

to be located on Federal Phosphate Lease I-01441); extension of a power line from the existing Smoky Canyon facilities; construction of permanent external overburden storage areas and runoff/sediment control facilities; and construction of an electrical substation and other mine support facilities. A 2.5-mile haul/access road is proposed to transport ore from Panel F to the existing mill at the Smoky Canyon Mine. Once Panel F is mined out, an additional 7.8-mile haul road is proposed to be constructed from Panel G to the existing Panel F, to transport ore to the mill.

The proposed Panel F pit would extend off of the existing lease. The proponent has applied for a lease modification to enlarge Federal Phosphate Lease I-27512 to accommodate those operations. The application includes two tracts, the North Lease Modification and the South Lease Modification, both for the purpose of ore recovery. Subsequent to preparation of the DEIS, the proponent has also applied for a lease modification to Federal Phosphate Lease I-01441 to accommodate 18 acres of off-lease external overburden fill at Panel G. The environmental impacts of mining off of the existing leases, within the lease modification areas, are analyzed in the FEIS.

Many of these proposed activities would occur within Forest Service Inventoried Roadless Areas. Inventoried Roadless Areas are managed according to local land use plans and Forest Service roadless management regulations, such as the Roadless Area Conservation Rule (RACR). The Agency Preferred Alternative identified in the FEIS may be modified in the Record of Decision to comply with laws and regulations applicable at that time.

The agency Preferred Alternative would approve mining both leases described as Panel F and Panel G. To accommodate the proposed off-lease mining, BLM would approve the lease modifications to I-27512 (Panel F). As described in Mining Alternative D, BLM would require construction of a Store and Release cover system to reduce the infiltration of water through seleniferous backfill and external seleniferous overburden fills. The FS would require power line placement on poles along the haul road corridor, as described in Mining Alternative E. The transportation route between Panel F and the existing mine would be constructed according to the Proposed Action. The agency Preferred Transportation Alternative to access Panel G is the Proposed Action, Panel G West Haul/Access Road. The

environmentally preferable transportation alternative would be Alternative 2, the East Haul/Access Road. The Alternative 2 road alignment crosses a portion of private land. Implementation of this alternative is contingent upon the proponent's ability to secure an easement across the private land. Access to Panel G is not required for several years. During that time, if Simplot and the private land holder were to come to a mutual agreement that would provide Simplot an easement, the East Haul/Access Road would replace the Panel G West Haul/Access Road.

#### Alternatives

Issues were identified for the proposed mining of Panels F and G by the agencies and by the public during the scoping process. They include potential effects on: ground water, surface water, geology and minerals, air quality and noise, soils, vegetation, wetlands, wildlife, fisheries and aquatic life, livestock grazing, recreation, Inventoried Roadless Areas, socio-economics, visual resources, cultural resources, and Tribal Treaty Resources. Alternatives to the proposed action were developed to address these issues.

Mining alternatives include mining without one or both lease modifications to Panel F, no external seleniferous overburden fills, no external overburden fills at all, construction of an infiltration-reducing cover over seleniferous material, constructing the power line only within proposed disturbance, and using generators in Panel G instead of a power line. The transportation alternatives include one variation on the haul road between Panel F and the existing mine, two variations of a haul road from Panel G located east of the project area, a more direct haul road from Panel G to Panel F, a variation of the proposed West Haul Road, and using a conveyor system to transport ore from Panel G to the existing mill. Two variations of the conveyor alternative are assessed with alternate routes for moving personnel and equipment between Panel G and the existing mine.

#### Jeff Cundick,

*Acting District Manager, Idaho Falls District, Bureau of Land Management.*

#### Larry Timchak,

*Forest Supervisor, Caribou-Targhee National Forest.*

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## DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR

### Bureau of Land Management

[WY-920-1320-EL]

#### Powder River Regional Coal Team Activities: Notice of Public Meeting in Casper, 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 December 6, 2007, 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. MST on December 6, 2007. The meeting is open to the public.

**ADDRESSES:** The meeting will be held at the Wyoming Oil and Gas Conservation Commission, 2211 King Boulevard, Casper, Wyoming.

**FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:** Robert Janssen, Regional Coal Coordinator, 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 purpose of the meeting is to discuss pending coal lease by applications (LBA's) in the Powder River Basin as well as other Federal coal related actions in the region. Specific coal lease applications and other matters for the RCT to consider include:

1. The Porcupine LBA, a lease application filed by BTU Western Resources on September 27, 2006, which is adjacent to the North Antelope-Rochelle mine. This application was reviewed by the RCT at a public meeting on January 18, 2007. At that time, approximately 5,116 acres and 598 million tons of Federal coal were included in the application. The applicant now wishes to amend this application. More details will be presented at the meeting. The RCT needs to consider the BLM processing schedule for the Porcupine LBA.

2. The BLM is doing a coal review study in the Powder River Basin. The results of this study will be used in the preparation of coal related NEPA documents in the Powder River coal region. The RCT will be updated on the progress and results of this study.

3. Update on U.S. Geological Survey coal inventory work.

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

5. 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, or any party proposing other issues to be considered by the RCT, may either do so in writing to the State Director (922), BLM Wyoming State Office, 5353 Yellowstone Road, Cheyenne, WY 82009, no later than November 21, 2007, or by addressing the RCT with his/her concerns at the meeting on December 6, 2007.

