

## President Obama's Record on Oil and Gas Production

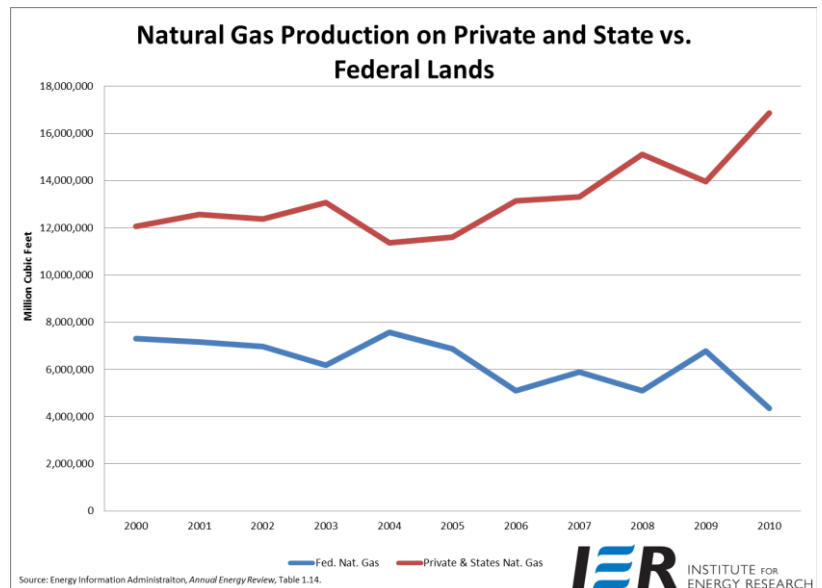
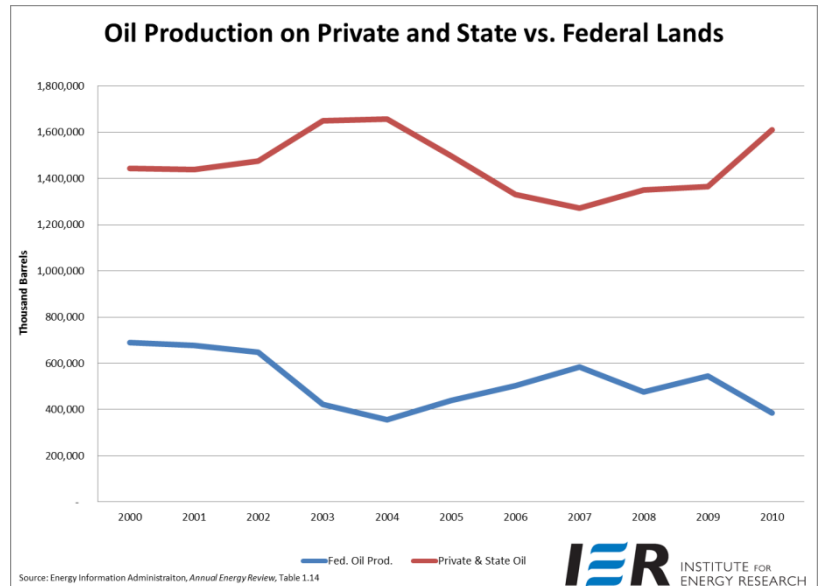
Since President Obama took office, total U.S. oil and natural gas production has increased. This increase, however, has happened in spite of the President, not because of him. The increase in production is occurring on private and state lands, the use of which is much harder for the President to restrict (at least in the short term). Meanwhile, production on federal lands is decreasing significantly. This decrease isn't a result of President Obama's policies exclusively, but it is the result of decades and policies that have systematically reduced energy production on federal lands.

