◆ Information regarding the level of oil and gas development in Osage County or possible mitigation measures for environmental and socioeconomic impacts of that development.

Notice of Intent
Published in the
Federal Register

April 2016

Public Scoping
Period

April—May 2016
(Ongoing)

Data Gathering and
Alternative
Development

Spring—Fall 2016
(Ongoing)

Draft EIS and
Public Comment
Period

April 2017

Final EIS and Issuing
of Record of Decision

October 2017

This is the third in a series of bulletins from the Bureau of Indian Affairs regarding the Osage County Oil and Gas Environmental Impact Statement. Contact us at osagecountyoilandgaseis@bia.gov if you would like to be added to the mailing list for future project updates.

How Can You Participate?

Public involvement is an integral part of preparing the Osage County Oil and Gas EIS. The BIA encourages the public to provide information and comments related to preparation of the EIS. The BIA is particularly interested in any new information on oil and gas development in Osage County that would help to inform the development of draft alternatives.

Comments may be submitted by email to osagecountyoilandgaseis@bia.gov; by US mail to Jeannine Hale, BIA Eastern Oklahoma Regional Office, P.O. Box 8002, Muskogee, OK 74402-8002; or by fax to (918) 781-4667.

The official scoping period began with the publication of the Notice of Intent (NOI) in the Federal Register on April 11, 2016, and will continue until **May 8, 2016**. The BIA can best use your comments and resource information submissions if received by this date.

Before including your address, phone number, email address, or other Personally Identifiable Information (PII) in your comment, please be aware that your entire

document—including your PII—may be made publicly available at any time. While you can ask us in your comment to withhold your PII from public review, we cannot guarantee that we will be able to do so.

Mark Your Calendar!

Osage County Oil and Gas Public Scoping Meeting

April 28, 2016 from 3-6 pm (CDT)

Wah-Zha-Zhi Cultural Center
1449 W. Main, Pawhuska, OK 74056

Sign up at the BIA Osage Agency or at the meeting for a two-minute time slot if you wish to provide oral input. The BIA encourages groups wishing to provide oral input to elect a single representative to speak on behalf of the group. You can also submit written comments at the meeting, email them to osagecountyoilandgaseis@bia.gov, or mail them to BIA Eastern Oklahoma Regional Office, P.O. Box 8002, Muskogee, OK 74402. The deadline for comments is **May 8, 2016**.

