



**Aubrey Dunn, State Land Commissioner
State of New Mexico**

For Immediate Release

Contact:

Emily Strickler, Assistant Commissioner for Communications

(505) 827-3650 - office

(505) 470-8829 - front office

estrickler@slo.state.nm.us

Commissioner Dunn Demands Proper Site Delineation from Siana Operating LLC

Santa Fe, NM (November 18, 2016) – New Mexico State Land Commissioner Aubrey Dunn announced today that his office will not grant access to Siana Operating LLC, a company that trespassed on State Trust Land and caused significant spills of oil and produced water on an expired business lease, until they agree to the Land Office’s terms for proper site delineation.

The Land Office issued a cease and desist order against Siana in March of this year in response to the discovery of trespass and damage on Siana’s expired business lease and has sued Siana to recover money damages for Siana’s four years of trespass and the cost to be incurred to clean-up the site.

Since that time, Land Office staff developed a comprehensive site delineation plan in order to determine the extent of the environmental damage and possible groundwater contamination resulting from the company’s operations. The Land Office has not received a response from Siana regarding the agency’s delineation plan, but has become aware of the fact that Siana has negotiated a significantly less extensive delineation plan with the New Mexico Oil Conservation Division (OCD), which is the agency that regulates oil and gas activity in New Mexico.

“One of my top priorities as Land Commissioner is to preserve and protect our State Trust Lands for the benefit of future generations. Siana has caused significant damage to trust land and my office will continue to do everything in its power to hold Siana accountable for its actions,” said Commissioner Dunn. “I am disappointed that the OCD did not take the Land Office’s delineation requirements into account prior to reaching a settlement agreement with Siana. Their agreement will not properly address some of the most critical areas of concern, especially as it relates to the possibility of groundwater contamination.”

Through ongoing communications in April of this year, Siana and the OCD were made aware of the Land Office’s site delineation requests. Regardless of the fact that Siana reached a settlement agreement with the OCD, Land Office permission is required for Siana to access State Trust Land.

“Siana thought they could avoid performing the Land Office’s necessary site delineation requirements by reaching an agreement with the OCD without our concurrence and that is not acceptable. We will do whatever is legally possible to ensure that the proper site delineation and remediation is completed by Siana in order to properly remediate these State Trust Lands. The beneficiaries of the trust – the public schoolchildren of New Mexico – deserve that,” said Commissioner Dunn.



Oil and produced water spill on Sian’s expired business lease located in Lea County.

The State Land Office is responsible for administering 9 million acres of surface and 13 million acres of subsurface estate for the beneficiaries of the state land trust, which includes schools, universities, hospitals and other important public institutions.

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