

typically held in Washington, DC or by telephone or video conference. Committee meetings may be closed if USDA or USTR determines that a committee will be discussing issues that justify closing a meeting or portions of a meeting, in accordance with 19 U.S.C. 2155(f). Throughout the year, members are requested to review sensitive trade policy information and provide comments regarding trade negotiations. In addition to their other advisory responsibilities, at the conclusion of negotiations of any trade agreement, all committees are required to provide a report on each agreement to the President, Congress, USTR and USDA.

#### *Committee Membership Information*

All committee members are appointed by and serve at the discretion of the Secretary and Trade Representative. Committee appointments are typically for a period of four years but may be renewed for an additional term. Each committee member must be a U.S. citizen and must represent a U.S. entity with an interest in agricultural trade and must not be registered with the Department of Justice under the Foreign Agents Registration Act. To attend most meetings, committee members must have a current security clearance. New members will be guided in how to apply for a security clearance and their appointment will be contingent on successful completion of the investigation. Committee members serve without compensation and are not reimbursed for their travel expenses. No person may serve on more than one USDA advisory committee at the same time unless a specific exception is granted by the USDA Committee Management Officer. No entity may have more than one representative on any single trade advisory committee.

#### *Nominations and Appointments of Members*

**Eligibility:** Nominations for APAC and ATAC membership are open to individuals representing U.S. entities with an interest in agricultural trade without regard to race, color, religion, sex, national origin, age, mental or physical handicap, marital status, or sexual orientation. Equal opportunity practices in accordance with U.S. Government policies will be followed in all appointments to the Committee. To ensure that the recommendations of the Committee reflect the needs of the diverse groups served by USDA, membership shall include to the extent possible, individuals with demonstrated ability to represent minorities, women, and persons with disabilities. Members should have expertise and knowledge of

agricultural trade as it relates to policy and commodity specific issues. Members will normally come from an entity with an interest in agriculture, and will serve as a Representative, presenting the views and interests of a particular U.S. entity that has an interest in the subject matter of the committee. However, should a member be appointed primarily for his or her expertise, and not as a representative of an interest group, he or she shall be designated as a Special Government Employee (SGE). SGEs are subject to specific provisions of the ethics laws, including disclosure of financial interests, if they are appointed because of their personal knowledge, background, or expertise. USDA will assist SGEs in disclosing their financial interest and will provide ethics training on an annual basis.

Appointments are made of individuals only and are not transferrable. No person, company, producer, farm organization, trade association, or other entity has a right to membership on a committee. In making appointments, every effort will be made to maintain balanced representation on the committees with representation from producers, farm and commodity organizations, processors, traders, and consumers. Geographical diversity on each committee will also be sought.

**Nominations:** Nominating a person to serve on any of the committees requires submission of a current resume for the nominee and the USDA AD-755 (Advisory Committee Membership Background Information, OMB Number 0505-0001), available on the internet at: <http://www.fas.usda.gov/trade-advisorycommittees-applying-membership>. A cover letter should also be submitted indicating the specific committee for which the individual is being nominated, why the nominee wants to be a committee member, and his or her qualifications for membership, and how the submitter learned about this call for nominations. The cover letter should also include the statements required below related to Federally Registered Lobbyists and Foreign Firms. If applicable, the application should include a sponsor letter on the non-Federal governmental entity letterhead containing a brief description of the manner in which international trade affects the entity and why the applicant should be considered for membership. Forms may also be requested by sending an email to [ATACs@usda.gov](mailto:ATACs@usda.gov), or by phone at (202) 868-7059.

**Federally Registered Lobbyists:** All nominees must provide a statement confirming their lobbyist status.

Pursuant to the Revised Guidance on Appointment of Lobbyists to Federal Advisory Committees, Boards, and Commissions, published by the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) on August 13, 2014, "federally registered lobbyists are no longer prohibited from serving on the advisory committees in a representative capacity." OMB's revised guidance clarifies that the eligibility restriction does not apply to advisory committee members who are specifically appointed to represent the interests of a nongovernmental entity, a recognizable group of persons or nongovernmental entities (an industry sector, labor unions, environmental groups, etc.), or state or local governments. The lobbyist prohibition continues to apply to persons serving on advisory committees in their individual capacity (e.g., SGEs).

