

ROCK SPRINGS FIELD OFFICE

NEPA



BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT WYOMING

1792 (040)
WYW39400
Jim Bridger Flue Pond Expansion EA

November 1, 2001

Scoping Notice
PacifiCorp Jim Bridger Power Plant Flue Pond Expansion

Dear Reader:

PacifiCorp has notified the Bureau of Land Management (BLM), Rock Springs Field Office, of plans to expand a flue gas de-sulfurization pond (Pond 2) at the Jim Bridger Power Plant, located 25 miles northeast of Rock Springs, Wyoming. The expansion activities would take place in Pond 2 located in Section 25, 26, and 36 of T. 21 N., R. 101 W., in Sweetwater County. Pond 1 in Sections 26 and 35 of T. 21 N., R. 101 W., would be allowed to dry up and would be reclaimed after approximately five years. The intent of the project is to extend the pond's (Pond 2) life approximately 40 years.

The enclosed document serves as notice of the beginning of the environmental analysis process to fulfill the requirements of the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA). An environmental document will be prepared for these proposals. If you are interested in participating in the process and have concerns, issues, or alternatives you would like to see addressed, please respond with your written comments by December 3, 2001. Send written comments to:

Address: Darlene Horsey, NEPA Coordinator
Rock Springs Field Office
280 Highway 191 North
Rock Springs, Wyoming 82901

Email: rock_springs_wymail@blm.gov
(reference PacifiCorp Flue Pond Expansion in the subject field)

Sincerely,

/s/ Stan McKee
Field Manager

Enclosure: Scoping Notice

November 1, 2001

Scoping Notice

PacifiCorp - Jim Bridger Power Plant
Flue Gas De-Sulfurization Pond Expansion Project
Bureau of Land Management

Rock Springs Field Office

DESCRIPTION OF PROJECT

This notice is being issued to advise the public that an environmental document will be prepared to amend existing Right-of-Way (ROW) Grant WYW39400 for a proposed expansion of a Flue Gas De-sulfurization (FGD) Pond (the Project) at the Jim Bridger Power Plant (Plant), owned and operated by PacifiCorp, located approximately 25 miles northeast of Rock Springs, Wyoming (Figure 1). The two existing FGD ponds (Pond 1 and Pond 2) are nearing capacity and the need for additional FGD pond space will be required in the near future if the Plant is to continue electrical power generation without interruption.

The proposed Project is designed to expand an existing FGD pond (Pond 2) and extend the pond's life approximately 40 years. Expanding the facility will include the following major elements: raising existing dikes, building new dikes, stockpiling topsoil for future reclamation, re-routing service roads, modifying the outlet structure, improving effluent piping, building of a pumpback system, modifying diversion channels, expanding bird-hazing systems, reseeding disturbed areas, and re-alignment of a transmission line. The initial phase of the Project would include raising the existing dikes at Pond 2 approximately 28 feet above the current height. The soil required for this phase would be obtained from the proposed ROW expansion area. All associated new disturbance would occur on land administered by the BLM and is adjacent to the existing facilities of the Jim Bridger Power Plant.

Expansion activities of Pond 2 would take place in Sections 25, 26, and 36 of T21N, R101W, in Sweetwater County. Dike expansion in Section 36 is within a previously approved BLM ROW Grant. Expansion activities in this section would require an amended ROW Grant. PacifiCorp owns the dike expansion area in Section 25. The total request for the new ROW Grant in Section 26 is 266.5 acres of BLM-administered lands (Figure 2). The pond surface area would increase from 225 acres to approximately 402 acres, or a 79 percent increase. A majority of the disturbance would involve the removing of soil from the proposed borrow area, west of the existing Pond 2, and the construction of dikes around the pond to the north, east, and south. As a result of the construction, Pond 2 would cover 177 additional acres of land, increasing the storage capacity from 2,040 acre-feet to 10,519 acre-feet, a 416 percent increase. Construction activities would likely begin in the spring of 2002. As a result of the proposed Project, the existing Pond 1 in Section 26 and 35 of T21N, R101W, would be allowed to dry up and would be reclaimed after approximately five years.

RELATIONSHIP TO EXISTING PLANS AND DOCUMENTS

Resource Management Plan - The proposed FGD pond expansion and related facilities are located on lands administered by the BLM Rock Springs Field Office. The proposed FGD pond 2 expansion project is in conformance with the Green River Resource Management Plan (RMP), Record of Decision approved August 8, 1997. The environmental analysis completed for this project will incorporate appropriate decisions, terms, and conditions of use described in the RMP decisions.

Use Authorization - Use authorizations for the FGD pond expansion and related facilities would be processed through the BLM right-of-way process.

