

significant effect on the human environment.

A preliminary environmental analysis checklist supporting this determination is available in the docket where indicated under **ADDRESSES**. These safety zones are intended to safeguard mariners from the hazards associated with wind farm construction activity. Vessels will be prohibited from entering into, transiting through, mooring, or anchoring within these safety zones while construction vessels and associated equipment are present unless authorized by the Captain of the Port (COTP), Southeastern New England or the COTP's designated representative. It appears that this action will qualify for Coast Guard Categorical Exclusion (34)(g), as described in figure 2-1 of the Commandant Instruction.

We seek any comments or information that may lead to the discovery of a significant environmental impact from this proposed rule.

**List of Subjects in 33 CFR Part 165**

Harbors, Marine safety, Navigation (water), Reporting and recordkeeping requirements, Security measures, Waterways.

For the reasons discussed in the preamble, the Coast Guard proposes to amend 33 CFR part 165 as follows:

**PART 165—REGULATED NAVIGATION AREAS AND LIMITED ACCESS AREAS**

- 1. The authority citation for Part 165 reads as follows:

**Authority:** 33 U.S.C. 1231; 50 U.S.C. 191; 33 CFR 1.05-1, 6.04-1, 6.04-6, and 160.5; Department of Homeland Security Delegation No. 0170.1.

- 2. Add § 165.T0227 to read as follows:

**§ 165.T0227 Safety Zone, Block Island Wind Farm; Rhode Island Sound, RI.**

(a) *Location.* Areas within a 500-yard radius of the following five positions are safety zones:

| Platform    | Latitude      | Longitude      |
|-------------|---------------|----------------|
| WTG 1 ..... | 41° 7.544' N. | 71° 30.454' W. |
| WTG 2 ..... | 41° 7.196' N. | 71° 30.837' W. |
| WTG 3 ..... | 41° 6.886' N. | 71° 31.268' W. |
| WTG 4 ..... | 41° 6.612' N. | 71° 31.747' W. |
| WTG 5 ..... | 41° 6.383' N. | 71° 32.259' W. |

(b) *Enforcement Period.* From 1 July to 30 September 2015, vessels will be prohibited from entering into any of these safety zones, when enforced, during construction activity of five

Block Island Wind Farm (BIWF) wind turbine generators (WTG) located in the positions listed in 2(a) above.

(c) *Definitions.* The following definitions apply to this section:

*Designated representative.* A “designated representative” is any Coast Guard commissioned, warrant or petty officer of the U.S. Coast Guard who has been designated by the Captain of the Port, Sector Southeastern New England (COTP), to act on his or her behalf.

(d) *Regulations.* (1) The general regulations contained in 33 CFR 165.23 as well as the following regulations apply to the safety zones established in conjunction with the construction of the Block Island Wind Farm; Rhode Island Sound, RI. These regulations may be enforced for the duration of construction.

(2) Vessels may not enter into, transit through, moor, or anchor in these safety zones during periods of enforcement unless authorized by the Captain of the Port (COTP), Southeastern New England or the COTP's designated representative. Vessels permitted to transit must operate at a no-wake speed, in a manner which will not endanger construction vessels or associated equipment.

(3) Failure to comply with a lawful direction from the Captain of the Port (COTP), Southeastern New England or the COTP's designated representative may result in expulsion from the area, citation for failure to comply, or both.

Dated: April 1, 2015.

**J.T. Kondratowicz,**

*Captain, U.S. Coast Guard, Captain of the Port Southeastern New England.*

[FR Doc. 2015-09036 Filed 4-20-15; 8:45 am]

**BILLING CODE 9110-04-P**

**ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY**

**40 CFR Part 52**

[EPA-R04-OAR-2015-0209; FRL-9926-46-Region 4]

**Approval and Promulgation of Implementation Plans; North Carolina; Charlotte; Base Year Emissions Inventory and Emissions Statement Requirements for the 2008 8-Hour Ozone Standard**

**AGENCY:** Environmental Protection Agency.

**ACTION:** Proposed rule.

**SUMMARY:** The Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) is proposing to approve a state implementation plan revision submitted by the State of North Carolina, through North Carolina

