

DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR**Bureau of Land Management**

[(WY-060-1320-EL), WYW154432]

Notice of Availability of Maysdorf Coal Lease Application Draft Environmental Impact Statement and Federal Coal Notice of Hearing, Wyoming**AGENCY:** Bureau of Land Management, Interior.**ACTION:** Notice of Availability (NOA) of a draft environmental impact statement (DEIS) and notice of public hearing for coal lease by application (LBA) WYW154432 in the decertified Powder River Federal Coal Production Region, Wyoming.**SUMMARY:** Under the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) and the implementing regulations, the Bureau of Land Management (BLM) announces the availability of the Maysdorf Coal DEIS and announces a public hearing pursuant to 43 Code of Federal Regulations (CFR) 3425.4.**DATES:** Requests to be included on the mailing list and to receive copies of the DEIS and notification of the comment period and hearing date should be sent to the address, facsimile number, or electronic address listed below. Written comments on the DEIS will be accepted for 60 days following the date that the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) publishes their NOA of the DEIS in the *Federal Register*. The BLM asks that those submitting comments on the DEIS make them as specific as possible with reference to page numbers and chapters of the document. Comments that contain only opinions or preferences will not receive a formal response; however, they will be considered and included as part of the BLM decision-making process. The public hearing will be held at 7 p.m. MST, on June 13, 2006, at the Clarion Hotel, 2009 South Douglas Highway, Gillette, Wyoming.**ADDRESSES:** Please address questions, comments, or concerns to the Casper Field Office, Bureau of Land Management, Attn: Nancy Doelger, 2987 Prospector Drive, Casper, Wyoming 82604, fax them to 307-261-7587, or send e-mail comments to the attention of Nancy Doelger at casper_wymail@blm.gov. A copy of the DEIS has been sent to affected Federal, State, and local Government agencies; persons, and entities identified as potentially being affected by a decision to lease the Federal coal in this tract; and persons who indicated to the BLM that they wished to receive a copy of the DEIS. Copies of the DEIS are available

for public inspection at the following BLM office locations: BLM Wyoming State Office, 5353 Yellowstone Road, Cheyenne, Wyoming 82009; and BLM Casper Field Office, 2987 Prospector Lane, Casper, Wyoming 82604.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Nancy Doelger or Mike Karbs at the above address, or telephone: 307-261-7600.**SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:** The DEIS analyzes and discloses to the public direct, indirect, and cumulative environmental impacts of issuing a Federal coal lease in the Wyoming portion of the Powder River Basin. The purpose of the public hearing is to solicit comments on the DEIS on the proposed competitive sale of the Federal coal in the Maysdorf Coal tract, and on the fair market value and maximum economic recovery of the Federal coal. The BLM is considering a coal lease issuance as a result of a September 20, 2001 application made by Cordero Mining Company (CMC) to lease Federal coal near the Cordero Rojo Mine approximately 15 miles south-southeast of Gillette, Wyoming, in Campbell County, Wyoming.

Cordero, the operator of the mine, applied to lease the tract as a maintenance tract to extend the life of their existing mining operations under the provisions of the Leasing on Application regulations at 43 CFR 3425. This tract, case number WYW154432, is referred to as the Maysdorf Coal tract.

On November 8, 2004, BLM received a request from CMC to modify the Maysdorf Coal tract. The following lands in Campbell County, Wyoming are included in the tract as currently filed:

