

administrative record. We will honor such requests to the extent allowable by law. There may also be other circumstances in which we would withhold from the administrative record a respondent's identity, as allowable by law. If you wish us to withhold your name and address, you must state this prominently at the beginning of your comments. We will not, however, consider anonymous comments. We will make all submissions from organizations or businesses, and from individuals identifying themselves as representatives or officials of organizations or businesses, available for public inspection in their entirety.

The Florida scrub-jay (scrub-jay) is geographically isolated from other subspecies of scrub-jays found in Mexico and the western United States. The scrub-jay is found exclusively in peninsular Florida and is restricted to xeric uplands (predominately in oak-dominated scrub). Increasing urban and agricultural development, and subsequent fire protection, has resulted in habitat degradation, loss and fragmentation which have adversely affected the distribution and numbers of scrub-jays. The total estimated population is between 7,000 and 11,000 individuals.

The decline in the number and distribution of scrub-jays in east-central Florida has been exacerbated by substantial urban growth in the past 50 years. Much of the historic commercial and residential development has occurred on the dry soils which previously supported scrub-jay habitat. Based on existing soils data, a major portion of the historic and current scrub-jay habitat of coastal east-central Florida occurs proximal to the current shoreline and larger river basins. Much of this area of Florida was settled early because few wetlands restricted urban and agricultural development. Due to the effects of urban and agricultural development over the past 100 years, much of the remaining scrub-jay habitat is now relatively small and isolated. What remains is largely degraded due to the exclusion of fire which is needed to maintain xeric uplands in conditions suitable for scrub-jays.

A family of scrub-jays have been observed on the project site. They are part of a larger complex of scrub-jays located in a matrix of urban and natural settings in central Brevard County. Scrub-jays in urban areas are particularly vulnerable and typically do not successfully produce young that survive to adulthood. Persistent urban growth in this area will likely result in further reductions in the amount of suitable habitat for scrub-jays.

Increasing urban pressures are also likely to result in the continued degradation of scrub-jay habitat as fire exclusion slowly results in vegetative overgrowth. Thus, over the long-term, scrub-jays are unlikely to persist in urban settings, and conservation efforts for this species should target acquisition and management of large parcels of land outside the direct influence of urbanization.

There is little information available about the status of the indigo snake in Florida and Brevard County. Like the scrub jay, this species habitat has been reduced in amount, degraded and fragmented from commercial, residential, and agricultural development. It may potentially use essentially all of the habitats found in the Project area. It has not been observed onsite but the Applicant desires to cover the indigo snake in the incidental take permit.

Construction of the Project's infrastructure and facilities will result in harm to scrub-jays and possibly to the indigo snake incidental to the carrying out of these otherwise lawful activities. Habitat alteration associated with the proposed residential construction will reduce the availability of foraging, sheltering, and possible nesting habitat for one family of scrub-jays and habitat for any indigo snakes that occur on the site. Development would take place within Section 31, Township 26 South, Range 37 East, Brevard County, Florida.

The Applicant does not propose to implement significant on-site minimization measures to reduce take of the scrub-jay or indigo snake. The proposed Project encompasses about 34.6 acres and the footprint of the homes, buildings, infrastructure and landscaping preclude retention of scrub-jay and indigo snake habitat. On-site minimization may not be a biologically viable alternative due to increasing negative demographic effects caused by urbanization.

The Applicant proposes to mitigate for the loss of 9.67 acres of scrub-jay habitat by purchasing 19.34 acres of scrub-jay habitat, establishing a management fund, and donating it to Brevard County for ownership and management. The acquisition and management of this land would also provide suitable habitat for the indigo snake.

As stated above, the Service has made a preliminary determination that the issuance of the Permit is not a major Federal action significantly affecting the quality of the human environment within the meaning of section 102(2)(C) of NEPA. This preliminary information may be revised due to public comment

received in response to this notice and is based on information contained in the EA and HCP.

