

There is no other source of the information, and failure to provide the information is grounds for terminating the contract.

Based on past experience in administering previous helium distribution contracts, BLM estimates that there will be approximately 10 respondents annually and that it will take each respondent an average of approximately 30 minutes to supply the requested information. This includes a range of from 15 minutes to 2 hours. The frequency of response is quarterly. The estimated total annual burden is 20 hours. These numbers may change as BLM gains experience in administering Act and the new contract.

Any interested member of the public may obtain a copy of the proposed contract, without charge, by contacting the person identified under **FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT**.

BLM will summarize and include all responses to this notice in the request for approval to the Office of Management and Budget. All comments will also become part of the public record.

Dated: August 26, 1997.

**Carole Smith,**

*Bureau of Land Management, Information Clearance Officer.*

[FR Doc. 97-23052 Filed 8-28-97; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 4310-84-M

## DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR

### Bureau of Land Management

[NV-930-1430-01; N-16095]

#### **Determination Regarding Opening of Nellis Air Force Range Withdrawn Lands to Mineral Exploration and Development; NV**

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

**ACTION:** Notice.

**SUMMARY:** In accordance with Section 12 of Pub. L. 99-606, as amended by Pub. L. 100-338 in 1988, the Nevada State Director has determined, after conferring with the Commander, Nellis Air Force Base, that no withdrawn lands within the Nellis Air Force Range are suitable to opening for operation under the Mining Law of 1872, The Mineral Leasing Act of 1920, as amended, the Mineral Leasing Act for Acquired Lands of 1947, the Geothermal Steam Act of 1970, or any one or more of such Acts. The Nellis Air Force Range is used as high hazard tactical and weapons training area and is closed to the public.

**FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:** Mike Dwyer, District Manager, Bureau

of Land Management, Las Vegas Field Office, 4765 West Vegas Drive, Las Vegas, Nevada 89108.

**SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:** The Military Lands Withdrawal Action of 1986 (Pub. L. 99-606), as amended, provided for the withdrawal of lands for military purposes in four states, including 2,209,326 acres in Clark, Lincoln, and Nye Counties of Nevada for the Nellis Air Force Range (See 53 FR 25694-25696 July 8, 1988, for the legal description of the affected lands). Section 12(a) requires that the Secretary of the Interior, with the concurrence of the Secretary of the appropriate military department, determine which, if any, of the withdrawn lands may be considered for opening to operation under the Mining Law of 1872, the Mineral Leasing Act of 1920, as amended, the Mineral Leasing Act for Acquired Lands of 1947, the Geothermal Steam Act of 1970, or any one or more of such Acts. The Department of the Air Force has closed the Nellis Air Force Range from public access. The intent of the closure is threefold: to protect the public from injury due to ordnance hazards; to ensure that national security is not compromised; and to ensure that military programs can be conducted without disruption. Therefore, it has been determined that no withdrawn lands within Nellis Air Force Range are suitable to opening for mineral exploration and development.

Dated: August 14, 1997.

**Jean Rivers-Council,**

*Associate State Director, Nevada.*

[FR Doc. 97-22998 Filed 8-28-97; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 4310-HC-P

## DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR

### Bureau of Land Management

[(WY-060-1620-01), WYW136142, WYW136458]

#### **Notice of Availability of a Draft Environmental Impact Statement and Notice of Public Hearing on Two Separate Coal Lease Applications for Federal Coal in the Decertified Powder River Federal Coal Production Region, Wyoming**

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

**ACTION:** Notice.

**SUMMARY:** This notice announces the Availability of a Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS) pursuant to 40 CFR 1500-1508 for the Powder River (WYW136142) and Thundercloud (WYW136458) Coal Lease Applications

in the Wyoming Powder River Basin, and announces the scheduled date and place for a public hearing pursuant to 43 CFR 3425.4. The purpose of the hearing is to receive comments on the DEIS, and on the fair market value, the maximum economic recovery, and the proposed separate competitive sales of coal from the two tracts. The Powder River tract is being considered for sale as a result of a coal lease application received from Powder River Coal Company on March 23, 1995 (WYW136142), for approximately 4,020 acres containing approximately 515 million tons of coal in an area adjacent to the company's North Antelope and Rochelle Mines in Campbell County, Wyoming. The Thundercloud tract is being considered for sale as a result of a coal lease application received from Kerr-McGee Coal Corporation on April 14, 1995 (WYW136458), for approximately 3,400 acres containing approximately 427 million tons of coal in an area adjacent to the company's Jacobs Ranch Mine in Campbell County, Wyoming. The two application areas are about 9 miles apart.

