

DATES: The lease sale will be held at 10 a.m. on Wednesday, August 21, 2013. Sealed bids must be submitted on or before 4 p.m. on Tuesday, August 20, 2013.

ADDRESSES: The lease sale will be held in the First Floor Conference Room (Room 107), of the Bureau of Land Management (BLM) Wyoming State Office, 5353 Yellowstone Road, P.O. Box 1828, Cheyenne, Wyoming 82003. Sealed bids must be submitted to the Cashier, BLM Wyoming State Office, at the address given above.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Mavis Love, Land Law Examiner, or Kathy Muller Ogle, Coal Coordinator, at 307-775-6258, and 307-775-6206, respectively.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: This coal lease sale is being held in response to a lease by application (LBA) filed by Cordero Mining LLC, Gillette, Wyoming. The coal resource to be offered consists of all reserves recoverable by surface mining methods in the following-described lands located approximately 15 miles south-southeast of Gillette, Wyoming, immediately east of State Highway 59, west of the Cordero Rojo Mine, and south of the Belle Ayr Mine.

Sixth Principal Meridian

T. 47 N., R. 71 W.,

Sec. 7, lots 6 to 11, inclusive, and lots 14 to 19, inclusive.

T. 47 N., R. 72 W.,

Sec. 1, lots 9 to 13, inclusive, and NW $\frac{1}{4}$ SE $\frac{1}{4}$;

Sec. 12, lots 1 to 12, inclusive, and lots 14 to 16, inclusive.

The areas described aggregate 1,338.37 acres.

The tract is adjacent to a Federal lease to the east controlled by the Cordero Rojo Mine, to a Federal lease to the north controlled by the Belle Ayr Mine, and to the Maysdorf II South Coal Tract to the southeast awaiting a future lease sale. The LBA is adjacent to additional unleased Federal coal to the west across State Highway 59. A qualified surface owner restricts leasing on the Maysdorf II North Tract toward the south. Most of the acreage offered has been determined to be minable except for the State Highway 59 right-of-way and 100 foot buffer along the western boundary of the LBA. Acreage south of the LBA has been removed from the application due to the lack of qualified surface owner consent; however, the economic analysis of the bonus value for the LBA coal along this southern boundary includes a reasonable cost to acquire an overstrip agreement toward the end of mine life in order to mine the last of the LBA coal. Reasonable costs to move features

such as utilities and pipelines to allow coal recovery have also been included in the economic analysis. In addition, numerous oil and coal bed natural gas wells have been drilled on the tract. The estimate of the bonus value of the coal lease will include consideration of the future production from these wells and the successful coal lessee's interaction with gas producers regarding any pre-existing rights of such producers. An economic analysis of this future income stream will consider reasonable compensation to the gas lessee for lost production of the natural gas when the wells are bought out by the coal lessee. Most of the surface estate of the tract is owned by Alpha Coal West, Inc., with a small portion in the southeast corner owned by Caballo Rojo, Inc.

The LBA tract contains surface mineable coal reserves in the Wyodak Coal Zone currently being recovered in the adjacent, existing mines. Several beds are merged on the LBA tract into a single mineable seam. The average total coal thickness is approximately 69 feet and the range of overburden thickness is approximately 266 to 397 feet. The tract contains an estimated 148,565,000 tons of mineable coal. This estimate of mineable reserves includes the main seam mentioned above but does not include any tonnage from localized seams or splits containing less than 5 feet of coal. It also excludes coal within and along the highway right-of-way as required by typical mining practices. The total mineable stripping ratio of the coal in bank cubic yards per ton is approximately 4.5:1. Potential bidders for the LBA should consider the recovery rate expected from thick seam mining.

The Maysdorf II North LBA coal is ranked as subbituminous C. The overall average quality on an as-received basis is 8,602 British Thermal Units per pound containing approximately 0.24 percent sulfur. These quality averages place the coal reserves near the middle of the range of coal quality currently being mined in the Wyoming portion of the Powder River Basin.

The tract will be leased to the qualified bidder of the highest cash amount provided that the high bid meets or exceeds the BLM's estimate of the fair market value (FMV) of the tract. The minimum bid for the tract is \$100 per acre or fraction thereof. No bid that is less than \$100 per acre, or fraction thereof, will be considered. The bids should be sent by certified mail, return receipt requested, or be hand delivered. The BLM Wyoming State Office Cashier will issue a receipt for each hand-delivered bid. Bids received after 4 p.m. local time on Tuesday, August 20, 2013,

will not be considered. The minimum bid is not intended to represent FMV. The FMV of the tract will be determined by the Authorized Officer after the sale. The lease that may be issued as a result of this offering will provide for payment of an annual rental of \$3 per acre, or fraction thereof, and a royalty payment to the United States of 12.5 percent of the value of coal produced by surface mining methods. The value of the coal will be determined in accordance with 30 CFR 1206.250.

