

# Rosebud Coal Mine Lease Modification Notification

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## **BLM Notice of Application to Modify Existing BLM Coal Lease MTM 80697**

Under the provisions of Section 102(2)(C) of the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) of 1969, as amended, and the Mineral Leasing Act of 1920, as amended, the Bureau of Land Management (BLM) intends to prepare an environmental assessment (EA) for an amendment to an existing Coal Lease. This notice, pursuant to Section 102(2)(D)(IV) of NEPA, solicits the views and comments of private and governmental stakeholders in order to ensure that potential socioeconomic and environmental issues are considered and addressed.

The BLM is the designated lead Federal agency for preparation of the EA for this project. Agencies with legal jurisdiction or special expertise have been invited to participate as cooperating agencies in preparation of the EA. Currently, the Office of Surface Mining Reclamation and Enforcement (OSMRE) Western Region and Montana Department of Environmental Quality Division of Permitting and Compliance, Industrial and Energy Minerals - Coal and Uranium Mining have agreed to participate as cooperating agencies.

## **Rosebud Coal Mine Lease Modification Information**

Western Energy Company a subsidiary of Westmoreland Mining LLC operates the Rosebud Mine which uses surface mining methods to extract the coal. Modern mining activities at the mine began in 1968.

Western Energy Company (WEC) proposes to add 160 acres to Federal coal lease MTM 80697 which is located at the Rosebud Coal Mine, near Colstrip, Montana.

The lands involved in the lease modification request are within to the current Rosebud Mine Surface Mining Control and Reclamation Act Areas C-Central C West, and B-Extension Permit boundaries. These permits cover on the order of 15,000 acres of land the WEC controls east of Colstrip, MT along Castle Rock Road.

## **Purpose of BLM's Notice**

The purpose of the notice process is to obtain feedback on relevant issues that may influence the scope of the environmental analysis, including alternatives, and guide the process for developing the EA. BLM, personnel have preliminarily identified the following issues that will be addressed in the EA; potential impacts to surface water and groundwater; plant and animal species including special and sensitive status species; cultural resources and historic properties; noxious weeds; migratory birds; soils; as well as socioeconomic impacts. The BLM is providing notice of the proposed WEC Lease Modification and welcomes all comments on the proposed project for consideration in the EA. BLM will use the NEPA public participation requirements to assist the agency in satisfying the public involvement requirements under NEPA and Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act (NHPA)(16 U.S.C 470(f) pursuant to 36 CFR 800.2(d)(3). The information about cultural resources within the area potentially affected by the proposed Lease Modification will assist the BLM in identifying and evaluating impacts to such resources in the context of both NEPA and Section 106 of NHPA. The BLM will hold a public scoping meet at the Isabel Bills Community Learning Center in Colstrip, Montana on September 25, 2014 from 3:00 – 5:00 P.M.



We will keep you informed of decisions resulting from the EA analysis. The EA will be made available on the BLM's website at:

**<http://www.blm.gov/mt/st/en/info/nepa.html>**

**Written comments and/or resource information can be mailed to\*:**

Bureau of Land Management  
Miles City Field Office  
Attn: Nate Arave  
USDI-BLM Miles City Field Office  
111 Garryowen Road  
Miles City, Mt 59301

Comments also can be submitted electronically at .

[blm\\_mt\\_mcfo\\_WECO\\_EA@blm.gov](mailto:blm_mt_mcfo_WECO_EA@blm.gov)

The BLM must receive all written comments and information by October 10, 2014, in order to ensure that such comments and information are fully considered during the preparation of the EA.

**DISCLAIMER:** *Entire comments, including personal identifying information, may be made publicly available at any time. You may ask the BLM, in your comment, to withhold such information from public review; however, the BLM cannot guarantee that will be possible."*

*\* Facsimile comments will not be accepted. Documents pertinent to this proposal may be examined during business hours, 8:00 a.m. to 4 p.m., Monday through Friday, excluding holidays, at the BLM Miles City Field Office, 111 Garryowen Road, Miles City, MT 59301.*