



# News Release

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## **Interior Department Takes Next Step in Comprehensive Review of Federal Coal Program** *BLM To Gather Public Input at Scoping Meetings Across Nation*

WASHINGTON – As the next step in the Department of the Interior’s comprehensive review of the federal coal program, the Bureau of Land Management (BLM) today announced the dates and locations for a series of public meetings in May and June to solicit public input. These meetings will provide the public with opportunities to help the BLM identify and evaluate potential reforms to the federal coal program. Today’s announcement follows last month’s publication of a Notice of Intent to conduct a Programmatic Environmental Impact Statement (PEIS) that began a formal, comprehensive review of the federal coal program.

“As we begin this review, we are looking forward to hearing from the public about a wide range of issues about the federal coal program,” said BLM Director Neil Kornze. “The information we gather will help shape future decisions about this public resource.”

The BLM is particularly interested in gathering public input on the issues and policies that should be outlined in the PEIS, including topics such as whether Americans are receiving a fair return for federal coal, how market conditions affect coal, how federal coal affects the environment, and how these and other factors impact coal-dependent communities. Public feedback obtained during these meetings will help inform the size and scope of the review conducted in the PEIS.

In January, Secretary of the Interior Sally Jewell announced a comprehensive review that will examine a broad array of concerns about the federal coal program following critical reports issued by the Government Accountability Office and Interior’s Office of the Inspector General; concerns raised by members of Congress and other interested stakeholders; and feedback received from a series of public listening sessions last year in Montana, Wyoming, Colorado, New Mexico and Washington, D.C.

Each public scoping meeting is scheduled from 10:00 a.m. – 4:00 p.m. local time in the following six locations:

May 17, 2016            Casper Events Center  
                                 1 Events Center Drive  
                                 Casper, WY 82601

May 19, 2016            Salt Palace Convention Center  
                                 100 West Temple

Salt Lake City, UT 84101

May 26, 2016	Tennessee Theatre 604 S. Gay St. Knoxville, TN 37902
June 16, 2016	Pittsburgh Convention Center 1000 Fort Duquesne Blvd. Pittsburgh, PA 15222
June, 2016	Seattle To be announced
June 23, 2016	Two Rivers Convention Center 159 Main St. Grand Junction, CO 81501

The meetings in Casper, Seattle and Pittsburgh will be live-streamed at [www.blm.gov/live](http://www.blm.gov/live), and all six meetings will have a listen-only audio link via telephone. Those who attend the meetings in person and who wish to speak will be asked to sign-in. Speakers will be called upon on a first-come, first-served basis and will be accommodated to the fullest extent possible given the space and time available. Those interested in attending should check the [BLM Coal PEIS website](#) prior to the meeting for additional information.

Written comments may be submitted until July 23, 2016, using one of the following methods:

Email: [BLM WO Coal Program PEIS Comments@blm.gov](mailto:BLM_WO_Coal_Program_PEIS_Comments@blm.gov)

Mail: Coal Programmatic EIS Scoping  
Bureau of Land Management  
20 M St. SE, Room 2134 LM  
Washington, D.C. 20003

The Interior Department will release an interim report on the PEIS by the end of 2016. The interim report will contain a summary of substantive comments received during the public scoping period and conclusions from the scoping process about potential planning alternatives results. The comprehensive review is expected to take approximately three years to complete.

Additional information on the PEIS can be found [here](#), and additional information on the federal coal program can be found [here](#).

*The BLM manages more than 245 million acres of public land, the most of any Federal agency. This land, known as the National System of Public Lands, is primarily located in 12 Western states, including Alaska. The BLM also administers 700 million acres of sub-surface mineral estate throughout the nation. The BLM's mission is to manage and conserve the public lands for the use and enjoyment of present and future generations under our mandate of multiple-use and sustained yield. In Fiscal Year 2015, the BLM generated \$4.1 billion in receipts from activities occurring on public lands.*