

EIS

Draft
Environmental Impact Statement

PIT 14
Coal Lease-by-Application
(Federal Coal Lease Application WYW160394)

March 2006

Wyoming State Office - Rock Springs Field Office



MISSION STATEMENT

It is the mission of the Bureau of Land Management to sustain the health, diversity, and productivity of the public lands for the use and enjoyment of the present and future generations.

BLM/WY/PL-06/005+1320



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:

1790/3425(LBA)

(922BJanssen)

WYW160394

Phone No: 307-775-6206

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Dear Reader:

This Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS) for the Pit 14 Coal Lease-By-Application project is submitted for your review and comment. The DEIS has been prepared to provide a basis for the Bureau of Land Management (BLM) to decide whether to lease Federal coal to Black Butte Coal Company (BBCC) to support further surface mining operations at the Black Butte Coal Mine in Sweetwater County, Wyoming. This document has been prepared to analyze the potential impacts of mining Federal coal adjacent to the Black Butte Mine as described in a lease application submitted by BBCC.

The DEIS is available for review at the BLM offices listed below. The Draft EIS is available for review and downloading from the BLM website at: <http://www.wy.blm.gov>.

BLM
Wyoming State Office
5353 Yellowstone Road
Cheyenne, WY 82009

BLM
Rock Springs Field Office
280 Highway 191 North
Rock Springs, WY 82901

A formal public hearing on the application to lease the tract of Federal coal will be held at 2:00 p.m. May 10, 2006, in the Pilot Butte Conference Room, Rock Springs Field Office at the above address. The purpose of the public hearing is to receive comments on the proposed coal lease sale, and on the fair market value and maximum economic recovery of the Federal coal resource in the tract.

Two alternatives have been analyzed in detail in this DEIS. The Proposed Action Alternative proposes to accept the proponent's lease-by-application and offer the tract of coal specified for lease sale, and assumes that the successful bidder would be BBCC. If the Proposed Action Alternative is selected then BBCC would expand its operations at the Black Butte Mine. Under the No Action Alternative, the proposal as described in the coal lease application would be rejected and the Federal coal applied for would not be leased. The BLM's preferred alternative is the Proposed Action.

If you wish to submit comments on the DEIS, we request that you make them as specific as possible. Comments are more helpful if they include suggested changes, sources, or methodologies. Comments that contain only opinions or preferences will not receive a formal response from the BLM. However, they will be considered and included as part of the BLM decision-making process.

Comments will be accepted for sixty (60) days following the Environmental Protection Agency's (EPA) publication of its Notice of Availability in the Federal Register. Please send written comments to:

Pit 14 Coal LBA
Attention: Teri Deakins
Bureau of Land Management
Rock Springs Field Office
280 Highway 191 North
Rock Springs, Wyoming 82901

This DEIS was prepared pursuant to the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) and other regulations and statutes to address the environmental and socio-economic impacts which could result if this project is implemented. This DEIS is not a decision document. Its purpose is to inform the public and interested parties of impacts associated with implementing the proponent's coal mining proposal of leasing Federal coal to an existing mine, to evaluate alternatives to leasing the coal and to solicit comments. This DEIS also provides information to other regulatory agencies for use in their decision-making process for other permits required for implementation of the project.

A copy of this DEIS has been sent to affected federal, state and local government agencies, and to those persons who have indicated that they wish to receive a copy of the DEIS. Copies of the DEIS are available for public inspection at the BLM offices listed above.

If you have any questions or need additional information regarding the proposal, please contact Joanna Nara-Kloepper at (307) 352-0321. Please direct questions regarding the NEPA process used to prepare the DEIS to Teri Deakins at (307) 352-0211. Ms Nara-Kloepper and Ms. Deakins may also be contacted by visiting the Rock Springs Field Office at the address shown above.

Sincerely,



Robert A. Bennett
State Director

