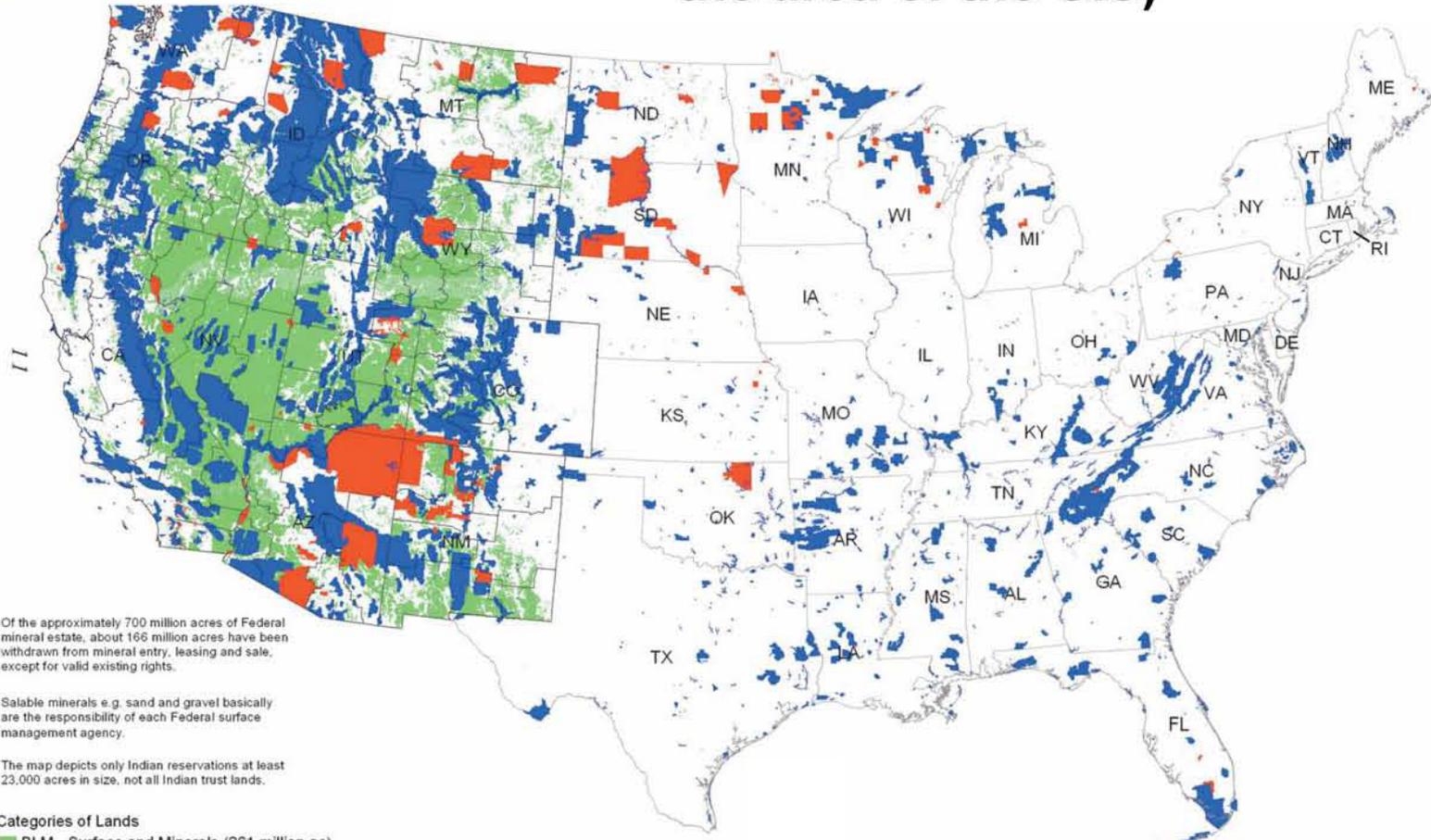


**The Status of the BLM-NRC MOU  
Modification to Enhance Coordination,  
Define Roles and Promotes  
Information Sharing**