### The Basic Facts:

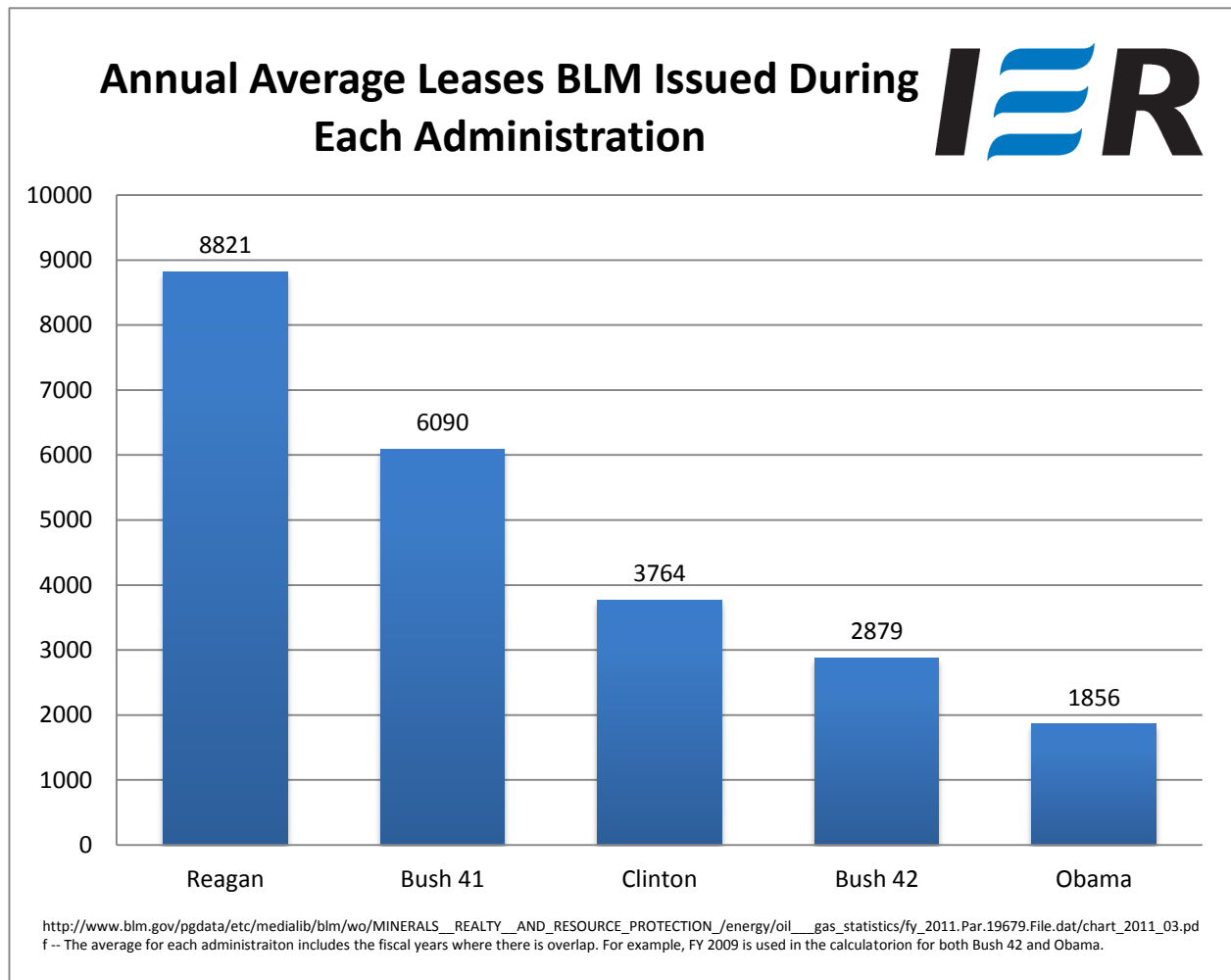
- The **government leases less than 2.2 percent of federal offshore areas<sup>1</sup> and less than 6 percent of federal onshore lands** for oil and natural gas production.<sup>2</sup>
- Oil and natural gas production on **federal lands has fallen by over 40 percent** since 2000.<sup>3</sup>
- Since 2000, oil production on **private and state lands has risen by 11 percent** and natural gas production **has risen by 40 percent.**<sup>4</sup>
- President Obama has leased less than half of the offshore acres than President Clinton leased.

The source for the amount of oil and natural gas produced on federal land is the Energy Information Administration's (part of the Department of Energy) *Annual Energy Review*, which analyzes historical energy trends.

The data from the *Annual Energy Review* is clear: the increase in U.S. oil and natural gas production is because of production on private and state lands in places like North Dakota. Almost all of North Dakota's Bakken formation is on private lands, and as a result, production has dramatically increased. Over the past 10 years, North Dakota oil production has [increased by over 250 percent](#), while federal oil and natural gas production has fallen over 40 percent.



President Obama cannot honestly claim credit for the increase in oil and natural gas production over the past misconstrues the facts, and is an inaccurate portrayal of his administration’s record on energy issues. After all, his administration did not hold a single offshore lease sale in fiscal year 2011, while the Bush administration planned to hold five. Those sales were rejected when the administration decided not to pursue a new 2010–2015 OCS lease plan reflecting the expiration of the presidential and congressional moratoriums on leasing in 2008. Also, President Obama’s Bureau of Land Management is setting records for the least amount of leases on average per year. President Clinton sold over twice the number of leases per year than President Obama.



<sup>1</sup> See Bureau of Ocean Energy Management, Regulation and Enforcement, *Offshore Energy and Minerals Management*, <http://www.boemre.gov/offshore/>. According to the administration’s website, the outer continental shelf is 1.76 billion acres (<http://www.boemre.gov/ld/PDFs/GreenBook-LeasingDocument.pdf> page 1) and only 38 million acres are leased (*Department of Interior, Oil and Gas Lease Utilization – Onshore and Offshore*, <http://www.doi.gov/news/pressreleases/loader.cfm?csModule=security/getfile&pageid=239255> page 4). That is a mere 2.16% of the entire Outer Continental Shelf.

<sup>2</sup> According to the Department of Interior, 38 million acres of onshore lands are leased for oil and natural gas production. See Table 3 in Department of Interior, *Oil and Gas Lease Utilization—Onshore and Offshore*, <http://www.doi.gov/news/pressreleases/loader.cfm?csModule=security/getfile&pageid=239255>. According to the Congressional Research Service, the federal government owns just over 650 million acres of land. See Appendix A. Congressional Research Service, *Major Federal Land Management Agencies: Management of Our Nation’s Lands and Resources*, May 15, 1995, <http://www.ncseonline.org/nle/crsreports/natural/nrgen-3.cfm>. The federal government also controls an additional 58 million acres of federal mineral estate below privately owned surface estate. See Bureau of Land Management, *Split Estate*, [http://www.blm.gov/pgdata/etc/medialib/blm/wo/MINERALS\\_REALTY\\_AND\\_RESOURCE\\_PROTECTION\\_/bmps.Par.98100.File.dat/SplitEstate08finalWeb.pdf](http://www.blm.gov/pgdata/etc/medialib/blm/wo/MINERALS_REALTY_AND_RESOURCE_PROTECTION_/bmps.Par.98100.File.dat/SplitEstate08finalWeb.pdf).

<sup>3</sup> See Energy Information Administration, *Annual Energy Review 2010*, Table 1.14 *Fossil Fuel Production on Federally Administered Lands, 1949-2010*, Oct. 19, 2011, [http://205.254.135.24/totalenergy/data/annual/pdf/sec1\\_31.pdf](http://205.254.135.24/totalenergy/data/annual/pdf/sec1_31.pdf).

<sup>4</sup> *Id.*