



Stephanie Garcia Richard, State Land Commissioner
State of New Mexico

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

January 14, 2019

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Land Office Requests Funding to Establish an Office of Renewable Energy; Improve Management of Oil and Gas Activities

SANTA FE, NM – For Fiscal Year 2020, Commissioner Stephanie Garcia Richard has requested additional budget appropriations for four new district resource managers tasked with overseeing oil and gas activity in the Permian Basin and resources to establish the Office of Renewable Energy.

Due to increased oil and gas operations in the southeastern part of the state, additional personnel are necessary to handle the exciting workload and provide adequate oversight. The formal creation of an Office of Renewable Energy within the Commercial Division will enable the Land Office to develop a more diverse and sustainable revenue source for the state land trust. The budget requests total \$452,000, and would be paid through revenue the Land Office generates each year.

“With hundreds of thousands of acres of state trust land prime for renewable energy projects, New Mexico has an opportunity to become the leader in wind and solar. I ran on a promise to advance renewable energy projects throughout the state, and creating the Office of Renewable Energy is just the first step in bringing that to fruition,” Garcia Richard said of the request.

“Not only will more wind and solar projects help us fight climate change and protect our environment, it will diversify the funds that the Land Office manages to benefit our schools, hospitals, and colleges,” she added.

With the 2019 Legislative Session beginning tomorrow, the Land Office budget request will be up for debate and consideration in the next 60 days.

Oil, gas, and mineral production, ranching and farming, and commercial development on State Trust Lands support public schools, seven universities, New Mexico Military Institute, New Mexico School for the Deaf, New Mexico School for the Blind and Visually Impaired, three hospitals, correctional facilities, water conservation projects, and public building construction and repair. In fiscal year 2018, the State Land Office collected \$852 million from lease payments, oil and gas lease sale earnings, rights-of-way, permits, interest, fees, and oil, gas, and mineral royalties.