

DEPARTMENT OF HOMELAND SECURITY**Coast Guard**

[Docket No. USCG–2018–0278]

Notice of Policy Implementing the 2016 Amendments to STCW in Support of the Polar Code**AGENCY:** Coast Guard, DHS.**ACTION:** Notice of policy; request for comments.

SUMMARY: The Coast Guard is announcing the availability of CG–MMC Policy Letter No. 02–18 titled “Guidelines for Qualifications of Personnel for Issuing STCW Endorsements for Basic and Advanced Polar Code Operations.” This policy provides guidance for the issuance of Merchant Mariner Credential endorsements in accordance with the International Convention on Standards of Training, Certification and Watchkeeping for Seafarers, 1978, as amended, for Basic and Advanced Polar Code Operations. This policy is effective today, but the Coast Guard requests public comments on it.

DATES: This policy is effective on June 22, 2018.

Comments and related material must be received by the Coast Guard on or before September 20, 2018.

ADDRESSES: Policy Letter No. 02–18 is available in docket number USCG–2018–0278 on <http://www.regulations.gov>. You may also submit comments identified at that same online docket. See the “Public Participation and Request for Comments” portion of the **SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION** section for further instructions on submitting comments.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: For information about this policy, contact Cathleen Mauro CG–MMC–1 by phone at (202) 372–1449 or by email at Cathleen.B.Mauro@uscg.mil.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: The International Maritime Organization (IMO) adopted the International Code for Ships Operating in Polar Waters, commonly referred to as the Polar Code, to address safety and environmental requirements for ships and the level of training required for deck officers serving on them. The Polar Code came into force on January 1, 2017.

The International Convention on Standards of Training, Certification and Watchkeeping for Seafarers, 1978, as amended, (STCW) Convention and Code is the instrument that provides the international standards for seafarer

training. Through the work of the IMO’s Sub-committee on Human Element, Training and Watchkeeping, amendments to the STCW Convention and Code were developed to define the training requirements supporting the implementation of the Polar Code. These amendments provide minimum standards of competence, sea service and training requirements for certification at the basic and advanced levels. They also contain transitional provisions for mariners with experience operating in polar waters to meet the new requirements. These amendments enter into force on July 1, 2018. After this date, deck officers on ships operating in polar waters will be required to have a Merchant Mariner Credential (MMC) endorsement in Basic or Advanced Polar Code operations.

To address the gap between the time the Polar Code entered into force (January 2017) and the time the supporting STCW amendments enter into force (July 2018), the Coast Guard provided CG–OES Policy Letter No. 01–16, “Guidelines for Training of Personnel on Ships Subject to the Polar Code” (81 FR 7552, Feb. 12, 2016).

CG–OES Policy Letter No. 01–16 was an interim measure to ensure there would be sufficiently trained U.S. mariners by the time the Polar Code entered into force. The Coast Guard did not issue endorsements to mariners who completed training in accordance with that policy.

Cognizant of the approaching date that the STCW amendments enter into force, the Coast Guard will issue STCW endorsements in Basic and Advanced Polar Code Operations to mariners who have voluntarily fulfilled the STCW requirements and who request the endorsement. CG–MMC policy letter No. 02–18 provides information on how to request the endorsement. These endorsements are not currently mandated by Coast Guard regulation; however, since the United States is signatory to the STCW Convention, vessel owners and operators should be aware that their vessels are subject to foreign port state control actions including detention if mariners are not compliant with the STCW Convention and Code.

The policy letter is effective today, and the National Maritime Center is now accepting applications for Polar Code Operations endorsements. We request public comments on the policy letter, including the instructions for requesting endorsements, so that we may improve the letter if needed.

Public Participation and Request for Comments

We view public participation as essential to effective policy development, and will consider all comments and material received during the comment period. If you submit a comment, please include the docket number for this action, and indicate the specific section of CG–MMC Policy Letter No. 02–18 to which your comment applies. Please make your comments as specific as possible, and include any applicable supporting data or other information, such as cost information, you may have.

We encourage you to submit comments through the Federal eRulemaking Portal at <http://www.regulations.gov>, using the instructions on that website. If your material cannot be submitted using <http://www.regulations.gov>, contact the person in the **FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT** section of this document for alternate instructions. Additionally, if you go to the online docket and sign up for email alerts, you will be notified when comments are posted or if a final rule is published.

We accept anonymous comments. All comments received will be posted without change to <http://www.regulations.gov> and will include any personal information you have provided. For more about privacy and the docket, visit <http://www.regulations.gov/privacyNotice>.

Authority: We issue this notice of policy availability under the authority of 5 U.S.C. 552(a) and 46 U.S.C. 7101.