The Service will also evaluate whether the issuance of a section 10(a)(1)(B) ITP complies with section 7 of the Act by conducting an intra-Service section 7 consultation. The results of the biological opinion, in combination with the above findings, will be used in the final analysis to determine whether or not to issue the ITP.

Dated: February 24, 2005.

Sam D. Hamilton,
Regional Director.

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DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR

Bureau of Land Management

[WY-920-1320-E]

Powder River Regional Coal Team Activities, Notice of Public Meeting in Gillette, WY

AGENCY: Bureau of Land Management, Interior.

ACTION: Notice of public meeting.

SUMMARY: The Powder River Regional Coal Team (RCT) has scheduled a public meeting for April 27, 2005, to review current and proposed activities in the Powder River Coal Region and to review pending coal lease applications (LBA).

DATES: The RCT meeting will begin at 9 a.m. MDT on April 27, 2005. The meeting is open to the public.

ADDRESSES: The meeting will be held at the City Council Chambers, 201 East 5th Street, Gillette, Wyoming 82718.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Robert Janssen, Regional Coal Coordinator, Bureau of Land Management (BLM) Wyoming State Office, Division of Minerals and Lands, 5353 Yellowstone Road, Cheyenne, Wyoming 82009, telephone 307-775-6206 or Rebecca Spurgin, Regional Coal Coordinator, BLM Montana State Office, Division of Resources, 5001 Southgate Drive, Billings, Montana 59101, telephone 406-896-5080.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: The primary purpose of the meeting is to discuss pending coal LBAs in the Powder River Basin. Specific coal lease applications and other matters for the RCT to consider include:

1. *Maysdorf LBA*. This LBA, filed by Cordero Mining Company under the name of Mt. Logan, was discussed at the meeting held in May 2002. The applicant significantly reduced the size

of the LBA in November of 2004. The LBA now includes approximately 2,219 acres and 230 million tons of Federal coal. The RCT will be updated on the new tract and the processing schedule for the Maysdorf LBA.

2. *West Extension-Eagle Butte LBA.* This LBA, filed by Foundation Coal West, Inc., was discussed at the meeting held in May 2002. It is adjacent to the Eagle Butte Mine and includes approximately 1,397 acres and 231 million tons of Federal coal. This LBA was also reduced in size by the applicant. The RCT will be updated on the new tract and the processing schedule for the West Extension-Eagle Butte LBA.

3. *Belle Ayr LBA.* This new LBA, filed by Foundation Coal West, Inc., is adjacent to the Belle Ayr mine. Approximately 1,578.74 acres and 200.0 million tons of Federal coal are involved. The original Belle Ayr LBA was filed in July 2000 and a portion of the original application was subsequently offered for sale. The bid was rejected for not meeting fair market value. At the RCT meeting in 2002, the team instructed the applicant to submit a new application if they were still interested in leasing this tract. RAG submitted a new application in July 2004. The RCT needs to consider the processing schedule for the Belle Ayr LBA.

4. Decker Coal Company has indicated to the Montana BLM State Office that they will be submitting a coal lease application prior to the scheduled April 27, 2005, RCT meeting. The F-Section Extension would be mined in conjunction with their current operations at Decker Coal Mine, located in South-Central Montana. Specific details regarding the acreage and Federal coal tons being applied for will be presented at the upcoming RCT meeting.

5. Spring Creek Coal Company (SCCC) contacted the Montana BLM State Office in December 2004 to discuss a lease application that would add reserves to their leased Federal and State Carbone tracts. SCCC has indicated that they will submit an application for the Spring Creek Expansion Tract, which includes approximately 1,181.3 acres and 111.6 million Federal coal tons. These reserves would be mined in conjunction with their existing Spring Creek Coal Mine, located in South-Central Montana.

6. The BLM is doing a coal review study in the Powder River Basin. This study includes coal development forecasts and an evaluation of cumulative effects. The results of this review will be used in the preparation

of coal related National Environmental Policy Act documents in the Powder River coal region. The RCT will be updated on the progress and results of this study.

