

condition. Additionally, forage production on winter ranges has also been reduced. These impacts to wintering wildlife are currently compounded by significant human activity, such as day and night wildlife observation, still and video photography, snowmobiling, and antler gathering. Because of the increased stress that the presence of motorized vehicles inflict on wintering big game during difficult winter periods, the number of animals that will die on the winter range can increase. This would also decrease production of young during the following summer. Therefore, by closing crucial winter range to motorized vehicles impacts to wintering big game would be reduced.

By this order the following BLM-administered lands are included in this closure:

- The Raymond Mountain WSA is located approximately 15 miles north of Cokeville and contains 32,956 acres.
- The Slate Creek area includes all BLM-administered lands south of Fontenelle Creek, west and north of Route 189, and east of the crest of Slate Creek Ridge, and contains 111,100 acres.
- The Rock Creek area includes all BLM-administered lands south of County Road 204 (Pine Creek Road), west of the crest of Dempsey Ridge, west of Fossil Butte National Monument, north and east of Highway 30, and contains 105,750 acres.
- The Bridger Creek area includes all BLM-administered lands south of Highway 30, west of Fossil Ridge, west of Bear River Divide, north of the Uinta-Lincoln County line, east of the Utah-Wyoming border, and southeast of Highway 89, and contains 98,400 acres.

Maps of these seasonal closure areas will be posted with this notice at key locations that provide access into the closure areas, as well as at the Kemmerer Field Office, 312 Highway 189 North, Kemmerer, Wyoming 83101-9710.

In addition to the exemption of authorized personnel performing official duty, under this closure the following may continue:

- Maintenance and pumping of existing oil and gas facilities by oil and gas leaseholders and their associated authorized operators as approved,
- Conduct of livestock operations by holders of grazing permits as approved, and
- Use of these areas by non-motorized means such as by foot or horseback.

After April 30, 2004, motorized vehicle use will be limited to existing roads and two-track trails.

Authority for closure orders is provided in regulation 43 CFR, subparts 8341.2 and 8364.1. Violations of this closure are punishable by a fine not to exceed \$1000, and/or imprisonment not to exceed 12 months.

DATES: This seasonal closure will be effective from January 1, 2004, through April 30, 2004.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:

Wally Mierzejewski, Outdoor Recreation Planner or Jim Wright, Wildlife Biologist, Bureau of Land Management, 312 Highway 189 North, Kemmerer, Wyoming 83101, or contact by telephone at 307-828-4500.

Dated: December 4, 2003.

Alan L. Kesterke,

Associate State Director.

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DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR

Bureau of Land Management

[AK-930-04-1310-DB]

Notice of Availability and Announcement of Public Subsistence-Related Hearings; Alpine Satellite Development Plan, Draft Environmental Impact Statement; National Petroleum Reserve-Alaska, and Colville River Delta

AGENCY: Bureau of Land Management, Interior.

ACTION: Notice of availability and announcement of public subsistence-related hearings: Alpine Satellite Development Plan, Draft Environmental Impact Statement; National Petroleum Reserve-Alaska, and Colville River Delta.

SUMMARY: The Bureau of Land Management (BLM) announces the availability of the Alpine Satellite Development Plan Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS). The DEIS provides National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) analysis and examines potential impacts of ConocoPhillips Alaska, Inc.'s (CPAI) proposed action to develop five satellite oil accumulations in the Northeast National Petroleum Reserve-Alaska (NPR-A) and the adjacent Colville River Delta. CPAI proposes to develop five drilling pads and associated access roads, bridges, airstrips, pipelines and power lines. The pads are termed CD-3, CD-4, CD-5, CD-6, and CD-7. In the Colville River Delta, CD-3 is on State of Alaska land and CD-4 is on land owned by Kuukpik Corporation, a Native-owned corporation created under the authority

of the Alaska Native Claims Settlement Act for the village of Nuiqsut. CD-5 is on land conveyed to Kuukpik within the NPR-A; CD-6 and CD-7 are on lands administered by the BLM in the NPR-A. The company proposes to place 20 to 30 wells on each pad and to transport the unprocessed, three-phase (oil, gas, and water) drilling product to the Alpine Central Processing Facility for processing. Processed oil would be placed in the existing pipeline system for transport to the Trans-Alaska Pipeline System.

