



United States Department of the Interior

BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT
Wyoming State Office
P.O. Box 1828
Cheyenne, Wyoming 82003-1828



In Reply Refer To:

3425 (LBA)
WY922 (MLove)
WYW172657 (Caballo West LBA)
WYW161248 (Belle Ayr North LBA)
WYW173360 (Maysdorf II LBA)
WYW172585 (West Coal Creek LBA)
South Gillette Area Coal EIS
Phone No: 307-775-6258
FAX No: 307-775-6203

October 1, 2008

Dear Reader:

The Bureau of Land Management (BLM) has prepared this draft environmental impact statement (DEIS) to document and disclose the results of environmental analyses of four applications received by BLM to lease tracts of Federal coal. The tracts are located in the South Gillette Area of the Wyoming Powder River Basin at the Caballo, Belle Ayr, Cordero Rojo, and Coal Creek mines. A copy of this document is provided for your review and comments. The DEIS may be reviewed on the following website:

<http://www.blm.gov/wy/st/en/info/NEPA/cfodocs/southgillette.html>. Copies of the DEIS are also available for public inspection at the following BLM offices:

Bureau of Land Management
Wyoming State Office
5353 Yellowstone Road
Cheyenne, Wyoming 82009

Bureau of Land Management
Casper Field Office
2987 Prospector Drive
Casper, Wyoming 82604

A formal public hearing on these applications to lease Federal coal will be held at 7 p.m. on November 18, 2008, at the George Amos Memorial Building, 412 South Gillette Avenue, Gillette, Wyoming. The purpose of the hearing is to receive comments on the proposed coal lease sales, on the fair market value, and on the maximum economic recovery of the Federal coal resources included in the tracts.

BLM has prepared a separate document entitled *Supplementary Information on the Affected Environment in the General Analysis Area for the South Gillette Area Coal Lease Application EIS* in addition to this DEIS. This document, which is available on request, includes more detailed site-specific information about the potentially affected resources included in the study areas for the South Gillette Area tracts.

BLM will accept public comments on this DEIS, for sixty (60) days commencing on the date the Environmental Protection Agency publishes a Notice of Availability in the Federal Register. Comments received after the end of the 60-day comment period will be considered in preparation of the final EIS as time permits. BLM is also publishing a Notice of Availability and Notice of Hearing in the Federal Register.

If you wish to comment on the DEIS, your comments should relate directly to the document. Comments should be as specific as possible and the location or locations in the document on which you are commenting should be cited. The agencies involved in preparing this draft EIS are required to respond in the final EIS to all substantive comments submitted. Substantive comments should: (1) give any new information that could alter conclusions; (2) show why or how analysis or assumptions in the DEIS are flawed; (3) show errors in data, sources, or methods; or, (4) request clarifications that bear on conclusions.

Opinions or preferences will not receive a formal response, but they will be considered and included as part of the BLM decisionmaking process.

This DEIS was prepared pursuant to the National Environmental Policy Act and applicable regulations, and other applicable statutes, to address possible environmental and socioeconomic impacts that could result from this project. This DEIS is not a decision document. Its purpose is to inform the public and the agency decisionmakers of the impacts of leasing some or all of the South Gillette Area tracts of Federal coal to the existing applicant mines in the Wyoming Powder River Basin and to evaluate alternatives to leasing the Federal coal included in the tracts as applied for.

Comments, including names and addresses of respondents, will be available for public review at the address listed below during regular business hours (7:45 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.), Monday through Friday, except holidays, and will be published as part of the final EIS. Individual respondents may request confidentiality. If you wish to withhold your name or 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 or businesses, and from individuals identifying themselves as representatives or officials of organizations or businesses, will be made available for public inspection in their entirety.

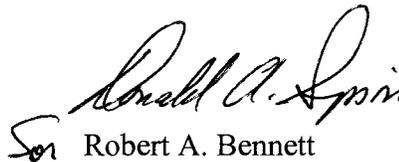
Please send written comments to Bureau of Land Management, Casper Field Office, Attn: Teresa Johnson, 2987 Prospector Drive, Casper, WY 82604. Written comments may also be e-mailed to the attention of Teresa Johnson at "casper_wymail@blm.gov". E-mail comments must

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include the name and mailing address of the commenter to receive consideration. Written comments may also be faxed to 307-261-7587.

If you have any questions or would like to obtain a copy of the supplementary information document or additional copies of this DEIS in either hard copy or PDF, please contact Teresa Johnson at 307-261-7510, Ginger Vickers at 307-261-7773, or at the above address.

Sincerely,


Robert A. Bennett
State Director