7. The BLM received an application from Peabody Energy Company for a coal lease exchange for leased Federal coal in the Gold Mine Draw Alluvial Valley Floor area. The RCT will be updated on the parcels of land being considered for exchange, the public interest determination, and other actions pertaining to this exchange.

8. Update on BLM land use planning efforts in the Powder River Basin of Wyoming and Montana.

9. Other Coal Lease Applications and issues that may arise prior to the meeting. The RCT may generate recommendation(s) for any or all of these topics and other topics that may arise prior to the meeting date.

The meeting will serve as a forum for public discussion on Federal coal management issues of concern in the Powder River Basin region. Any party interested in providing comments or data related to the above pending applications may do so in writing to the State Director (910), BLM Wyoming State Office, P.O. Box 1828, Cheyenne, WY 82003, no later than April 15, 2005, or by addressing the RCT with concerns, in person, at the meeting on April 27, 2005.

Draft Agenda for Regional Coal Team (RCT) Meeting

1. Introduction of RCT members and guests.
2. Approval of the Minutes of the May 30, 2002, RCT meeting held in Casper, WY.
3. Coal activity since last RCT meeting.
4. Industry Presentations on Lease Applications:
 - Cordero Mining Company, Maysdorf LBA
 - Foundation Coal West, Inc., West Extension-Eagle Butte LBA
 - Foundation Coal West, Inc., Belle Ayr LBA
 - Decker Coal Company, F-Section Extension
 - Spring Creek Coal Company, Spring Creek Expansion
5. BLM presentation on Powder River Basin coal review study.
6. Peabody/BLM joint presentation on Gold Mine Draw lease exchange.
7. BLM land use planning efforts.
8. Other pending coal actions and other discussion items that may arise.
9. RCT Recommendations.
 - Review and recommendation(s) on pending Lease Application(s) and Exchanges(s).

10. Discussion of the next meeting.
11. Adjourn.

Alan L. Kesterke,

Associate State Director.

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DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR

Bureau of Land Management

[NV-050-1430-ES; N-41567-38, N-74936, N-75715, N-75843, N-78352, N-78353, N-78354, N-79018]

Notice of Realty Action: Conveyance for Recreation and Public Purposes

AGENCY: Bureau of Land Management.

ACTION: Notice of realty action.

SUMMARY: The public land described in this Notice in the Las Vegas Valley, Clark County, Nevada, has been examined and found suitable for conveyance for recreational or public purposes under the provisions of the Recreation and Public Purposes Act, as amended (43 U.S.C. 869 *et. seq.*).

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:

Jacqueline Grattton, BLM Lead Community Specialist, (702) 515-5054.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

The following described public land in the Las Vegas Valley, Clark County, Nevada, has been examined and found suitable for conveyance for recreational or public purposes under the provisions of the Recreation and Public Purposes Act, as amended (43 U.S.C. 869 *et. seq.*) and the implementing regulations at 43 CFR part 2740. The Clark County School District proposes to use the land for elementary and middle school sites.

N-41567-38—Elementary School

Mount Diablo Meridian

T. 19 S., R. 60 E., sec. 17: Lot 15, 10.3 acres—General location: Northeast of the intersection of Elkhorn Road and Fort Apache Road.

N-74936—Middle School

Mount Diablo Meridian

T. 22 S., R. 60 E., sec 25: E¹/₂SE⁴SW¹/₄NW¹/₄, NW¹/₄SE¹/₄SW¹/₄NW¹/₄, SW¹/₄SE¹/₄NW¹/₄, SW¹/₄SE¹/₄NW¹/₄, 20 acres—General location: North of the intersection of West Pyle Avenue and Lindell Road.

N-75715—Elementary School

Mount Diablo Meridian

T. 23 S., R. 61 E., sec 4: Lots 14 and 15, N¹/₂SW¹/₄NE¹/₄NE¹/₄, 14.63 acres—General location: Southeast of the intersection of Starr Avenue and Placid Street.

N-75843—Elementary School

Mount Diablo Meridian

T. 19 S., R. 60 E., sec 12: Lots 3 and 5, 15.02 acres—General location: Southwest of the