Pursuant to the regulation at 43 CFR 3473.2(f), the applicant for the Maysdorf II North Tract, Cordero Mining LLC, has paid a total case-by-case cost recovery processing fee in the amount of \$86,165. The successful bidder for the Maysdorf II North Tract, if someone other than the applicant, must pay to the BLM the \$86,165 previously paid by Cordero Mining, LLC. Additionally, the successful bidder must pay all processing costs the BLM will incur after the date this sale notice is published in the **Federal Register**, which are estimated to be \$10,000.

Bidding instructions for the LBA tract offered and the terms and conditions of the proposed coal lease are available from the BLM Wyoming State Office at the address above. Case file documents, WYW173360, are available for inspection at the BLM Wyoming State Office.

Nancy L. Beres,

Acting State Director.

[FR Doc. 2013-16629 Filed 7-11-13; 8:45 am]

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DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR

Bureau of Land Management

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Notice of Availability of a Supplement to the Bighorn Basin Draft Resource Management Plan/Environmental Impact Statement, Cody and Worland Field Offices, WY

AGENCY: Bureau of Land Management, Interior.

ACTION: Notice of availability.

SUMMARY: In accordance with the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) of 1969, as amended, and the Federal Land Policy and Management Act (FLPMA) of 1976, as amended, the Bureau of Land Management (BLM) is announcing the availability of a Supplement to the Draft Resource Management Plan (RMP) and Environmental Impact Statement (EIS)

for the Bighorn Basin Planning Area and announcing the opening of the comment period.

DATES: To ensure that comments will be considered, the BLM must receive written comments on the Supplement to the Draft RMP/EIS within 90 days after the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) publishes its notice of availability of the Supplement in the **Federal Register**. The BLM will announce future meetings or hearings and any other public participation activities at least 15 days in advance through public notices, media releases, and/or mailings.

ADDRESSES: You may submit written comments related to the Supplement to the Draft RMP/EIS by any of the following methods:

- *Web site:* www.blm.gov/wy/st/en/programs/Planning/RMPs/bighorn.
- *Email:* BBRMP_WYMail@blm.gov.
- *Mail:* Worland Field Office, Attn: RMP Project Manager, 101 South 23rd, Worland, WY 82401.

Copies of the Supplemental Draft RMP/EIS are available at the following locations:

- Bureau of Land Management, Wyoming State Office, 5353 Yellowstone Road, Cheyenne, WY 82003.
- Bureau of Land Management, Cody Field Office, 1002 Blackburn Street, Cody, WY 82414.
- Bureau of Land Management, Worland Field Office, 101 South 23rd Street, Worland, WY 82401

The Supplement is also available on the Web site: www.blm.gov/wy/st/en/programs/Planning/RMPs/bighorn.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Caleb Hiner, RMP Project Manager, telephone 307-347-5171; address 101 South 23rd Street, Worland, WY 82401; email chiner@blm.gov. Persons who use a telecommunications device for the deaf (TDD) may call the Federal Information Relay Service (FIRS) at 1-800-877-8339 to contact the above individual during normal business hours. The FIRS is available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, to leave a message or question with the above individual. You will receive a reply during normal business hours.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: The Planning Area for the RMP supplement includes lands within the BLM Cody and Worland Field Offices administrative boundaries, in all of Big Horn, Park and Washakie Counties, and most of Hot Springs County in north-central Wyoming. The Planning Area includes all lands, regardless of jurisdiction, totaling 5.6 million acres; however, the BLM will only make decisions on lands that fall under the

BLM's jurisdiction. Lands within the Planning Area under the BLM's jurisdiction make up the Decision Area. The Decision Area consists of BLM-administered surface, totaling 3.2 million acres, and mineral estate, totaling 4.2 million acres. The BLM-administered surface acreage and the Federal mineral estate acreage overlap in some areas.