**DATES:** A public hearing will be held at 7 p.m. on Wednesday, October 8, 1997, at the Holiday Inn, 2009 S. Douglas Highway, Gillette, Wyoming. An open house will start at 6:30 p.m., prior to the hearing, to answer questions related to the Lease by Application (LBA) process and these coal lease applications. The DEIS is scheduled to be available to the public on August 22, 1997. In order to assure that comments are considered in the Final Environmental Impact Statement, they should be postmarked no later than October 28, 1997.

**ADDRESSES:** Please address questions, comments or requests for copies of the DEIS to the Casper District Office, Bureau of Land Management, Attn: Nancy Doelger, 1701 East E Street, Casper, Wyoming 82601, or FAX them to 307-234-1525.

**FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:** Nancy Doelger or Mike Karbs at the above address, or phone: 307-261-7600.

**SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:** Both applications were filed as maintenance tract LBAs under the provisions of 43 Code of Federal Regulations (CFR) 3425.1.

On March 23, 1995, Powder River Coal Company filed a coal lease application with the Bureau of Land Management (BLM) for a maintenance tract LBA for the following lands, which contain an estimated 515 million tons of Federal coal:

T. 41 N., R. 70 W., 6th P.M., Wyoming  
Section 6: Lots 10 thru 13, and 18 thru 21;  
Section 7: Lots 6, 11, 14, and 19;

Section 18: Lots 5, 12, 13, and 20;  
*T. 42 N., R. 70 W., 6th P.M., Wyoming*  
 Section 31: Lots 5 thru 20;  
 Section 32: Lots 1 thru 16;  
 Section 33: Lots 1 thru 16;  
 Section 34: Lots 1 thru 16;  
 Section 35: Lots 1 thru 16;

*T. 41 N., R. 71 W., 6th P.M., Wyoming*  
 Section 1: Lots 5, 6, 11, and 12;

Containing 4,023.460 acres more or less.

The BLM has recommended that the following lands be excluded from the tract to enhance the value of remaining unleased Federal coal in the area:

*T. 41 N., R. 71 W., 6th P.M., Wyoming*  
 Section 1: Lots 5, 6, 11, and 12;

Containing 161.24 acres more or less.

The BLM further recommended that the following lands be included in the tract to avoid a potential bypass situation in the future:

*T. 41 N., R. 71 W., 6th P.M., Wyoming*  
 Section 19: Lot 5, and Lot 12 (N $\frac{1}{2}$ );  
 Section 20: Lots 1 thru 4, Lot 5 (N $\frac{1}{2}$ ), Lot 6 (N $\frac{1}{2}$ ), Lot 7 (N $\frac{1}{2}$ ), and Lot 8 (N $\frac{1}{2}$ );  
 Section 21: Lot 4, and Lot 5 (N $\frac{1}{2}$ );

Containing 362.005 acres more or less.

The tract as amended by the BLM contains a total of 4,224.225 acres and approximately 534 million tons of Federal coal and includes the following lands:

*T. 41 N., R. 70 W., 6th P.M., Wyoming*  
 Section 6: Lots 10 thru 13 and 18 thru 21;  
 Section 7: Lots 6, 11, 14, and 19;  
 Section 18: Lots 5, 12, 13, and 20;  
 Section 19: Lot 5, and Lot 12 (N $\frac{1}{2}$ );  
 Section 20: Lots 1 thru 4, Lot 5 (N $\frac{1}{2}$ ), Lot 6 (N $\frac{1}{2}$ ), Lot 7 (N $\frac{1}{2}$ ), and Lot 8 (N $\frac{1}{2}$ );  
 Section 21: Lot 4, and Lot 5 (N $\frac{1}{2}$ );

*T. 42 N., R. 70 W., 6th P.M., Wyoming*  
 Section 31: Lots 5 thru 20;  
 Section 32: Lots 1 thru 16;  
 Section 33: Lots 1 thru 16;  
 Section 34: Lots 1 thru 16;  
 Section 35: Lots 1 thru 16.

The North Antelope and Rochelle Mines are contiguous mines which are both adjacent to the lease application area. Both mines have approved mining and reclamation plans. The Rochelle Mine has an air quality permit approved by the Wyoming Department of Environmental Quality, Air Quality Division (WDEQ/AQD) to mine up to 30 million tons of coal per year. The North Antelope Mine has an air quality permit approved by the WDEQ/AQD to mine up to 35 million tons of coal per year. According to the application, Powder River Coal Company plans no production increase at either mine solely from the acquisition of the proposed lease; the additional tonnage would extend the life of both mines.

Powder River Coal Company previously acquired a maintenance coal lease (WYW119554, issued effective 10/1/92) containing approximately 3,064

acres adjacent to the North Antelope and Rochelle Mines using the LBA process.