Dated: June 19, 2018.

Jeffrey G. Lantz,*Director of Commercial Regulations and Standards.*

[FR Doc. 2018–13465 Filed 6–21–18; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 9110–04–P**DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR****Bureau of Land Management****[LLNM006200 L99110000.EK0000 XXX L4053RV]****Crude Helium Auction and Sale for Fiscal Year 2019 Delivery****AGENCY:** Bureau of Land Management, Interior.**ACTION:** Notice of auction and sale.

SUMMARY: The Secretary of the Interior (Secretary), through the Bureau of Land Management (BLM) New Mexico State Office, is issuing this Notice to conduct an auction and sale from the Federal Helium Program, administered by the

BLM New Mexico, Amarillo Field Office. The Helium Stewardship Act of 2013 (HSA) requires the BLM to conduct an annual auction and sale of crude helium. The BLM will use the auction and sale process that was established for a previous sale in a **Federal Register** notice dated June 20, 2017.

DATES: The schedule for the auction and sale process is:

- July 18, 2018—FY 2019 helium auction held in Amarillo, Texas
 - July 20, 2018—FY 2019 helium auction results published on the BLM website
 - July 25, 2018—Invoices for auction sent on or before this date; payments due 30 days from invoice
 - July 27, 2018—Invitation for offers (IFO) posted for helium sale
 - August 3, 2018—Bids due from IFO
 - August 6, 2018—Award announcements published on the BLM website
 - August 10, 2018—Invoices for sale sent on or before; payments due 30 days from invoice
 - September 30, 2018—Helium transferred to buyers' storage accounts
- If a high bidder does not submit its payment for helium won at auction by September 15, 2018, volumes will be offered for sale proportionally to the bidders who participated in the Conservation Helium Sale, but who did

not receive their requested volume of helium.

ADDRESSES: The July 18, 2018, helium auction will be held in the main conference room of the Amarillo Field Office, 801 South Fillmore, Suite 500, Amarillo, TX 79101. Supplementary documents referenced in this Notice are available at the BLM helium operations website at: www.blm.gov/programs/energy-and-minerals/helium, see the Helium Stewardship, HSA Implementation page of the website.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Samuel R.M. Burton, Amarillo Field Manager, telephone: 806-356-1000, email: sburton@blm.gov. Persons who use a telecommunications device for the deaf (TDD) may call the Federal Relay Service (FRS) at 1-800-877-8339. The FRS is available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, to leave a message. You will receive a reply during normal business hours.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

A. Purpose and Background

In October 2013, Congress passed the HSA. The HSA requires the Department of the Interior, through the BLM Director, to offer for auction and sale annually a portion of the helium reserves owned by the United States and stored underground at the Cliffside Gas Field near Amarillo, Texas.

On July 23, 2014, the BLM published a "Final Notice for Implementation of Helium Stewardship Act Sales and Auctions" in the **Federal Register** (79 FR 42808) (2014 Final Notice). The 2014 Final Notice contained information about the HSA, definitions of terms used in the Notice, the reasons for the action, and a process for conducting the auctions and sales in FY 2014.

On August 24, 2015, the BLM published a "Notice of Final Action: Crude Helium Sale and Auction for Fiscal Year 2016 Delivery" in the **Federal Register** (80 FR 51304) (2015 Final Notice). The Final Notices for FY 2015 and FY2016 further refined the process the BLM used in FY 2017 for conducting the auction and sale of crude helium. The BLM will use the process set forth in the June 20, 2017 Final Notice (82 FR 28090) for the auction and sale of crude helium to occur in FY 2018 for FY 2019 delivery.

All previous Final Notices are available from the Helium Stewardship, HSA Implementation page of the BLM helium website at www.blm.gov/programs/energy-and-minerals/helium.

B. Volumes Offered in the FY 2019 Helium Auction and Sale

Table 1 identifies the volumes to be offered for auction and sale in FY 2018 for FY 2019 delivery.

TABLE 1—PROJECTED VOLUMES FOR AUCTION AND SALES FOR FY 2019 DELIVERY

Fiscal year (FY)	Forecasted production capability (NITEC study)	In-kind sales (sales to federal users)	Total remaining production available for sale/auction or delivery	Volume available for auction	Volume available for non-allocated sale	Volume available for sale
	MMcf*	MMcf	MMcf	MMcf	MMcf	MMcf
FY 2019	825	130	345***	240**	10	95

* MMcf means one million cubic feet of gas measured at standard conditions of 14.65 per square inch atmosphere (psia) and 60 degrees Fahrenheit.