The Notice of Intent (NOI) to prepare the Bighorn Basin RMP/EIS was published in the **Federal Register** on October 17, 2008 (73 FR 61900), and the Draft RMP/EIS was released to the public on April 22, 2011. On December 9, 2011, the NOI for the BLM's National Greater Sage-grouse Planning Strategy was published in the **Federal Register** (76 FR 77008). The planning area for National Greater Sage-grouse Planning Strategy included the Bighorn Basin Planning Area. The National Greater Sage-grouse Planning Strategy NOI invited the public to nominate or recommend areas on public lands for Greater Sage-grouse and their habitat to be considered as areas of critical environmental concern (ACECs). Through the scoping process, numerous nominations were presented, including a nomination for all priority Greater Sage-grouse habitats to be included. The two additional alternatives that will be analyzed in this Supplement to the Draft RMP/EIS were prepared to include these ACEC nominations, since these nominations were not received during the initial scoping period for the RMP/EIS in 2008. The two additional alternatives in the Supplement to the Draft RMP/EIS analyze all BLM lands within identified Greater Sage-grouse Key Habitat Areas (1.2 million acres—Alternative E) and Sage-grouse Core Population Areas (1.1 million acres—Alternative F), regardless of jurisdiction, as ACECs, as well as constraints on development and management of non-wilderness study area lands with wilderness characteristics. Both geographic boundaries have been identified as priority Sage-grouse habitat (PH), having the highest conservation value to maintaining sustainable Sage-grouse populations. These areas include breeding, late brood-rearing, and winter concentration areas.

Pursuant to 43 CFR 1610.7-2(b), this notice announces a public comment period on the proposed ACECs. A total of two ACECs are proposed in the Supplement. The proposed ACECs and the proposed resource use limitations that will occur for each proposed ACEC if formally designated are:

- **Key Habitat Areas** (1.2 million acres): Value of Concern: Greater Sage-grouse Habitat. Proposed Use

Limitations: Right-of-Way Exclusion Areas, 3 percent surface disturbance limit, closed to fluid mineral leasing, closed to livestock grazing, closed to mineral material disposals, and recommend a withdrawal from appropriation under the mining laws.

- **Core Areas** (1.1 million acres): Value of Concern: Greater Sage-grouse Habitat. Proposed Use Limitations: Right-of-Way Avoidance Areas, 5 percent surface disturbance limit, and timing and surface use restrictions. The Preferred Alternative (Alternative D) within the existing Draft RMP/EIS was developed with consideration of specific issues raised through the 2008 public scoping period, recommendations from cooperating agencies, consideration of planning criteria, impact analysis and conformance with local land use plans. The Preferred Alternative remains unchanged in the Supplement to the Draft RMP/EIS. The final agency decision will follow a public protest period for the Proposed RMP, scheduled for release later in 2013. The Proposed RMP and Final EIS will reflect changes or adjustments based on information received during public comment, new information, or changes in BLM policies or priorities. The Proposed RMP may include portions of any analyzed alternatives or decisions otherwise within the spectrum of alternatives analyzed.

You may submit comments in writing to the BLM at any public meeting, or you may submit them to the BLM using one of the methods listed in the **ADDRESSES** section above. In order to reduce the use of paper and control costs, the BLM strongly encourages the public to submit comments electronically at the project Web site or via email. Only comments submitted using the methods described in the **ADDRESSES** section above will be accepted. Comments submitted must include the commenter's name and street address. Whenever possible, please include reference to either the page or section in the Supplement to the Draft RMP/EIS to which the comment applies.

Before including your address, phone number, email address, or other personal identifying information in your comment, you should be aware that your entire comment—including your personal identifying information—may be made publicly available at any time. While you may ask us in your comment to withhold your personal identifying information from public review, we cannot guarantee that we will be able to do so.

Authority: 40 CFR 1506.6, 1506.10, and 43 CFR 1610.2, 1610.7–2.

Mary Jo Rugwell,

Associate State Director, Wyoming.

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BILLING CODE 4310–22–P

DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR

Bureau of Land Management

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Notice of Intent To Prepare an Environmental Impact Statement for the Lower Gas Hills Conventional Uranium Project, Fremont County, WY

AGENCY: Bureau of Land Management, Interior.

ACTION: Notice.

SUMMARY: Pursuant to the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969, as amended (NEPA) and the Federal Land Policy and Management Act of 1976, as amended (FLPMA), and in response to a proposal filed by Strathmore Resources (US), LTD (Strathmore), the Bureau of Land Management (BLM), Lander Field Office, Wyoming, intends to prepare an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS). By this notice, the BLM is announcing the beginning of the scoping process to solicit public comments regarding issues and resource information for the proposed Lower Gas Hills Conventional Uranium Project (Project) in Fremont County, Wyoming. The Project is a proposed uranium exploration and development project employing open pit mining methods and using heap leach methods for uranium recovery.