**Foreign Firms:** If the nominee is to represent an entity or corporation with ten percent or greater non-U.S. ownership, the nominee must state the extent to which the organization or interest to be represented by the nominee is owned by non-U.S. citizens, organizations, or interests and demonstrate at the time of nomination that this ownership interest does not constitute control and will not adversely affect his or her ability to serve as an advisor on the U.S. agriculture advisory committee for trade.

Dated: December 18, 2023.

**Cikena Reid,**

*USDA Committee Management Officer.*

[FR Doc. 2023-28407 Filed 12-22-23; 8:45 am]

**BILLING CODE 3410-10-P**

## **DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE**

### **Forest Service**

#### **Ouachita National Forest, Scott and Sebastian Counties, Arkansas; Heavener Coal Leasing Project; Environmental Impact Statement**

**AGENCY:** Forest Service, Agriculture (USDA).

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

**SUMMARY:** The USDA Forest Service (FS) is preparing an environmental impact statement (EIS) as the lead Federal agency with support from Federal cooperating agencies, the U.S. Department of Interior (DOI) Bureau of Land Management (BLM) and Office of Surface Mining Reclamation and Enforcement (OSMRE). The purpose of the analysis is to respond to a Federal coal Lease by Application (LBA) submitted to the BLM from the Emera

Corporation on behalf of Ouro Mining Inc. The application seeks approval to access and recover Federal metallurgical coal resources from approximately 3,077 acres that underly lands on the Ouachita National Forest (ONF). No surface mining is proposed on National Forest System (NFS) lands. The FS and BLM have consent and leasing determinations to be made based in association with this EIS. The OSMRE does not have a decision to be made at this time but may tier to this analysis in the future.

**DATES:** Comments concerning the scope of the analysis for the EIS must be received by January 25, 2024. The draft environmental impact statement (DEIS) is expected in July 2024. The final EIS is expected to be available for review in June 2025.

**ADDRESSES:** Documents pertinent to this proposal are available for review on the project website at: <https://www.fs.usda.gov/project/?project=64897>.

Send electronic comments to: <https://cara.fs2c.usda.gov/Public/CommentInput?Project=64897>.

Send written comments to: Forest Supervisor, Heavener Project, P.O. Box 1270, Hot Springs, AR 71902.

**FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:**

Contact FS Project Manager Michelle Davalos via email at

[SM.FS.HeavCoalProj@usda.gov](mailto:SM.FS.HeavCoalProj@usda.gov) or by phone at 276-220-1670. For the BLM, contact Robert Swithers, District Manager via email at

[SM.FS.HeavCoalProj@usda.gov](mailto:SM.FS.HeavCoalProj@usda.gov) or by phone at 601-919-4650. Individuals who use telecommunication devices for the deaf (TDD) may call the Federal Information Relay Service (FIRS) at 800-877-8339, 24 hours a day, every day of the year, including holidays.

**SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:** On December 21, 2012, a Federal coal LBA was submitted to the BLM Eastern States Office by Emera Corporation on behalf of Ouro Mining, Inc. On March 7, 2014, the BLM accepted the lease application. The application requests access to extract Federal metallurgical coal resources under lands managed by the ONF on the Poteau-Cold Springs Ranger District in Arkansas. The proposed lease area is in T3N, R32W, Sections 8-11, 14, 15, 17-19 and T3N, R33W, Section 13 in Scott and Sebastian Counties, Arkansas. The proposed Federal lease area is located adjacent and directly to the north of current coal leases held by Ouro Mining on private lands near Bates, Arkansas. The Emera Corporation's application involves a mix of reserved public domain lands and acquired lands on the ONF.