The DEIS evaluates a range of alternatives, consistent with applicable law, by which to accomplish the proposed action while mitigating adverse impacts. Four action alternatives that fulfill the purpose and need of the proposed action are presented and analyzed. The No Action Alternative is presented as a benchmark, enabling the public and decision makers to compare the magnitude of environmental effects of the action alternatives. The alternatives cover the full range of reasonable development scenarios. The Agency's preferred alternative has not been identified in the DEIS, but will be identified in the final EIS.

Also included in the DEIS is an analysis of full-field development (FFD) for an 890,000-acre area that includes the Colville River Delta west of its eastern-most channel and extends west to the vicinity of the mouth of the Kogru River on the west side of Harrison Bay and south from the Kogru River mouth for approximately 45 miles. Though FFD is not proposed at this time, the BLM considers it likely that development besides that currently proposed by CPAI will occur in this area over the next 20 years. As a result, the DEIS evaluates and analyzes alternative development options for potential future development. This approach gives the public and decision makers a comprehensive overview of proposed and potential future development in the area. An agency-preferred alternative or Record of Decision will not be developed for FFD. Decisions on future proposals for developments in the area would be addressed through additional NEPA analysis tiered or incorporated by reference to the final EIS.

Section 810 of the Alaska National Lands Conservation Act requires the BLM to evaluate the effects of plans presented in this DEIS on subsistence activities in the area of the proposed action and alternatives, and to hold public hearings if it finds that any alternative may significantly restrict subsistence activities. The analysis of environmental consequences indicates

the proposed action and two alternatives may significantly restrict subsistence activities. In addition, all alternatives may significantly restrict subsistence in the cumulative case. Therefore, the BLM is holding public hearings on subsistence in conjunction with the public meetings discussed below.

DATES: Written comments on the DEIS will be accepted until March 1. Public meetings or hearings are scheduled for 7 to 9 p.m. at the following locations and dates:

Barrow, Alaska, February 9, 2004, North Slope Borough Assembly Chambers
Nuiqsut, Alaska, February 10, 2004, Kisik Community Center
Atkasuk, Alaska, February 12, 2004, Village Community Center
Anaktuvuk Pass, Alaska, February 17, 2004, Village Community Center
Fairbanks, Alaska, February 18, 2004, Noel Wein Public Library
Anchorage, Alaska, February 23, 2004, Wilda Marston Theater, Z.J. Loussac Library

An open house will precede each meeting at 5:30. The above meetings, any changes or rescheduling of the above meetings, and any additional public meetings will be announced through public notices, media news releases, and/or other mailings.

ADDRESSES: Written comments should be sent to: Alpine Satellite Development Plan EIS, Entrix Project Office, 3701 E. Tudor Road, Suite 208, Anchorage, Alaska, 99507; faxed to 907-563-0439; hand delivered to Entrix, Inc., 3701 E. Tudor Road, Suite 208, Anchorage, Alaska, or to the BLM Public Information Center in the Federal Building, 222 W. 7th Avenue, Anchorage, Alaska; or forwarded electronically to the project Web site at <http://www.alpine-satellites-eis.com>. Individual respondents may request confidentiality. If you wish to withhold your name or street address from public review or from disclosure under the Freedom of Information Act, you must state this prominently at the beginning of your written comment. Such requests will be honored to the extent allowed by law. All submissions from organizations and businesses, and from individuals identifying themselves as representatives or officials of organizations or businesses will be available for public inspection in their entirety. The DEIS will be available in either hard copy or on compact disk at Entrix, Inc., 3701 E. Tudor Road, Suite 208, Anchorage, Alaska, 99507; and the Alaska State Office, Public Information Center at 222 West 7th Avenue, Anchorage, Alaska, 99513-7599. Copies