On April 14, 1995, Kerr-McGee Coal Corporation filed a coal lease application with the BLM for a maintenance tract LBA for the following lands, which contain an estimated 427 million tons of Federal coal:

*T. 43 N., R. 70 W., 6th P.M., Wyoming*

Section 4: Lots 8, 9, and 15 thru 18;

Section 5: Lots 5 thru 20;

Section 6: Lots 8 thru 23;

Section 7: Lots 5 thru 7, Lot 8 (N $\frac{1}{2}$ ), Lots 9 thru 12; Lot 13 (N $\frac{1}{2}$  and SE $\frac{1}{4}$ ), and Lot 19 (NE $\frac{1}{4}$ );

Section 8: Lots 1 thru 16;

Section 9: Lots 3 thru 6 and 11 thru 14;

*T. 43 N., R. 71 W., 6th P.M., Wyoming*

Section 1: Lots 5 thru 15, 19, and SE $\frac{1}{4}$  NE $\frac{1}{4}$ ;

Containing 3,395.915 acres more or less.

The BLM has recommended that the following acreage be included in the tract to avoid a potential bypass situation in the future:

*T. 43 N., R. 71 W., 6th P.M., Wyoming*  
 Section 1: Lot 16 (N $\frac{1}{2}$ ), Lots 17 and 18;  
 Section 12: Lot 1, and Lot 2 (NE $\frac{1}{4}$ );  
 Containing 149.588 acres more or less.

The tract as amended by the BLM contains a total of 3,545.503 acres and approximately 450 million tons of Federal coal and includes the following lands:

*T. 43 N., R. 70 W., 6th P.M., Wyoming*  
 Section 4: Lots 8, 9, and 15 thru 18;  
 Section 5: Lots 5 thru 20;  
 Section 6: Lots 8 thru 23;  
 Section 7: Lots 5 thru 7, Lot 8 (N $\frac{1}{2}$ ), Lots 9 thru 12, Lot 13 (N $\frac{1}{2}$  and SE $\frac{1}{4}$ ), and Lot 19 (NE $\frac{1}{4}$ );  
 Section 8: Lots 1 thru 16;  
 Section 9: Lots 3 thru 6 and 11 thru 14;  
*T. 43 N., R. 71 W., 6th P.M., Wyoming*  
 Section 1: Lots 5 thru 15, Lot 16 (N $\frac{1}{2}$ ), Lots 17 thru 19, and SE $\frac{1}{4}$ NE $\frac{1}{4}$ ;  
 Section 12: Lot 1, and Lot 2 (NE $\frac{1}{4}$ ).

The acreage applied for in Kerr McGee's application is known as the Thundercloud tract. It is described in a 1983 BLM document entitled "Powder River Coal Region Tract Summaries," which was prepared in anticipation of a Federal coal sale proposed for 1984 that did not take place.

The Jacobs Ranch Mine has an air quality permit approved by the WDEQ/AQD to mine up to 35 million tons of coal per year. According to Kerr-McGee, the additional coal reserves would extend the life of the current mining operations at the Jacobs Ranch Mine.

Kerr-McGee previously acquired a maintenance coal lease (WYW117924, issued effective 10/1/92) containing approximately 1,709 acres adjacent to the Jacobs Ranch Mine under the LBA process.

The Powder River Regional Coal Team reviewed both competitive lease applications at their meeting on April 23, 1996, in Cheyenne, Wyoming, and recommended that both be processed.

The DEIS analyzes three alternatives. The Proposed Action is to lease one or both tracts as applied for to the successful bidder at separate, competitive sales. The second alternative, Alternative 1, is the No Action Alternative, which assumes that neither tract will be leased. The third alternative, Alternative 2, is to lease one or both tracts as modified by BLM to the successful bidder at separate, competitive sales.

The U.S. Forest Service (USFS) is a cooperating agency in the preparation of the EIS because the surface of some of the land included in both tracts is owned by the Federal government and administered by the USFS as part of the Thunder Basin National Grasslands. The Office of Surface Mining Reclamation and Enforcement is also a cooperating agency in the preparation of the EIS because it is the Federal agency that would review the mining plans for the two tracts if they are leased, and recommend approval or disapproval of the mining plans to the Secretary of the Interior.

Dated: August 20, 1997.

**Alan R. Pierson,**  
 State Director.

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## DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR

### Bureau of Land Management

[NV-030-97-1020-00-24-1 A]

### Sierra Front/Northwest Great Basin Resource Advisory Council—Notice of Meeting Location and Times

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

**ACTION:** Resource advisory council meeting locations and times.

**SUMMARY:** In accordance with the Federal Land Policy and Management Act and the Federal Advisory Committee Act of 1972 (FACA) the Department of the Interior, Bureau of Land Management (BLM) Council meetings will be held as indicated below. The agenda includes a business meeting, public comment period and a tour of the new BLM facilities.

All meetings are open to the public. The public may present written comments to the council. Each formal council meeting will have a time