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Done at Washington, DC, on April 18, 2012.

Alfred V. Almanza,
Administrator.

[FR Doc. 2012-9797 Filed 4-19-12; 4:15 pm]

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DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

Forest Service

Notice of Delegation of Authority From the Regional Forester, Pacific Southwest Region, to Forest Supervisor, Eldorado National Forest, for the El Dorado County Rubicon Trail Forest Road and Trail Act Easement

AGENCY: Forest Service, USDA.

ACTION: Notice.

SUMMARY: The Regional Forester, Pacific Southwest Region, hereby delegates to the Forest Supervisor, Eldorado National Forest, authority to grant a Forest Road and Trail Act easement to El Dorado County for the Rubicon Trail.

DATES: April 19, 2012.

ADDRESSES: USDA Forest Service, Pacific Southwest Region, 1323 Club Drive, Vallejo, CA 94592.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Ramiro Villalvazo, Director, Public Services, (707) 562-8856.

Randy Moore,
Regional Forester.

[FR Doc. 2012-9945 Filed 4-24-12; 8:45 am]

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DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

Forest Service

Grand Mesa, Uncompahgre and Gunnison National Forests; Colorado; Federal Coal Lease Modifications COC-1362 & COC-67232

AGENCY: Forest Service, USDA.

ACTION: Notice of intent to prepare an environmental impact statement.

SUMMARY: The Grand Mesa, Uncompahgre and Gunnison National Forests (GMUG) must decide whether or not to consent to Bureau of Land Management (BLM) modifying the Federal Coal Leases COC-1362 and COC-67232 by adding 800 and 922

acres, respectively, to them. If the GMUG does consent to lease, it will prescribe conditions (as stipulations) for the protection of non-mineral resources

DATES: Public comments for this project were received between April 21 and May 21, 2010 during the preparation of an Environmental Assessment. Comments received during that period will be also be considered in this analysis. These comments have informed the issue analysis and alternative development. Additionally, the agency will continue to accept public comments throughout the preparation of the Draft Environmental Impact Statement, which is estimated to be released in May, 2012. The final environmental impact statement is expected in July, 2012.

ADDRESSES: Written comments should be addressed to Grand Mesa, Uncompahgre, and Gunnison National Forest, Attn: Forest Supervisor, 2250 HWY50, Delta, CO 81416. Comments may also be sent via email to comments-rocky-mountain-gmug@fs.fed.us or via facsimile to 970-874-6698.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Niccole Mortenson, 406-329-3163 or nmortenson@fs.fed.us.

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SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

Purpose and Need for Action

Under 43 CFR part 3432 (as amended by the Energy Policy Act of 2005), the holder of a federal coal lease may apply to modify a lease by adding up to 960 acres. The federal agencies are responding to applications to modify existing leases. The GMUG and BLM have identified the need to consider issuing two coal lease modifications for federal coal lands immediately adjacent to existing federal coal leases COC-1362 and COC-67232. The purpose of the lease modifications is to ensure that compliant and super-compliant coal reserves are recovered.

The BLM, charged with administration of the mineral estate on these Federal lands, is required, by law, to consider leasing Federally-owned minerals for economic recovery. The USDA-Forest Service (FS), as the surface management agency, considers consenting to the BLM leasing reserves underlying lands under its jurisdiction, and prescribes stipulations for the protection of non-mineral resources.

Proposed Action

Within the jurisdiction of the Forest Service, the proposed action is to consent to BLM modifying existing federal coal leases COC-1362 and COC-67232 by adding 800 and 922 additional acres (respectively) to ensure that compliant and super-compliant coal reserves are recovered and not bypassed, and to identify stipulations for the protection of non-mineral (i.e. surface) resources.

The proposed lease modifications are located in Gunnison County, Colorado in portions of sections 10, 11, 13, 14, 22, 23 of T.14S. R. 90W., 6th PM. The modification areas include National Forest System (NFS) surface lands managed by the GMUG and the coal estate managed by the BLM.

The proposed action deals primarily with underground mining. It is assumed that longwall mining practices would be used. Surface disturbance may include soil subsidence due to removal of the coal. In the event that post-lease surface activities are proposed and authorized, other soil disturbance may occur due to temporary road construction and drilling of methane drainage wells. A Reasonably Foreseeable Mine Plan (RFMP) has been developed to address potential environmental effects. It is detailed to the extent possible and will be included in the analysis.

Possible Alternatives

No Action Alternative—Analysis of the No Action alternative is required by CEQ 40 CFR 1502.14(d). Under the no action alternative, the lease modifications would not be approved, and no mining would occur in these specific areas. Impacts from mining coal under these areas would not occur on these lands, and the effects from on-going land uses could continue including coal mining activities such as exploration and monitoring related to mine activities, as well as continued recreation and grazing. The land would continue to be managed according to Forest Plan standards, goals and guidelines.

The Following is Common to All Action Alternatives—Within the jurisdiction of the Forest Service, the proposed action is to consent to BLM modifying existing federal coal leases COC-1362 and COC-67232 by adding 800 and 922 additional acres (respectively) to ensure that compliant and super-compliant coal reserves are recovered and not bypassed, and to identify stipulations for the protection of non-mineral (i.e. surface) resources.

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