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From the Albuquerque Business First:

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Major oil co. cuts NM jobs, shifts focus to Colorado

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Illinois-headquartered BP America Inc. plans to cut 40 jobs in Farmington when it closes its office by the end of this year in the New Mexico portion of the San Juan Basin.

That's according the Farmington Daily Times, which reported Wednesday that BP will relocate other employees in New Mexico to Durango as part of the Farmington office closure.

BP officials said in a statement they are closing the office improve efficiency and competitiveness in the San Juan Basin.

The company said it would keep its two smaller field offices in San Juan County open, with some staff shifting to working remotely for those offices. Is said it has no plans to decrease its investment in New Mexico despite the cuts, BP said in a statement, according to the Daily times.

Carla Sonntag, president of the New Mexico Business Coalition, said she is pleased to hear BP is not reducing its New Mexico holdings.

"The loss of jobs and a good corporate partner, as BP has proven to be, is bad news indeed for Farmington," Sonntag said. "The good news, however, is that Farmington has some great public officials and community organizations like Four Corners Economic Development and the Farmington Chamber of Commerce who are aggressively working to diversify and expand economic opportunities for the community."

The closure comes after BP's announcement last year that it will establish its lower 48 headquarters in Denver in 2018.

"In some ways, this is a homecoming for us," said David Lawler, CEO of BP Lower 48, in a statement about the Denver office. "With two-thirds of our operated oil and natural gas production and proved reserves in the Rockies, world-class universities nearby and a wealth of industry expertise in the region, Denver is a logical -and strategic -place for us to be and a natural fit for our business."

This year has been very different for New Mexico's San Juan and Permian basins.



COURTESY CARLA J. SONNTAG

"The loss of jobs and a good corporate partner, as BP has proven to be, is bad news indeed for Farmington," said Carla J. Sonntag, president and co-founder of the New Mexico Business Coalition.

While the nation's largest Permian Basin deals occurred in southeastern New Mexico, farther north in the Four Corners, the San Juan Basin saw ConocoPhillips' sell all of its assets there for \$3 billion followed by Public Service Co. of New Mexico's plans to eliminate all coal reliance by late 2031 and shut down its coal operations in the area.

BP America ranked No. 4 on the most recent Business First gas production list for New Mexico.

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