** 70 percent of total production capacity after deducting in-kind (rounded).

*** Volumes offered fulfill the requirement of the HSA to reach Phase C.

C. FY 2019 Helium Auction

1.01 What is the minimum FY 2019 auction price and the FY 2019 sales price? The minimum FY 2019 auction price is \$110 per Mcf (one thousand cubic feet of gas measured at standard conditions of 14.65 psia and 60 degrees Fahrenheit). The BLM will announce the FY 2019 sale price after the auction has concluded, and the BLM completes its analysis of the auction information. The BLM will use this information to publish the crude helium price for FY 2019. The BLM publishes this crude helium price, effective October 1, 2018, in order to provide a consistent index to the world-wide helium market.

1.02 What will happen to the helium offered but not sold in the helium auction? Any volume of helium offered, but not sold in the FY 2019 auction, will be added to the helium available for sale and will be offered in the FY 2019 sale.

1.03 When will the auction and sale take place? The BLM will offer helium for FY 2019 according to the following schedule:

- July 18, 2018—FY 2019 helium auction held in Amarillo, Texas
- July 20, 2018—FY 2019 helium auction results published on the BLM website
- July 25, 2018—Invoices for auction sent on or before this date; payments due 30 days from invoice

- July 27, 2018—Invitation for offers (IFO) posted for helium sale
- August 3, 2018—Bids due from IFO
- August 6, 2018—Award announcements published on the BLM website
- August 10, 2018—Invoices for sale sent on or before; payments due 30 days from invoice
- September 30, 2018—Helium transferred to buyers' storage accounts (in accordance with Section 1.08)

If the high bidder does not submit its payment for helium won at auction by September 15, 2018, volumes will be offered for sale proportionally to the bidders who participated in the Conservation Helium Sale, but who did

not receive their requested volume of helium.

1.04 What is the auction format? The auction will be a live auction, held in the main conference room of the Amarillo Field Office at 1 p.m. Central Time, on July 19, 2018. The address is 801 South Fillmore, Suite 500, Amarillo, TX 79101. Anyone meeting the HSA definition of a qualified bidder may participate in the auction. The logistics for the auction and the pre-bid qualification form is included in a document entitled, "FY 2019 Helium Auction Notice and Guide" on the Helium Stewardship page of the BLM Helium Program website at www.blm.gov/programs/energy-and-minerals/helium. Questions related to the auction can be submitted by phone to the BLM at 806-356-1000.

1.05 Who is qualified to purchase helium at the auction? Only qualified bidders, as defined in 50 U.S.C. 167(9), may participate in and purchase helium at the auction. The BLM will make the final determination of who is a qualified bidder using the HSA's definition of a qualified bidder, regardless of whether or not that person was previously determined to be a qualified bidder.

1.06 How many helium lots does the BLM anticipate offering at the FY 2019 auction? The BLM anticipates auctioning 240 MMcf in a total of 14 lots for delivery in FY 2019. The lots would be divided as follows:

- 6 lots of 25 MMcf each; and
- 5 lots of 15 MMcf each; and
- 3 lots of 5 MMcf each.

1.07 What must I do to bid at auction? The BLM has described the live auction procedures, including detailed bidding instructions and pre-bid registration requirements, in a document entitled, "FY 2019 Auction Notice and Guide" available on the BLM's helium page at www.blm.gov/programs/energy-and-minerals/helium. The "FY 2019 Auction Notice and Guide" is located in the Helium Stewardship, HSA Implementation page of the BLM Federal Helium Program website.

1.08 When will helium that is purchased at sale or won at auction be available in the purchaser's storage account? The BLM will transfer the volumes won in the FY 2019 auction or purchased at the FY 2019 sale to the buyer's storage accounts on September 30, 2018.

D. FY 2019 Helium Sale

2.01 Who will be allowed to purchase helium in the FY 2019 sale? The crude helium sale will be separated into two distinct portions, a non-allocated portion and an allocated

portion. The non-allocated portion will be ten percent of the total amount offered for sale for FY 2019, and will be available to those storage contract holders who do not have the ability to accept delivery of crude helium from the Federal Helium Pipeline (as defined in 50 U.S.C. 167(2)) as of May 30, 2018. The allocated portion will be 90 percent of the total amount offered for sale for FY 2019, and will be available to any person (including individuals, corporations, partnerships, or other entities) with the ability to accept delivery of crude helium from the Federal Helium Pipeline (as defined in 50 U.S.C. 167(2)).

