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BILLINGS -- The Bureau of Land Management took in \$1,632,182.50 in rental and bonus bids at a competitive oil and gas lease auction held May 25, 2004, at the Montana State Office in Billings. A summary of sale statistics is available at http://www.mt.blm.gov/oilgas/leasing/may04/0504_ResultsList.pdf.

All offered parcels were located in Montana, North Dakota, and South Dakota and included Forest Service parcels within the recently completed Dakota Prairie Grasslands Environmental Impact Study area. All but two Forest Service parcels received a bid and generated \$1,084,277 of the total rental and bonus bids.

Parcels not sold at the auction were made available for noncompetitive leasing the next day. Noncompetitive offers were received on twenty-six parcels. Four parcels that did not receive bids or offers are still available for noncompetitive leasing. A percentage of the receipts for competitive and noncompetitive leases are returned to the state or county where the lands are located. Ninety-six percent of the 108 parcels offered received bids or offers. All leases are issued for a 10-year term.

Competitive oil and gas lease sales are generally conducted every other month (January/March/May/July/September/November) at the Montana State Office. Additional information regarding competitive sale lists, detailed results of sales, or the leasing process is available by writing the Bureau of Land Management, P.O. Box 36800, Billings, Mont., 59107, or by calling (406) 896-5004.

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