The draft agenda for the meeting follows:

1. Introduction of RCT Members and guests.

2. Approval of the Minutes of the January 18, 2007 Regional Coal Team meeting held in Casper, Wyoming.

3. Coal activity since the last RCT meeting.

4. Industry Presentations on Lease Applications: BTU Western Resources, Modification of the Porcupine LBA.

5. BLM presentation on Powder River Basin coal review study.

6. U.S. Geological Survey presentation on Coal Inventory.

7. BLM land use planning efforts.

8. Other pending coal actions and other discussion items that may arise.

9. Discussion of the next meeting.

10. Adjourn.

Dated: October 22, 2007.

**Robert A. Bennett,**

State Director.

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## DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR

### National Park Service

#### **Draft Environmental Impact Statement/ Comprehensive Management Plan; Ala Kahakai National Historic Trail County of Hawaii, State of Hawaii; Notice of Availability**

**SUMMARY:** Pursuant to § 102(2)(C) of the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969 (Pub. L. 91-190, as amended), and the Council on Environmental Quality Regulations (40 CFR part 1500-1508), the National Park Service, Department

of the Interior, has prepared a Draft Comprehensive Management Plan and programmatic Environmental Impact Statement identifying and evaluating two alternatives to current administration and management of the Ala Kahakai National Historic Trail. These alternatives respond to the National Trails System Act (16 U.S.C. 1241-1251), NPS planning requirements, and the issues identified during public scoping. They address trail administration and management, cultural and natural resource protection, and use of the trail by local residents, Native Hawaiians, and the visiting public.

When approved, the comprehensive management plan will guide, for approximately 15 years, the National Park Service in administering, preserving, protecting, developing, managing, and maintaining the 175-mile trail which includes portions of the ancient and historic ala loa (long trail; coastal trail around the island). The EIS compares baseline conditions of a "no action" alternative with potential impacts and two "action" alternatives and, where appropriate, suggests mitigation measures to reduce the intensity of the potential effect or to avoid the potential effect. Three other preliminary alternatives were considered but rejected because they did not achieve the objectives of the plan or were infeasible. An "environmentally preferred" alternative is also identified.

*Background:* The National Park Service (NPS) administers the Ala Kahakai National Historic Trail (NHT), added to the National Trails System by the U.S. Congress on November 13, 2000. The legislation authorizing the Ala Kahakai NHT identifies an approximately 175-mile portion of prehistoric ala loa (long trail) and other trails on or parallel to the seacoast extending from Upolu Point on the north tip of Hawaii Island down the west coast of the island around South Point to the east boundary of Hawaii Volcanoes National Park. The Ala Kahakai NHT combines surviving elements of the ancient ala loa with segments of later government trails (alanui aupuni), which developed on or parallel to the traditional routes, and more recent pathways and roads that create links between the historic segments.

The purposes of the Ala Kahakai NHT, derived from the legislative history, the Feasibility Study, and the public scoping phase completed in 2003, are to:

- Preserve, protect, reestablish as necessary, and maintain a substantial

portion of the ancient ala loa and associated resources and values, along with linking trails on or parallel to the shoreline on Hawaii Island, and

- Provide for a high quality experience, enjoyment, and education (guided by Native Hawaiian protocol and etiquette) while protecting the trail's natural and cultural heritage and respecting private and community interest.

Federal ownership of the Ala Kahakai NHT is limited to the trail alignment within the four national parks it links: Pu'ukohola Heiau National Historic Site, Kaloko-Honokohau National Historical Park (NHP), Pu'uuhonua o Honaunau NHP, and Hawaii Volcanoes National Park. Approximately 17% of the NHT is within the boundaries of these national parks. With trail authorization, these trail segments become federally protected components of the NHT, in compliance with § 3(a)(3) of the National Trails System Act.

The National Trails System Act, as amended, requires the preparation of a comprehensive management plan (CMP) for each new trail in the system. The CMP is intended to provide direction for natural and cultural resource preservation, education, and trail user experience of the Ala Kahakai NHT over the next 15 years. It considers the trail in its entirety. It identifies the necessity of community partnerships to protect trail resources and provide appropriate trail user services. As a partnership endeavor, the success of this plan is not solely determined by the NPS; rather its success rests with the will and preservation of other local government agencies, communities, organizations, neighborhood associations, and individuals who have the capacity and desire to implement actions within this plan.

*Proposed Plan and Alternatives:* *Alternative C* (both the agency-preferred as well as the "environmentally preferred" alternative), is based on the traditional Hawaiian trail system in which multiple trail alignments within the ahupua'a (mountain to sea land division) are integral to land use and stewardship. Within the planning period of 15 years, the goal would be to complete the linear trail within the priority zone from Kawaihae to Pu'uuhonua o Honaunau NHP (73 miles) and to protect other segments outside of that area as feasible. In addition, on publicly-owned lands the Ala Kahakai NHT would include inland portions of the ala loa or other historic trails that run lateral to the shoreline and would be connected to ancient or historic mauka-makai (mountain to sea) trails that would have traditionally been part