Department of Environment and Natural Resources, on July 7, 2014, to address the base year emissions inventory and emissions statement requirements for the 2008 8-hour ozone national ambient air quality standards (NAAQS) for the State's portion of the Charlotte Gastonia-Rock Hill, North Carolina-South Carolina Area. Annual emissions reporting (*i.e.*, emission statement) and a base year emissions inventory are required for all ozone nonattainment areas. The Area is comprised of the entire county of Mecklenburg and portions of Cabarrus, Gaston, Iredell, Lincoln, Rowan and Union Counties in North Carolina; and a portion of York County in South Carolina. EPA will consider and take action on the South Carolina submission for the emissions inventory and emissions statement for its portion of this Area in a separate action.

**DATES:** Written comments must be received on or before May 21, 2015.

**ADDRESSES:** Submit your comments, identified by Docket ID No. EPA-R04-OAR-2015-0209 by one of the following methods:

1. *www.regulations.gov:* Follow the on-line instructions for submitting comments.

2. *Email:* R4-ARMS@epa.gov.

3. *Fax:* (404) 562-9019.

4. *Mail:* “EPA-R04-OAR-2015-0209,” Air Regulatory Management Section (formerly the Regulatory Development Section), Air Planning and Implementation Branch (formerly the Air Planning Branch), Air, Pesticides and Toxics Management Division, U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, Region 4, 61 Forsyth Street SW., Atlanta, Georgia 30303-8960.

5. *Hand Delivery or Courier:* Lynorae Benjamin, Regulatory Development Section, Air Planning Branch, Air, Pesticides and Toxics Management Division, U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, Region 4, 61 Forsyth Street SW., Atlanta, Georgia 30303-8960. Such deliveries are only accepted during the Regional Office's normal hours of operation. The Regional Office's official hours of business are Monday through Friday, 8:30 to 4:30, excluding Federal holidays.

Please see the direct final rule which is located in the Rules section of this **Federal Register** for detailed instructions on how to submit comments.

**FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:** Jane Spann, Regulatory Development Section, Air Planning Branch, Air, Pesticides and Toxics Management Division, U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, Region 4, 61 Forsyth Street

SW., Atlanta, Georgia 30303–8960. The telephone number is (404) 562–9029. Ms. Spann can be reached via electronic mail at [spann.jane@epa.gov](mailto:spann.jane@epa.gov).

**SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:** For additional information see the direct final rule which is published in the Rules Section of this **Federal Register**. A detailed rationale for the approval is set forth in the direct final rule. If no adverse comments are received in response to this rule, no further activity is contemplated. If EPA receives adverse comments, the direct final rule will be withdrawn and all public comments received will be addressed in a subsequent final rule based on this proposed rule. EPA will not institute a second comment period on this document. Any parties interested in commenting on this document should do so at this time.

Dated: April 9, 2015.

**Heather McTeer Toney,**

*Regional Administrator, Region 4.*

[FR Doc. 2015–09049 Filed 4–20–15; 8:45 am]

**BILLING CODE 6560–50–P**

## DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR

### Bureau of Land Management

#### 43 CFR Part 3100

[LLWO3100 L13100000.PP0000]

RIN 1004–AE41

#### **Oil and Gas Leasing; Royalty on Production, Rental Payments, Minimum Acceptable Bids, Bonding Requirements, and Civil Penalty Assessments**

**AGENCY:** Bureau of Land Management, Interior.

**ACTION:** Advance notice of proposed rulemaking.

**SUMMARY:** The Bureau of Land Management (BLM) is issuing this Advanced Notice of Proposed Rulemaking (ANPR) to solicit public comments and suggestions that may be used to update the BLM's regulations related to royalty rates, annual rental payments, minimum acceptable bids, bonding requirements, and civil penalty assessments for Federal onshore oil and gas leases. As explained below, each of these elements is important to the appropriate management of the public's oil and gas resources. They help ensure a fair return to the taxpayer, diligent development of leased resources, adequate reclamation when development is complete; and that there is adequate deterrence for violations of

legal requirements, including trespass and unauthorized removal. Aspects of these elements are fixed by statute and beyond the Secretary's authority to revise; however, in many instances they have been further constrained by regulatory provisions (*e.g.*, minimum bond amounts) that have not been reviewed or adjusted in decades. The purpose of this ANPR is to seek comments on this situation and the need for, and content of, potential changes or updates to the existing regulations in these areas.