2.02 How will helium sold in the FY 2019 sale be allocated among those participating in the non-allocated sale? The non-allocated sale will be made available to all qualified offerors not eligible to participate in the allocated sales. The minimum volume that can be requested is 1 MMcf. The total volume available for the non-allocated portion of the sale is 10 MMcf. Any volumes not sold at auction will be distributed between the non-allocated (10 percent) and the allocated sale (90 percent). Any volumes not purchased at the non-allocated sale will be sold in the allocated portion.

2.03 How will the helium sold in the FY 2019 sale be allocated among the persons who have operational capacity to accept delivery of crude helium from the Federal Helium Pipeline? Any person wishing to participate in the allocated portion of the FY 2019 sale needs to report its excess refining capacity and operational capacity a minimum of 14 calendar days prior to the sale, using the Excess Refining Capacity form. The form can be downloaded at www.blm.gov/programs/energy-and-minerals/helium. The form is located in the Helium Stewardship, HSA Implementation page of the website. Each person participating in the sale will then be allocated a proportional share based upon that person's operational capacity.

2.04 How does a person apply for access to the Federal Helium Pipeline for the purpose of taking crude helium? The steps for taking crude helium are provided in the BLM's Helium Operations website at www.blm.gov/programs/energy-and-minerals/helium. The steps are contained in a document entitled, "How to Establish a Storage Contract and Pipeline Connection Point," located in the Federal Helium Operations/Helium Storage page of the website. Reporting forms can be downloaded at the same website address. Reporting forms are located in the Helium Stewardship, HSA

Implementation page of the BLM Federal Helium Program website, and show the requirements and due dates for each report. The length of time required to apply for and obtain access to the Federal Helium Pipeline can vary based on the person's plans for plant construction, pipeline metering installation, and other variables. The BLM is available to provide technical assistance, including contact information for applying for access and meeting any applicable National Environmental Policy Act requirements.

E. Delivery of Helium in FY 2019

3.01 When will I receive the helium that I purchase in a sale or win based on a successful auction bid? Helium purchased at the FY 2019 sale or won at the FY 2019 auction will be delivered starting September 30, 2018, in accordance with the crude helium storage contract. The intent is to ensure delivery of all helium purchased at sale or auction up to the BLM's production capability for the year.

3.02 How will the BLM prioritize delivery? The HSA gives priority to Federal in-kind helium (*i.e.*, helium sold to Federal users) (50 U.S.C. 167d(b)(1)(D)) and (b)(3)). After meeting that priority, the BLM will make delivery on a reasonable basis, as described in the crude helium storage contract, to ensure storage contract holders who have purchased helium at sale or won helium at auction have the opportunity during the year to have that helium produced or refined in monthly increments.

F. Background Documents

Supplementary documents referenced in this Notice are available at the BLM helium operations website at www.blm.gov/programs/energy-and-minerals/helium. They are located in the Helium Stewardship, HSA Implementation page of the website, and include the following documents:

- a. This **Federal Register** Notice for FY 2019 Delivery;
- b. The HSA (50 U.S.C. 167);
- c. FY 2019 Helium Auction Notice and Guide;
- d. 2016 Storage Contract (template for information only);
- e. Determination of Fair Market Value Pricing of Crude Helium;
- f. Storage Fees;
- g. Required Forms for Helium Reporting; and
- h. FY 2014 through FY 2018 **Federal Register** Notices for Helium Auctions and Sales.

Authority: The HSA of 2013 (Pub. L. 113–40) codified to various sections in 50 U.S.C. 167–167q.

Aden L. Seidlitz,

Bureau of Land Management, Acting State Director, New Mexico.

[FR Doc. 2018–13469 Filed 6–21–18; 8:45 am]

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DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR

Bureau of Land Management

[16X.LLUT920000.L71220
0000.ER0000.LVTFJX496770.241A; AZA–34941]

Notice of Intent To Amend a Portion of the Arizona Strip Field Office Resource Management Plan Related to the Kanab Creek Area of Critical Environmental Concern, Arizona

AGENCY: Bureau of Land Management, Interior.

ACTION: Notice of intent.

SUMMARY: In compliance with the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969 (NEPA), as amended, and the Federal Land Policy and Management Act of 1976 (FLPMA), as amended, the Bureau of Land Management (BLM), Arizona Strip Field Office, St. George, Utah, intends to amend a portion of the Arizona Strip Field Office (ASFO) Resource Management Plan (RMP) related to the Kanab Creek Area of Critical Environmental Concern (ACEC). The BLM will incorporate the analysis for the RMP amendment into a Federal Energy Regulatory Commission (FERC) Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) for the Lake Powell Pipeline Project. FERC is the lead agency and the BLM is a cooperating agency. FERC's EIS will analyze the proposed Lake Powell Pipeline Project and the proposed RMP amendment to consider allowing development of the Lake Powell Pipeline within the Kanab Creek ACEC. By this notice the BLM is announcing the beginning of the scoping process to solicit public comments and identify issues pursuant to BLM's land use planning regulations.