- T. 46 N., R. 71 W., 6th P.M., Wyoming
 Sec. 4: Lots 5, 6, 7 (E $\frac{1}{2}$ E $\frac{1}{2}$), 10 (E $\frac{1}{2}$ E $\frac{1}{2}$), 11, 12;
 Sec. 10: Lots 1, 2, 3 (N $\frac{1}{2}$, N $\frac{1}{2}$ S $\frac{1}{2}$), 4 (N $\frac{1}{2}$, N $\frac{1}{2}$ S $\frac{1}{2}$), 5 (N $\frac{1}{2}$, N $\frac{1}{2}$ S $\frac{1}{2}$), 6 (N $\frac{1}{2}$, N $\frac{1}{2}$ S $\frac{1}{2}$);
 Sec. 11: Lots 1 through 8, 9 (N $\frac{1}{2}$, N $\frac{1}{2}$ S $\frac{1}{2}$), 10 (N $\frac{1}{2}$, N $\frac{1}{2}$ S $\frac{1}{2}$), 11 (N $\frac{1}{2}$, N $\frac{1}{2}$ S $\frac{1}{2}$), 12 (N $\frac{1}{2}$, N $\frac{1}{2}$ S $\frac{1}{2}$);
 T. 47 N., R. 71 W, 6th P.M., Wyoming
 Sec. 8: Lots 3 through 6, 11 through 13;
 Sec. 21: Lots 1, 2, 3 (E $\frac{1}{2}$ E $\frac{1}{2}$), 6 (E $\frac{1}{2}$ E $\frac{1}{2}$), 7 through 10, 11 (E $\frac{1}{2}$ E $\frac{1}{2}$), 14 (E $\frac{1}{2}$ E $\frac{1}{2}$), 15, 16;
 Sec. 28: Lots 1, 2, 3 (E $\frac{1}{2}$ E $\frac{1}{2}$), 6 (E $\frac{1}{2}$ E $\frac{1}{2}$), 7 through 10, 11 (E $\frac{1}{2}$ E $\frac{1}{2}$), 14 (E $\frac{1}{2}$ E $\frac{1}{2}$), 15, 16;
 Sec. 33: Lots 1, 2, 3 (E $\frac{1}{2}$ E $\frac{1}{2}$), 6 (E $\frac{1}{2}$ E $\frac{1}{2}$), 7 through 10, 11 (E $\frac{1}{2}$ E $\frac{1}{2}$), 14 (E $\frac{1}{2}$ E $\frac{1}{2}$), 15, 16;

Total Acres: 2,219.39 acres, more or less.
 The tract as currently filed includes an estimated 230.30 million tons of in-place coal.

The Cordero Rojo Mine is adjacent to the lease application area and has an

approved mining and reclamation plan from the Land Quality Division of the Wyoming Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ). The Mine has an approved air quality permit from the Air Quality Division of the Wyoming DEQ to mine up to 65 million tons of coal per year.

The Office of Surface Mining Reclamation and Enforcement (OSM), the Land Quality Division of the Wyoming Department of Environmental Quality (WDEQ), and the Wyoming State Planning Office (WSPO) are cooperating agencies in the preparation of the DEIS. If the tract is leased as a maintenance tract, the new lease will be incorporated into the existing mining and reclamation plan for the adjacent mine. The Secretary of the Interior must approve the revision to the Mineral Leasing Act (MLA) mining plan before the Federal coal can be mined. If the tract is leased, OSM is the Federal agency that would be responsible for recommending approval, approval with conditions, or disapproval of the revised MLA mining plan to the Office of the Secretary of the Interior. WDEQ has entered into a cooperative agreement with the Secretary of the Interior to regulate surface coal mining operations on Federal and non-Federal lands within the State of Wyoming. WSPO coordinates planning within state agencies and facilitates collaboration among the agencies, the Federal Government, other states, the private sector, and the general public.

The DEIS analyzes leasing the tract as applied for as described above as a separate Proposed Action. Under this alternative, a competitive sale would be held and a lease issued for Federal coal in the tract as applied for by Cordero. As part of the coal leasing process, BLM has identified and is evaluating other tract configurations which add Federal coal to avoid bypassing coal or to prompt competitive interest in the unleased Federal coal in this area. The tract configurations that BLM has identified are described and analyzed as separate alternatives in the DEIS. Under these alternatives, a competitive sale would be held and a lease issued for Federal coal lands included in a tract modified by the BLM. The DEIS also analyzes the alternative of rejecting the application to lease Federal coal as the No Action Alternative. The Proposed Action and Alternatives being considered in the DEIS are in conformance with the "Approved Resource Management Plan for Public Lands Administered by the Bureau of Land Management Buffalo Field Office" (April 2001).

Comments, including names and street addresses of respondents, will be available for public review at the Casper Field Office at the address listed above during regular business hours (7:45 a.m. through 4:30 p.m.), Monday through Friday, except holidays. Individual respondents may request confidentiality. If you wish to withhold your name or street address from public review or from disclosure under the Freedom of Information Act, you must state this prominently at the beginning of your written comment. Such requests will be honored to the extent allowed by law. All submissions from organizations or businesses, and from individuals identifying themselves as representatives or officials of organizations or businesses, will be made available for public inspection in their entirety.

Robert A. Bennett,

State Director.

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DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR

Bureau of Land Management

[NM-220-1610-DO-026G]

Notice of Intent To Prepare a Resource Management Plan Revision (RMP) for the Taos Field Office, New Mexico, and Associated Environmental Impact Statement (EIS)

AGENCY: Bureau of Land Management, Interior.