Specifically, the BLM is seeking comments and suggestions that would assist the agency in preparing a proposed rule that gives the Secretary of the Interior (Secretary), through the BLM, the flexibility to adjust royalty rates in response to changes in the oil and gas market. Absent near-term enactment of new statutory flexibility for new non-competitively issued leases, a future proposed rule would limit any contemplated royalty rate changes to new competitively issued oil and gas leases on BLM-managed lands, because the royalty rate that is charged on non-competitively issued leases is currently fixed by statute at 12.5 percent. The intent of any anticipated changes to the royalty rate regulations would be to provide the BLM with the necessary tools to ensure that the American people receive a fair return on the oil and gas resources extracted from BLM-managed lands.

In addition to the royalty rate, the BLM is also seeking input on: (1) How to update its annual rental payment, minimum acceptable bid, and bonding requirements for oil and gas leases, and (2) Whether to remove the caps established by existing regulations on civil penalties that may be assessed under the Federal Oil and Gas Royalty Management Act (FOGRMA). With respect to annual rental payments, the intent of any potential increase in annual payments would be to provide a greater financial incentive for oil and gas companies to develop their leases promptly or relinquish them, including for potential re-leasing, as appropriate, by other parties, and to ensure that leases acquired non-competitively provide a fair financial return to the taxpayer. With respect to the minimum acceptable bid, the intent of any potential changes is to ensure that the American taxpayers receive a fair financial return at BLM oil and gas lease sale auctions. With respect to bonding requirements, the intent of any potential bonding updates would be to ensure that bonds required for oil and gas activities on public lands adequately capture costs associated with potential

non-compliance with any terms and conditions applicable to a Federal onshore oil and gas lease. The BLM's existing regulations currently set bond minimums that have not been adjusted in 50 years. With respect to penalty assessments, the intent of the potential removal of the regulatory caps would be to ensure that the penalties provide adequate deterrence of unlawful conduct, particularly drilling on Federal onshore leases without authorization and drilling into leased parcels in knowing and willful trespass.

The anticipated updates to BLM's onshore oil and gas royalty rate regulations and other potential changes to its standard lease fiscal terms address recommendations from the Government Accountability Office (GAO), and will help ensure that taxpayers are receiving a fair return from the development of these resources. The anticipated changes to the royalty rate regulations will also support implementation of reform proposals in the Administration's Fiscal Year (FY) 2016 budget.

**DATES:** The BLM will accept comments and suggestions on this ANPR on or before June 5, 2015.

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

*Mail:* Director (630) Bureau of Land Management, U.S. Department of the Interior, 1849 C St. NW., Room 2134LM, Washington, DC 20240, Attention: 1004–AE41.

Personal or messenger delivery: U.S. Department of the Interior, Bureau of Land Management, 20 M Street SE., Room 2134LM, Attention: Regulatory Affairs, Washington, DC 20003.

Federal eRulemaking Portal: <http://www.regulations.gov>. Follow the instructions at this Web site.

**FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:**

Dylan Fuge, Office of the Director, at 202–208–5235, Steven Wells, Division of Fluid Minerals, at 202–912–7143, or Jolly McQuilliams, Division of Fluid Minerals, at 202–912–7156, for information regarding the substance of this ANPR. For information on procedural matters or the rulemaking process generally, you may contact Anna Atkinson, Regulatory Affairs, at 202–912–7438. Persons who use a telecommunications device for the deaf (TDD) may call the Federal Information Relay Service (FIRS) at 1–800–877–8339, 24 hours a day, 7 days a week to contact the above individuals.

**SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:** The Department of the Interior (Department) oversees and manages much of the nation's Federal mineral resources, including onshore oil and natural gas