BLM is responsible for considering whether a coal lease would be offered through the competitive bid process and what stipulations would be required for surface resource protection. Because the lease would involve minerals underlying the ONF, the FS administrative unit with jurisdiction for managing surface resources, the BLM must have FS consent prior to deciding whether to offer the lease for sale.

**Purpose and Need for Action**

The purpose of the project is to respond to the Federal coal LBA submitted to the BLM Eastern States Office by Emera Corporation on behalf of Ouro Mining Inc. to extract metallurgical coal from 3,077 acres beneath the ONF. Under the Mineral Leasing Act of 1920 (MLA), as amended, 30 U.S.C. 181 *et seq.*, and the Mineral Leasing Act for Acquired Lands of 1947 (MLAAL), as amended, 30 U.S.C. 351 *et seq.* The BLM is responsible for leasing Federal coal and regulation of the development of that coal on approximately 570 million acres of the 700 million acres of mineral estate that is owned by the Federal Government. This responsibility encompasses Federal mineral rights on Federal lands and Federal mineral rights located under surface lands with non-Federal ownership. Under the authority of the MLA and MLAAL, the BLM administers leasing and monitors coal production.

Under the MLA, the BLM has responsibility for reviewing the Emera Corporation application and determining if it will approve the application and offer the lease for sale through a competitive bid process. The BLM takes into consideration whether leasing the applied for lands would be in the public interest (30 U.S.C. 181-287, 351-359; 43 CFR 3425.1 and 3472.1). The BLM regulations state the BLM must reject an application if "leasing of the land covered by the application, environmental or other sufficient reasons, would be contrary to the public interest" (43 CFR 3425.1-8(a)(3)). Many, often competing, interests must be considered in arriving at a public interest determination, including, but not limited to, the applicant's request; the environmental impacts; the economic benefit to the local, state, and national economy; rights of qualified surface owners; ensuring a fair return for the use of the public resources; and conservation of the public resource (BLM Manual 3435). Further, because the lease would involve minerals underlying the ONF, the BLM must have FS consent prior to deciding whether to offer the lease for sale (43 CFR 3461.5). The ONF is an

administrative unit of the FS and as such FS has the jurisdiction for managing surface resources. FS will determine whether to provide consent to the BLM under the applicable statutory standards.

The 2005 Ouachita National Forest Revised Land and Resource Management Plan (ONF Revised Forest Plan) does not address metallurgical coal leasing. For this reason, the FS will determine whether the proposed lease area on NFS lands is suitable for coal leasing. A forest plan amendment that provides additional direction for managing coal may be needed. If needed, the scope of the plan amendment would be limited to the 3,077 acres proposed for Federal metallurgical coal leasing. However, it would be programmatic in nature and plan direction would apply to future projects (36 CFR 219.13(b)). As part of its consent analysis, the Forest Service will consider, but not limit it to, the unsuitability criteria that the BLM applies on its own lands as outlined in 43 CFR 3461.5.

In association with the Federal coal lease application, the Forest Service will respond to a special use permit application received from Arkansas Valley Electric Cooperative to construct and operate approximately 3.0 miles (out of 9 total miles) of 161kV transmission powerline and 2.0 miles of associated new powerline access roads across NFS lands on the ONF for the purpose of providing electricity to the coal operation. The approximately 6.0 miles of powerline not on NFS lands would be addressed in the EIS cumulative effects analysis.

**Proposed Action**

The FS will assess whether the proposed lease area on NFS lands is suitable for coal leasing and if so, whether to consent to leasing 3,077 acres of Federal coal underlying the Ouachita National Forest as described in the Emera Corporation application. As part of assessing consent, the FS will develop lease stipulations that protect surface resources. The stipulations will be included with any FS consent decision to lease. The BLM would include these stipulations in the coal lease.