**Benjamin F. (Frank) Martin  
Deputy Chief  
Division of Solid Minerals  
Minerals and Realty Management Directorate  
Bureau of Land Management  
Washington, DC  
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# BLM Manages more than 700 million acres of Federal mineral estate (29% of the area of the U.S)



- \* Of the approximately 700 million acres of Federal mineral estate, about 166 million acres have been withdrawn from mineral entry, leasing and sale, except for valid existing rights.
- \* Salable minerals e.g. sand and gravel basically are the responsibility of each Federal surface management agency.
- \* The map depicts only Indian reservations at least 23,000 acres in size, not all Indian trust lands.

### Categories of Lands

- BLM - Surface and Minerals (261 million ac)
- Other Federal Lands - Minerals (380 million ac)
- Non-Federal Surface (includes 58 million ac of Split - Estate Federal Minerals)
- Indian Trust Lands (56 million ac) except Mineral Operations for Osage Minerals
- BLM Administration Boundaries

BLM manages all Federal minerals onshore, regardless of Surface Management Agency

# Mining Claim Regulation – Surface Use

- **Casual use** – negligible disturbance not requiring mechanized equipment nor notification of BLM – No NEPA
- **Notice level operations** – disturb 5 acres or less – requires notification of BLM and reclamation bonding only – No NEPA
- **Plan of Operations – Larger surface disturbances or other circumstances – BLM approval, EA/EIS and full Reclamation Bonding required**

# **GAO-12-544**

## **Report to the Ranking Member, Committee on Natural Resources, House of Representatives March 17, 2012**

### **•Recommendation:**

- The Secretary of the Interior and the Chairman of the Nuclear Regulatory Commission should enhance their coordination on financial assurances for ISR operations through the development of a memorandum of understanding that defines roles and promotes information sharing.

# **IMPLEMENTATION OF THE RECOMMENDATION**

In the past year the NRC and BLM have revised the existing Memorandum of Understanding to

- (1) strengthen interagency communication,
- (2) improve the facilitation and the sharing of special expertise and information, and to
- (3) coordinate the review of financial assurances within the boundaries of existing regulatory authorities.

## **Strengthen Interagency Communication**

- The MOU has been modified to include actions under Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act to ensure that historical sites are catalogued and protected contemporaneously with the necessary actions and investigations under NEPA
- Thorium has been added to uranium bring all mining and processing of potentially fissionables under the MOU
- Strengthened MOU language to require each agency to provide the other with the opportunity to participate in all NEPA and Section 106 actions and to combine such actions as much as possible to elimination duplication and improve efficiency

