

SOUTH GILLETTE AREA COAL EIS

Background

Between July 2004 and August 2006, four individual applications for coal leases were filed by the operators of the four operating coal mines in the South Gillette area. These applications and respective mines are Belle Ayr North (Belle Ayr Mine), West Coal Creek (Coal Creek Mine), West Caballo (Caballo Mine) and Maysdorf II (Cordero Rojo Mine). These applications were to provide reserves to allow the mines to continue production. The Powder River Basin Regional Coal Team reviewed these applications at meetings between April 2005 and January 2007, and recommended the LBAs be processed. BLM combined the applications into one EIS because of the geographic proximity of the four applications.

Current Status

The South Gillette Area Final EIS was issued for public comment in August 2009. Responses to comments on the Final EIS were issued July 2010. Records of Decision (RODs) were issued for the Belle Ayr North LBA on July 30, 2010, West Caballo LBA on August 6, 2010, and West Coal Creek LBA on June 2011.

Past Actions

BLM issued a Notice of Intent to prepare an EIS on these LBAs – April 2007

BLM conducted scoping and a public meeting in Gillette – April 2007

A Draft EIS was issued for public comment – October 2008

A public hearing was held in Gillette – November 2008

A Final EIS was issued for public comment – August 2009

Responses to comments on the Final EIS were issued – July 2010

Record of Decision for the Belle Ayr North LBA was issued - July 2010

Record of Decision for the Caballo West LBA was issued - August 2010

Record of Decision for the West Coal Creek LBA was issued – June 2011

Future Actions

BLM will complete the ROD on the Maysdorf II LBA.

BLM will complete pre-sale FMV analysis on the Maysdorf II LBA.

Competitive sales could be scheduled, announced and held, after FMV analysis is complete.

If high bids at sale meet or exceed FMV, leases could be issued to those bidders.

If lease issued, lessees would have to permit the leases for mining through Wyoming DEQ and OSM.