Additionally, connected actions associated with the lease include the:

- Construction, operation, and maintenance of a 161kV powerline on 3.0 miles of NFS lands and the construction of approximately 2.0 miles of powerline access roads.
- Issuance of a special use permit that authorizes a 100-foot right of way (ROW) for the 161kV powerline.

Issuance of the permit would be contingent on the metallurgical coal lease being sold, and the mining plan approved and permitted.

- If needed, a forest plan amendment that may add management direction for the leasing of metallurgical coal on 3,077 acres.

### Expected Impacts

Disclosure of potential adverse impacts to NFS lands includes subsidence, which means the land surface is lowered as a result of mining activities. Resources potentially affected include, but are not limited to, vegetation, soil, and water. The EIS will address the potential for impacts from increased carbon emissions. Whether greenhouse gas emissions could approach significance over the life of the project is unknown at this time. Construction and maintenance of the electrical powerline and its associated roads would be designed to comply with the ONF Revised Forest Plan; significant impacts to vegetation, water, and soil resources are not expected.

### Lead and Cooperating Agencies

The FS is the lead agency for the preparation and development of the EIS. The BLM and OSMRE are cooperating agencies. The FS will coordinate with BLM and OSMRE as cooperating agencies during preparation of the EIS, during the public review process, and throughout the decision-making process. The FS and BLM will be making separate decisions. The OSMRE does not have a decision to be made at time but may tier to this analysis for future decisions.

### Responsible Officials

The official responsible for the Forest Service consent determination is the Ouachita Forest Supervisor. This authority was delegated by the Southern Region Regional Forester on October 16, 2023. The official responsible for the BLM leasing decision is the BLM Eastern States State Director.

### Scoping Comments and the Objection Process

This notice of intent initiates the scoping process, which guides the development of the EIS. In this process the FS and BLM are requesting comments on the plan amendment, potential alternatives and impacts, and identification of any relevant information, studies or analyses of any kind concerning impacts affecting the quality of the human environment. Additional opportunities for public comment will be provided when the draft EIS is available. Whether virtual or

in-person meetings will be hosted during the scoping period is to be determined. It is important that reviewers provide their comments at such times and in such manner that they are useful to the agency's preparation of the final EIS; therefore, comments should be provided prior to the close of the comment period and should clearly articulate the reviewer's concerns and contentions. Commenting during the opportunity to comment provided by the FS Responsible Official as prescribed by the applicable regulations will also govern eligibility to object once the final EIS and Draft Record of Decision has been published. Comments received in response to this solicitation, including names and addresses of those who comment, will be part of the public record for this proposed action. Comments submitted anonymously will be accepted and considered; however, they will not be used to establish eligibility for the objection process.

The site-specific FS decisions (consent and the powerline) will be subject to the FS's predecisional administrative review procedures established in 36 CFR part 218. Those wishing to object to the site-specific decisions must meet the requirements at 36 CFR part 218, subparts A and B, for the project.

If a forest plan amendment is needed, that decision will be subject to the plan-level administrative review procedures established in 36 CFR part 219. Those wishing to object to the forest plan amendment must meet the requirements at 36 CFR part 219, subpart B (per 36 CFR 219.54). (See 36 CFR 219.59(b).) It is possible that the 36 CFR parts 218 and 219 objection process would run concurrently.

### Permits, Licenses or Other Authorizations Required

Should the BLM decide to sell the Federal metallurgical coal lease through the competitive bid process, OSMRE will be the permitting authority for the 3,077 acres of Federal land for coal leasing. OSMRE would approve and enforce the operator's subsidence control plan and ensure that mining-related impacts on the hydrological balance or acid mine discharge would be minimized. The Federal lease holder would be required to provide OSMRE with a final mine plan that provides details on how the underground mine and any surface infrastructure would be constructed, operated, and maintained.

OSMRE would prepare a mine plan decision document and make a recommendation to the DOI Assistant Secretary of the Interior for Land and

Minerals Management (ASLM) whether to approve, approve with conditions, or disapprove the mine plan. OSMRE would request FS consent on the terms and conditions of the mine plan approval prior to submitting its recommendation to ASLM.