DATES: This notice initiates the public scoping process. The BLM can best consider public input if comments and resource information are submitted within 60 days of publication of this notice. To provide the public with an opportunity to review the proposal and project information, the BLM will host public meetings in Lander and Riverton, Wyoming; and will announce the dates, times, and locations for these meetings at least 15 days prior to each event. Announcements will be made by news release to the news media and individual mailings, and posted on the project Web site listed below. Project information and documents including the submitted Plan of Operations will be available on the Project Web site address given below.

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

- *Email:* BLM_WY_Lower_Gas_Hills_Conventional_Mine@blm.gov.

- *Mail:* Lander Field Office, Attn: Kristin Yannone, 1335 Main Street, Lander, WY 82520.

- *Project Web site:* <http://www.blm.gov/wy/st/en/info/NEPA/documents/lfo/LowerGasHillsConvMine.html>.

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

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:

Kristin Yannone, Project Manager, at:

- *Telephone:* 307–332–8400;
- *Address:* 1335 Main Street, Lander, Wyoming 82520;

- *Email:* kyannone@blm.gov.

Persons who use a telecommunications device for the deaf (TDD) may call the Federal Information Relay Service (FIRS) at 1–800–877–8339 to contact the above individual during normal business hours. The FIRS is available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, to leave a message or question with the above individual. You will receive a reply during normal business hours.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: The Lander Field Office intends to prepare an EIS to inform decision-making regarding the proposed Lower Gas Hills Conventional Uranium Project and to begin the public scoping period. The BLM seeks public input on the preliminary issues identified below regarding this Project, as well as other Project issues of public concern. The Project area is located in central Wyoming; 45 miles east of Riverton, 35 miles southwest of Casper, and 70 miles northeast of Lander, Wyoming, in the Gas Hills Mining District of Fremont County, Wyoming. The Project area encompasses approximately 12,400 acres of land, 11,040 acres of which is public land administered by the BLM Lander Field Office. Uranium mining activities have been active in the Gas Hills area since the early 1950s; as a result the proposed project area contains land surface disturbance and variably effective mine land reclamation efforts. In November 2012, Strathmore submitted a Preliminary Plan of Operations in accordance with the BLM's surface management regulations at 43 CFR part 3809 to develop a conventional uranium mining and heap leach recovery operation. The purpose of the proposed Project is to explore for and identify mining reserves and extract and process uranium ore from 4 separate mine units over an anticipated project life of 12 or more years. Strathmore proposes to construct four different mine units in a phased manner utilizing open pit mining methods.

Several mine units will require dewatering of existing open pits prior to and during mining of new open pits. Waste rock and ore material will be stored at the surface during mining, and mine facilities will be constructed at each mine unit. Haul roads will be constructed or re-occupied for ore material to be transported to the central processing facility. Uranium recovery will be performed on-site using heap leach methods and a processing facility to produce yellowcake (uranium oxide-U₃O₈). Strathmore proposes to construct a centrally located uranium recovery facility consisting of a heap leach pad, solution exchange building, and drying facility with ancillary collection and drainage ponds.

Anticipated new surface disturbance associated with the Lower Gas Hills Conventional Uranium Project proposal will include approximately 2,000 total acres; including surface disturbance for the construction of open pits, haul roads, spoils piles and associated facilities. Surface disturbance will be phased over several years, depending on the uranium production rate and the availability of mine construction equipment and personnel. Final surface reclamation is required by regulatory agencies and assured through procurement of a financial guarantee.

The BLM's analysis of any potential impacts from granting surface use authorization for the milling facility and water disposal operations are in addition to the environmental analysis conducted by the Nuclear Regulatory Commission as part of its permitting process.

Final reclamation will commence at the end of surface mining, including placing all mine overburden and spoil back in the mine pits, removing all ponds and buried piping, and re-grading and re-vegetating the disturbed surface with approved native plant species. After vegetation has been reestablished, the mine surface will be returned to its pre-mining use of livestock grazing and wildlife habitat or any other use consistent with the applicable land use plan.

Depending on the residual radiological hazards found to be present within the mill site or processing part of the Project area, ownership of the reclaimed surface may be required to be transferred to the Department of Energy for long-term custodian care until contamination is deemed to no longer be a threat to public health and safety. Strathmore estimates that the Project will employ a mix of full-time personnel and temporary contractors throughout the life of the mine. It is likely that the majority of employees will live in