of the DEIS will also be available for public review at the following locations: City of Anaktuvuk Pass, Anaktuvuk Pass, Alaska; Loussac Library and Alaska Resources Library and Information Service, Anchorage, Alaska; City of Atkasuk, Atkasuk, Alaska; Tuzzy Public Library, Barrow, Alaska; City of Nuiqsut, Nuiqsut, Alaska; and Noel Wein Library, Fairbanks, Alaska. The entire document can be reviewed at the project Web site at <http://www.alpine-satellites-eis.com>.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Jim Ducker, BLM Alaska State Office, 907-271-3130; e-mail Jim_Ducker@ak.blm.gov.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: Public participation has occurred throughout the period since the BLM published a Notice of Intent (NOI) in the **Federal Register** on February 18, 2003, announcing the intent to begin preparation of the Alpine Satellite Development Plan EIS. Public meetings were held in Anchorage, Barrow, Nuiqsut, and Fairbanks between March 6 and March 20, 2003. The BLM and four cooperating agencies—U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE), U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (USEPA), U.S. Coast Guard (USCG), and the State of Alaska have also conducted government-to-government consultation with three Native governments: the Native Village of Barrow, the Inupiaq Community of the Arctic Slope, and the Native Village of Nuiqsut, and have worked closely with the North Slope Borough, the local government of Nuiqsut, and other Federal agencies on the DEIS.

The development on Federal lands within NPR-A is subject to the management direction provided by the BLM's Record of Decision for the Northeast National Petroleum Reserve-Alaska Integrated Activity Plan/Environmental Impact Statement (Northeast NPR-A IAP/EIS). The Record of Decision for this development EIS may amend the Northeast NPR-A IAP/EIS. Any amendment, including exceptions to requirements to the Northeast NPR-A IAP/EIS, would be limited to those changes necessary for the development authorized by BLM following completion of the final EIS and will not constitute a general amendment of the Northeast NPR-A IAP/EIS.

EPA is a cooperating agency because it potentially has a permitting decision to make on the disposal of wastewater from camps under an NPDES permit. The alternatives presented in the DEIS discuss the use of a general permit or an individual permit. The USACE as a

cooperating agency will review the proposed project pursuant to relevant Federal jurisdiction.

Dated: December 8, 2003.

Henri R. Bisson,
State Director.

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DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR

Bureau of Land Management

[ID-070-1150-PG]

Notice of Public Meeting, Upper Snake River Resource Advisory Council Meeting

AGENCY: Bureau of Land Management, Interior.

ACTION: Notice of public meeting.

SUMMARY: In accordance with the Federal Land Policy and Management Act (FLPMA) and the Federal Advisory Committee Act of 1972 (FACA), the U.S. Department of the Interior, Bureau of Land Management (BLM) Upper Snake River Resource Advisory Council (RAC), will meet as indicated below.

DATES: The meeting will be held February 25 and 26, 2003, at the BLM Fire Warehouse, 3630 Overland Road in Burley, Idaho. The meeting will start February 25 at 9 a.m., with the public comment period beginning at approximately 1 p.m. The meeting will adjourn on February 26 at or before 5 p.m.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: The 15-member Council advises the Secretary of the Interior, through the Bureau of Land Management, on a variety of planning and management issues associated with public land management in the BLM Upper Snake River District (USRD), which covers south-central and southeast Idaho. At this meeting, topics we plan to discuss include:

Range Ecology training for new members.

Updates on major planning projects in the USRD, including coordination of subgroups.

BLM's Draft Environmental Impact Statement on proposed changes to Grazing Regulations.

An update on the Idaho BLM's proposed organizational refinements, and the potential changes to the RAC. Brief overview on the Abandoned Mine Lands program, for the education of the RAC.

Other items of interest raised by the Council.

All meetings are open to the public. The public may present written