An additional finding is required by the Secretary of the Interior on whether Federal lands within the national forest have significant recreational, timber, economic, or other values that may be incompatible with coal mining operations. That finding, as required by section 522(e)(2) of the Surface Mining Control and Reclamation Act (30 CFR 761.11(b)), would rely on a recommendation of compatibility and determination of compliance (1990 OSMRE and FS memorandum of understanding (MOU)) from the FS, and a subsequent compatibility determination from OSMRE. Operation and reclamation of the metallurgical coal mine would be under the permitting jurisdiction of OSMRE.

### Nature of Decision To Be Made

Among other considerations, the responsible officials will review the proposed action, other alternatives, environmental consequences, in order to make the following decisions:

*For the BLM the decisions to be made are whether:*

- (1) The proposed metallurgical coal lease area is acceptable for coal leasing (43 CFR part 3461).

- (2) Areas unsuitable for surface mining of coal have been identified as required by 43 CFR 3461.5.

- (3) There are special conditions designed to protect resources that would be required for a future coal lease.

- (4) The amount of coal recoverable has been identified and is acceptable for a future consideration of leasing.

- (5) The screening process has been completed in accordance with 43 CFR 3420.1–4(e). If the BLM determines the proposed lease area is suitable and can be made available for a Federal coal lease, the lease would be offered for sale through the competitive bid process. The BLM decision for a lease to utilize Federal lands would be documented in a record of decision (ROD) issued by the BLM.

*For the FS the decisions to be made are whether:*

- (1) The lands underlying the ONF are suitable for coal leasing;

- (2) To provide consent, with appropriate lease stipulations to protect surface resources, to the BLM concerning a Federal coal Lease by Application (LBA) submitted to the BLM from the Emera Corporation on behalf of Ouro Mining Inc.;

(3) To approve the powerline and associated access roads and issue a special use permit with terms and conditions; and

(4) If needed, to approve a forest plan amendment that may provide management direction for coal leasing on 3,077 acres within the ONF.

The FS decision on suitability, consent with surface leasing stipulations, the powerline and access roads special use permit, and a forest plan amendment (if needed) would be documented in a Record of Decision issued by the FS. Consent to the BLM would be issued through correspondence.

### Substantive Provisions

The FS's Land Management Planning Rule at 36 CFR 219.13(b)(2) requires the responsible official to provide notice of which substantive requirements of 36 CFR 219.8 through 219.11 are likely to be directly related to the amendment. Whether a rule provision is directly related to an amendment is determined by the purpose for the amendment and the effects (beneficial or adverse) of the amendment, and is informed by the best available scientific information, scoping, effects analysis, monitoring data or other rationale (36 CFR 219.13(b)(5)). Based on those criteria, the Planning Rule provision likely to be directly related to the forest plan amendment (if needed) is: § 219.10(a)(2) (multiple use).

### Additional Information

The EIS will identify, analyze, and consider mitigation to address the reasonably foreseeable impacts to surface resources from the LBA, the electrical powerline, and the associated access roads. In accordance with 40 CFR 1502.14(e), the agencies will evaluate appropriate mitigation measures not already included in the LBA. Mitigation may include avoidance, minimization, rectification, reduction or elimination over time, and compensation; and may be considered at multiple scales, including the landscape scale. The agencies will utilize and coordinate the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) and land use planning processes to help support compliance with applicable procedural requirements under the Endangered Species Act (16 U.S.C. 1536) and section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act (54 U.S.C. 306108) as provided in 36 CFR 800.2(d)(3), including public involvement requirements of section 106. The information about historic and cultural resources and threatened and endangered species within the area potentially affected by the LBA and

proposed plan amendment will assist the agencies in identifying and evaluating impacts to such resources.