NATIONAL ENVIRONMENTAL POLICY ACT (NEPA) COMPLIANCE

The proposed project is subject to the appropriate level of environmental analysis. To comply with NEPA and the Council on Environmental Quality regulations, which implement NEPA, the BLM is required to conduct an environmental analysis. The environmental document will serve several purposes. It will provide the public and government agencies with information about the potential environmental consequences of the project and alternatives; it will allow the public and various agency officials to evaluate the significance of the potential environmental consequences of the project and alternatives; it will provide the opportunity to evaluate all practicable means to avoid or minimize environmental harm from the project and alternatives; and it will provide the responsible official with information upon which to make an informed decision regarding the project.

One element of the NEPA process is scoping. Scoping activities are initiated early in the process to:

- Identify reasonable alternative measures to be evaluated in the environmental document.
- Identify environmental issues of concern related to the proposed project.
- Determine the depth of analysis for issues addressed in the environmental document.

This scoping statement has been prepared to enable government agencies, the general public, and other interested parties to participate in and contribute to the analysis process. Public input is important in establishing the scope of analysis for any NEPA document, and the BLM encourages public participation.

IDENTIFIED RESOURCE MANAGEMENT ISSUES AND CONCERNS

The following issues and concerns have been identified by the BLM to date. It is not meant to be an all inclusive list, but rather a starting point for public input and a means of identifying the resource disciplines needed to conduct the analysis. Land and resource management issues and concerns associated with the FGD pond expansion project include:

- Potential impacts to wildlife habitats within the project area, including big game and raptors.
 - Social and economic impacts to local communities.
 - Reclamation of disturbed surrounding areas and control of noxious weed invasion.
 - Potential conflicts with livestock management operations in and around the project area.
- Impacts to groundwater resources.
- Potential impacts to cultural resources within the project area.

PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

Public input is important in establishing the level and scope of analysis. The public is encouraged to participate throughout the environmental analysis process to help in identifying the level of analysis needed, alternatives to the proposed action, other issues or concerns that should be analyzed, mitigative opportunities, and any other comments or ideas to help ensure the completeness of the analysis process.

Comments, including names and street addresses of respondents will be available for public review at the BLM Rock Springs Field Office and will be subject to disclosure under the Freedom of Information Act (FOIA). They will be published as part of the Environmental Assessment (EA) and other related documents. Individual respondents may request confidentiality. If you wish to withhold your name or street address from public review and disclosure under the FOIA, 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.

Written comments on the issues and concerns regarding the scope of this proposal will be accepted until December 3, 2001. Upon completion of the EA, a Decision Record will be issued by the BLM and sent to all interested parties.

Comments should be directed to:

Darlene Horsey
NEPA Coordinator
Bureau of Land Management, Rock Springs Field Office
280 Highway 191 North
Rock Springs, Wyoming 82901

Email:rock_springs_wymail@blm.gov
(reference PacifiCorp Flue Pond Expansion)

This scoping notice was mailed to approximately 123 federal, state, and local government entities, citizens, special interest groups, and companies, including but not limited to the following.

FEDERAL AGENCIES

- FEDERAL ENERGY REGULATORY COMMISSION
- U.S. ARMY CORPS OF ENGINEERS
- U.S. DEPARTMENT OF ENERGY
- U.S. FISH AND WILDLIFE SERVICE
- U.S. REPRESENTATIVE BARBARA CUBIN
- U.S. SENATOR CRAIG THOMAS
- U.S. SENATOR MICHAEL B. ENZI

STATE AGENCIES

- GOVERNOR, JIM GERINGER
- STATE SENATORS
- STATE REPRESENTATIVES
- WYOMING GAME AND FISH DEPARTMENT
- WYOMING DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY
- WYOMING OFFICE OF FEDERAL LAND POLICY
- WYOMING STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICE

COUNTY GOVERNMENT

- SWEETWATER COUNTY COMMISSIONERS
- SWEETWATER COUNTY PLANNING AND ZONING

MUNICIPALITIES

- MAYOR OF GREEN RIVER
- MAYOR OF ROCK SPRINGS
- MAYOR OF SUPERIOR
- MAYOR OF WAMSUTTER

NATIVE AMERICAN TRIBES

- EASTERN SHOSHONE NATIONAL
- NORTHERN ARAPAHO BUSINESS
- NORTHERN UTE CULTURAL COMMITTEE
- SHOSHONE-BANNOCK TRIBES

LOCAL MEDIA

- A Press release was sent to local media.

LANDOWNERS, INDUSTRY REPRESENTATIVES, AND GRAZING PERMITTEES

- This scoping notice has been sent to known property owners, industry representatives, and grazing permittees that would be affected by the project.

OTHER AGENCIES AND INDIVIDUALS

- HUMANE SOCIETY OF THE U.S.
- OREGON CALIFORNIA TRAILS ASSOCIATION
- PEOPLE FOR THE USA
- PEOPLE FOR WYOMING
- SIERRA CLUB/REGIONAL DIRECTOR

- SIERRA CLUB/WYOMING CHAPTER
- THE NATURE CONSERVANCY
- WYOMING OUTDOOR COUNCIL
- WYOMING PUBLIC LANDS COUNCIL