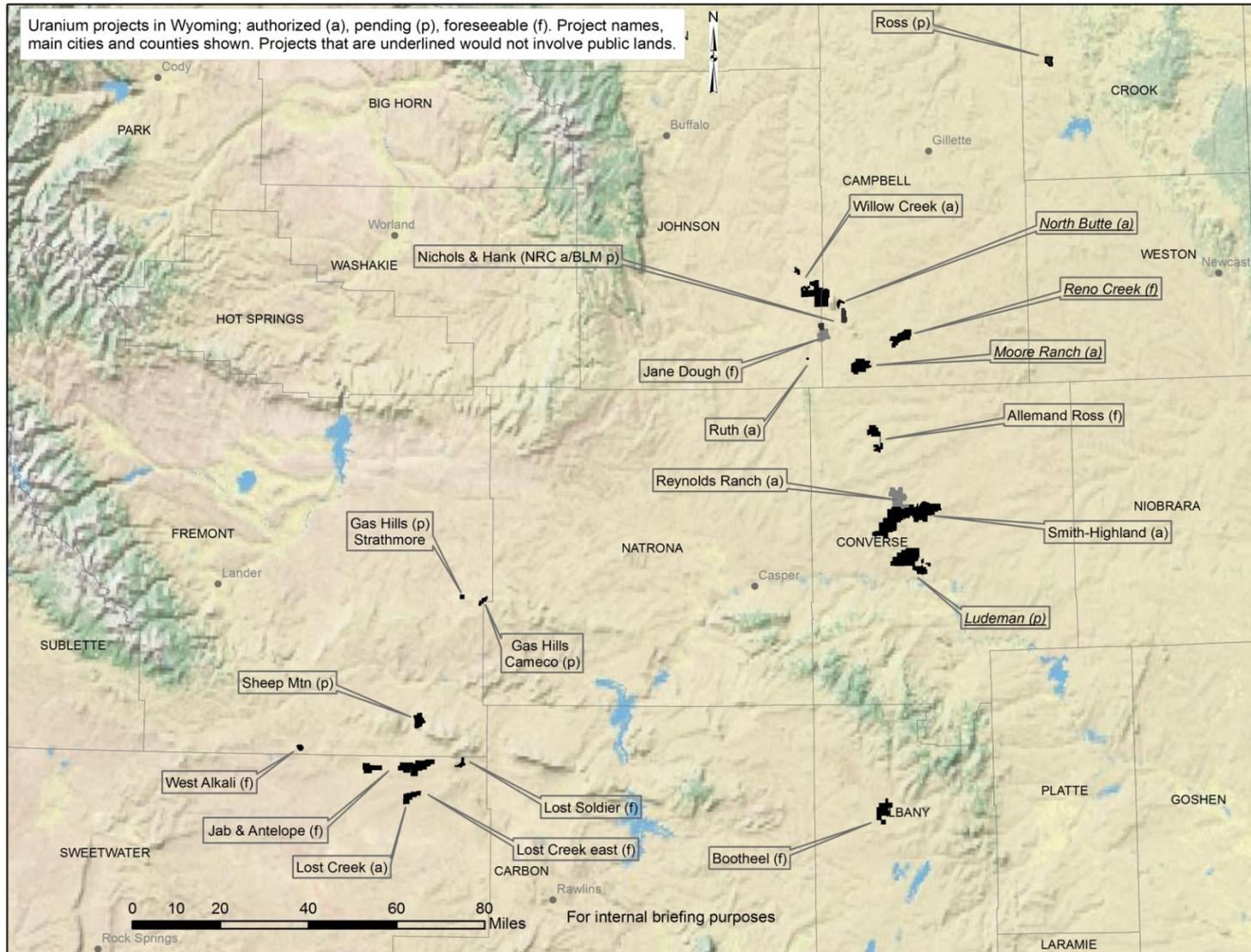
## **Improve the Facilitation and the Sharing of Special Expertise and Information**

- MOU changes encourage both agencies to join together in cooperating on NEPA tasks such as environmental assessments and environmental impact statements will encourage interaction of our respective experts with attendant cross-fertilization of ideas and information sharing
- The Steering Committee Charter requires technical expertise be available and shared where needed to strengthen each agencies capabilities

# Coordinate the Review of Financial Assurances within the Boundaries of Existing Regulatory Authorities

- The Charter of the Steering Committee has been revised to include the improvement of oversight of financial assurances
- This change will focus oversight to avoid any inadvertent gaps in coverage for financial assurance and eliminate any overlap or redundancies in financial assurance so that:
  - The Government will be protected, from loss
  - The companies will not be paying for excess coverage
  - Reclamation funding will always be sufficient to restore the environment

•BLM Wyoming has nine authorized and nine pending Plans of Operations (mine plans) and 22 authorized and one pending Notices to explore for uranium.



We look forward to continued close cooperation with the NRC in the future as we work together to deliver safe, efficient, and environmentally responsible energy to America

Thank You!