Indian Tribal Nations will be consulted on a government-to-government basis in accordance with Executive Order 13175, BLM MS 1780, and other Departmental policies. Tribal concerns, including impacts on Indian trust assets and potential impacts to cultural resources, will be given due consideration. Federal, state, and local agencies, along with Indian Tribal Nations and other stakeholders that may be interested in or affected by the proposed Federal coal LBA for the Heavener project, the amendment to the ONF Revised Forest Plan, and powerline-associated actions. They are invited to participate in the scoping process and, if eligible, may request or be requested by the agencies to participate in the development of the EIS as a cooperating agency.

Additional opportunities for government-to-government consultation will be provided during the NEPA process.

Dated: December 19, 2023.

**Gregory Smith,**

*Associate Deputy Chief, National Forest System.*

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**BILLING CODE 3411-15-P**

## DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE

### International Trade Administration

[A-570-970]

#### **Multilayered Wood Flooring From the People's Republic of China: Preliminary Results of the Antidumping Duty Administrative Review, Preliminary Determination of No Shipments, and Rescission of Review, in Part; 2021–2022**

**AGENCY:** Enforcement and Compliance, International Trade Administration, Department of Commerce.

**SUMMARY:** The U.S. Department of Commerce (Commerce) preliminarily determines that Jiangsu Senmao Bamboo and Wood Industry Co., Ltd. (Senmao) did not make sales of subject merchandise at less than normal value (NV), and that certain companies had no shipments of subject merchandise during the period of review (POR) December 1, 2021, through November 30, 2022. In addition, we are rescinding the review with respect to one company. We invite interested parties to comment on these preliminary results.

**DATES:** Applicable December 26, 2023.

### FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:

Rebecca Trainor, AD/CVD Operations, Office VIII, Enforcement and Compliance, International Trade Administration, U.S. Department of Commerce, 1401 Constitution Avenue NW, Washington, DC 20230; phone: (202) 482-4007.

### SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

#### Background

Commerce is conducting an administrative review of the antidumping duty order on multilayered wood flooring (MLWF) from the People's Republic of China (China).<sup>1</sup> The review covers 48 companies, including mandatory respondent, Senmao.

For events that occurred since the *Initiation Notice* and the analysis behind our preliminary results herein, see the Preliminary Decision Memorandum.<sup>2</sup> The Preliminary Decision Memorandum is a public document and is on file electronically via Enforcement and Compliance's Antidumping and Countervailing Duty Centralized Electronic Service System (ACCESS). ACCESS is available to registered users at <https://access.trade.gov>. In addition, a complete version of the Preliminary Decision Memorandum can be accessed directly at <https://access.trade.gov/public/FRNoticesListLayout.aspx>. A list of topics discussed in the Preliminary Decision Memorandum is included as Appendix I to this notice.

#### Scope of the Order<sup>3</sup>

The product covered by the *Order* is MLWF from China. For a complete description of the scope of this administrative review, see the Preliminary Decision Memorandum.

#### Partial Rescission of Review

On May 1, 2023, Kahrs International Inc. (Kahrs) timely withdrew its request for review of the Fusong Jinlong Group

<sup>1</sup> See *Initiation of Antidumping and Countervailing Duty Administrative Reviews*, 88 FR 7060 (February 2, 2023) (*Initiation Notice*).

<sup>2</sup> See Memorandum, "Decision Memorandum for the Preliminary Results of Antidumping Duty Administrative Review: Multilayered Wood Flooring from the People's Republic of China; 2021–2022," dated concurrently with, and hereby adopted by, this notice (Preliminary Decision Memorandum).

<sup>3</sup> See *Multilayered Wood Flooring from the People's Republic of China: Notice of Amended Final Affirmative Determination of Sales at Less than Fair Value and Antidumping Duty Order*, 76 FR 76690 (December 8, 2011), as amended in *Multilayered Wood Flooring from the People's Republic of China*, 77 FR 5484 (February 3, 2012) (collectively, *Order*).