DATES: This notice initiates the public scoping process for the RMP amendment with an associated EIS. Comments on issues may be submitted in writing until July 23, 2018. The date(s) and location(s) of any scoping meetings will be announced at least 15 days in advance through local media, newspapers, and the BLM website at: <http://www.blm.gov/arizona>. In order to be included in the analysis, all comments must be received prior to the close of the 30-day public scoping

period or 15 days after the last public meeting, whichever is later. The BLM will provide additional opportunities for public participation as appropriate.

ADDRESSES: You may submit comments on issues and planning criteria related to the Kanab Creek ACEC RMP amendment by any of the following methods:

- **Website:** https://eplanning.blm.gov/epl-front-office/eplanning/nepa/nepa_register.do.

- **Email:** BLM_AZ_ASFO_comments@blm.gov.

- **Fax:** 435–688–3258.

- **Mail:** BLM, Arizona Strip Field Office, Attention: Lorraine Christian/Kanab Creek ACEC RMP Amendment, 345 East Riverside Drive, St. George, Utah 84790–6714.

Documents pertinent to this proposal may be examined at the Arizona Strip Field Office at the address above.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:

Lorraine Christian, BLM Arizona Strip Field Manager, telephone: 435–688–3200; email: lmchrist@blm.gov. Contact Ms. Christian to have your name added to our mailing list. Persons who use a telecommunications device for the deaf (TDD) may call the Federal Relay Service (FRS) at 1–800–877–8339 to contact the above individual during normal business hours. The FRS 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 is located in Coconino and Mohave Counties, Arizona. Only a small portion (900 acres) of the Kanab Creek ACEC would be affected by the proposed Lake Powell Pipeline route, but an RMP amendment is required in order to address inconsistencies between the management direction in the current RMP, the proposed route for the pipeline, and an existing utility corridor designated under the Energy Policy Act of 2005.

Approximately 1 mile of the proposed pipeline would run within an existing utility corridor, designated by the BLM pursuant to Section 368 of the Energy Policy Act of 2005, which overlaps a portion of the ACEC. Approximately 0.5 mile of the proposed pipeline would run inside the ACEC, but outside the existing utility corridor; this pipeline route is proposed due to steep rugged terrain which could be avoided by routing the pipeline outside of the utility corridor. The ASFO RMP encourages new utility rights-of-way (ROW) to be located within the utility corridor to the greatest extent possible. However, the ASFO RMP also

established ACECs as “avoidance areas” for new ROWs. The BLM proposes to amend the ASFO RMP to: (1) Resolve the conflict between the designated Section 368 utility corridor and the ACEC decisions; and (2) Determine whether to allow the proposed Lake Powell Pipeline outside of the utility corridor, and if so, change the visual resource management class for that portion of the ACEC from Class II (where changes to the landscape should be low) to either Class III or Class IV in order to be compatible with utility development.

The purpose of the public scoping process is to determine relevant issues that will influence the scope of the environmental analysis, including alternatives, and guide the planning process. Preliminary issues for the RMP amendment area have been identified by BLM personnel; Federal, State, and local agencies; and other stakeholders. These issues include: Cultural resources, specifically tribal resources and values; special status species; riparian habitat; visual resources; special designations (*i.e.*, Kanab Creek ACEC); and lands and realty, specifically the existing designated utility corridor—Corridor No. 113–116. The analysis will also consider mitigation.

Preliminary planning criteria include: (1) The BLM will continue to manage the Kanab Creek ACEC in accordance with FLPMA and other applicable laws and regulations; (2) The BLM will continue to manage Utility Corridor No. 113–116 in accordance with FLPMA and other applicable laws and regulations; and (3) The amendment process will follow the FLPMA planning process.

You may submit comments on issues and planning criteria in writing to the BLM at any ASFO RMP amendment public-scoping meeting, or you may submit them to the BLM using one of the methods listed in the **ADDRESSES** section above. You should submit comments by the close of the 30-day scoping period or within 15 days after the last public meeting, whichever is later.

The BLM will coordinate the processes of fulfilling requirements of NEPA and Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act (54 U.S.C. 306108), as provided in 36 CFR 800.2(d)(3).

The BLM will consult with Indian tribes on a government-to-government basis in accordance with Executive Order 13175 and other policies. Tribal concerns, including impacts on Indian trust assets and potential impacts to cultural resources, will be given due consideration. Federal, State, and local