ACTION: Notice of intent.

SUMMARY: The Bureau of Land Management (BLM) Field Office, Taos, New Mexico, intends to prepare a Resource Management Plan Revision with an associated Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) for the Taos Field Office and by this notice is announcing public scoping meetings. The RMP will revise the existing Taos Resource Management Plan.

DATES: The BLM will announce public scoping meetings to identify relevant issues through local news media, newsletters and the BLM Web site http://www.nm.blm.gov/tao/taos_rmpa/taos_rmpa.htm at least 15 days prior to the first meeting. We will provide formal opportunities for public participation upon publication of the Draft RMP/EIS.

ADDRESSES: You may submit comments by any of the following methods:

- Web site: http://www.nm.blm.gov/tao/taos_rmp/taos_rmp.htm.
- Fax: (505) 758-1620.

- Mail: Attn: RMPR Comments, BLM-Taos, 226 Cruz Alta Rd., Taos, NM 87571.

Documents pertinent to this proposal may be examined at the Taos Field Office.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: For further information and/or to have your name added to our mailing list, contact Ms. Sharon "Sher" Churchill, telephone (505) 751-4725; e-mail sharon_churchill@nm.blm.gov.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: This document provides notice that the BLM Field Office, Taos, New Mexico, intends to prepare a RMP with associated EIS for the Taos Field Office and announces public scoping meetings.

The planning area is located in Taos, Rio Arriba, Santa Fe, Colfax, Harding, Los Alamos, Mora, San Miguel and Union counties in the state of New Mexico. This planning activity encompasses approximately 593,659 surface acres of public land and 4,331,946 acres of Federal mineral estate. The plan revision will fulfill the obligations set forth by the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA), the Federal Land Policy and Management Act (FLPMA), and BLM management policies. The BLM will work collaboratively with interested parties to identify the management decisions that are best suited to local, regional, and national needs and concerns.

The purpose of the public scoping process is to determine relevant issues that will influence the scope of the environmental analysis and EIS alternatives. These issues also guide the planning process. You may submit comments on issues and planning criteria in writing to the BLM at any public scoping meeting or you may submit them to the BLM using one of the methods listed in the **ADDRESSES** section above. To be most helpful, you should submit formal scoping comments within 30 days after the last public meeting. The minutes and list of attendees for each scoping meeting will be available to the public and open for 30 days after the meeting to any participant who wishes to clarify the views he or she expressed. Individual respondents may request confidentiality. If you wish to withhold your name and/or address from public review or disclosure under the Freedom of Information Act, you must state this prominently at the beginning of your written comment. The BLM will honor such requests to the extent allowed by law. All submissions from organizations or businesses, and from individuals identifying themselves as representatives or officials of

organizations or businesses, are available for public inspection in their entirety.

Preliminary issues and management concerns have been identified by BLM personnel, other agencies, and in meetings with individuals and user groups. They represent the BLM's knowledge to date regarding the existing issues and concerns with current land management. The major issues that will be addressed in this planning effort include land tenure adjustment, land uses, special area designations, visual resource management, off-highway vehicle use, and minerals materials. After public comments as to what issues the plan revision should address are gathered, they will be placed in one of three categories:

1. Issues to be resolved in the plan revision;
2. Issues to be resolved through policy or administrative action; or
3. Issues beyond the scope of this plan revision.

The BLM will provide an explanation in the plan revision as to why we placed an issue in category two or three. In addition to these major issues, a number of management questions and concerns will be addressed in the plan revision. The public is encouraged to help identify these questions and concerns during the scoping phase.

Preliminary planning criteria are:

1. Actions must comply with laws, regulations, executive orders, and BLM Manual (*i.e.*, supplemental program guidance).
2. Actions must be reasonable, achievable, allow for flexibility where appropriate, and support adaptive management principles.
3. The Taos RMP Revision will change Field Office management guidance in a number of program areas by either modifying existing direction or adding new direction. As appropriate, RMPR guidance will be developed within an adaptive management framework, providing context and identifying processes and tools for implementing adaptive management.
4. The planning process will include an environmental impact statement that complies with National Environmental Policy Act standards.
5. The planning process will follow guidance provided in the BLM Land Use Planning Handbook H-1610-1.
6. The planning process will be conducted using an interdisciplinary approach.
7. While ensuring conformance with BLM policies and Federal laws, the planning team and Taos Field Office manager will strive to make RMP Revision decisions consistent with