§ 9.36 Plan of operations.

(a) The proposed plan of operations shall include, as appropriate to the proposed operations, the following:

(1) The names and legal addresses of the following persons: The operator, and the owner(s) or lessee(s) (if rights are State-owned) other than the operator;

(2) Copy of the lease, deed, designation of operator, or assignment of rights upon which the operator’s right to conduct operations is based;

(3) A map or maps showing the location of the perimeter of the area where the operator has the right to conduct operations, as described in § 9.36(a)(2), referenced to the State plane coordinate system or other public land survey as acceptable to the Superintendent; and a description of the interest transferred. Failure to so notify the Superintendent shall render the approval of any previously approved plan of operations void.

(b) The transferring owner shall remain responsible for compliance with the plan of operations and shall remain liable under his bond until such time as the Superintendent is notified of the transfer in accordance with paragraph (a). At that time the Superintendent will prohibit the new owner from operating until such time as the new owner has filed with the Superintendent:

(1) A statement ratifying the existing plan of operations and stating his intent to be bound thereby, or a new plan of operations, and (2) a suitable substitute performance bond which complies with the requirements of §9.48.

§ 9.35 Use of water.

No operator may use for operations any water from a point of diversion which is within the boundaries of any unit unless authorized in writing by the Regional Director. The Regional Director shall not approve a plan of operations requiring the use of water from such source unless the operator shows either that his right to the use of the water is superior to any claim of the United States to the water, or where the operator’s claim to the water is subordinate to that of the United States that the removal of the water from the water system will not damage the unit’s resources. In either situation, the operator’s use of water must comply with appropriate State water laws.

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production facilities and gathering, service and transmission lines; wellsite layout; sources of construction materials such as fill; and the location of ancillary facilities such as camps, sanitary facilities, water supply and disposal facilities, and airstrips. The point within the site of operations identified by registered land surveyor or civil engineer shall be marked with a permanent ground monument acceptable to the Superintendent, shall contain the point's State plane coordinate values, and shall be placed at least to an accuracy of third order, class I, unless otherwise authorized by the Superintendent;

(5) A description of the major equipment to be used in the operations, including a description of equipment and methods to be used for the transport of all waters used in or produced by operations, and of the proposed method of transporting such equipment to and from the site;

(6) An estimated timetable for any phase of operations for which approval is sought and the anticipated date of operation completion;

(7) The geologic name of the surface formation;

(8) The proposed drilling depth, and the estimated tops of important geologic markers;

(9) The estimated depths at which anticipated water, brines, oil, gas, or other mineral bearing formations are expected to be encountered;

(10) The nature and extent of the known deposit or reservoir to be produced and a description of the proposed operations, including:

   (i) The proposed casing program, including the size, grade, and weight of each string, and whether it is new or used;

   (ii) The proposed setting depth of each casing string, and the amount of type of cement, including additives, to be used;

   (iii) The operator's minimum specifications for pressure control equipment which is to be used, a schematic diagram thereof showing sizes, pressure ratings, and the testing procedures and testing frequency;

   (iv) The type and characteristics of the proposed circulating medium or mediums to be employed for rotary drilling and the quantities and types of mud and weighting material to be maintained;

   (v) The testing, logging, and coring programs to be followed;

   (vi) Anticipated abnormal pressures or temperatures expected to be encountered, or potential hazards to persons and the environment such as hydrogen sulfide gas or oil spills, along with plans for mitigation of such hazards;

(11) A description of the steps to be taken to comply with the applicable operating standards of §9.41 of this subpart;

(12) Provisions for reclamation which will result in compliance with the requirements of §9.39;

(13) A breakdown of the estimated costs to be incurred during the implementation of the reclamation plan;

(14) Methods for disposal of all rubbish and other solid and liquid wastes, and contaminating substances;

(15) An affidavit stating that the operations planned are in compliance with all applicable Federal, State and local laws and regulations;

(16) Background information, including:

   (i) A description of the natural, cultural, social and economic environments to be affected by operations, including a description and/or map(s) of the location of all water, abandoned, temporarily abandoned, disposal, production, and drilling wells of public record within a two-mile radius of the proposed site. Where such information is available from documents identified in §9.36(d), specific reference to the document and the location within the document where such information can be found will be sufficient to satisfy this requirement;

   (ii) The anticipated direct and indirect effects of the operations on the unit's natural, cultural, social, and economic environment;

   (iii) Steps to be taken to insure minimum surface disturbance and to mitigate any adverse environmental effects, and a discussion of the impacts which cannot be mitigated;

   (iv) Measures to protect surface and subsurface waters by means of casing and cement, etc.;
§ 9.37 Plan of operations approval.

(a) The Regional Director shall not approve a plan of operations:

(1) Until the operator shows that the operations will be conducted in a manner which utilizes technologically feasible methods least damaging to the federally-owned or controlled lands, waters and resources of the unit while assuring the protection of public health and safety.

(2) For operations at a site the surface estate of which is not owned by the Federal government, where operations would constitute a nuisance to Federal lands or waters in the vicinity of the operations, would significantly injure federally-owned or controlled lands and waters; Provided, however, That if the application of this standard would, under applicable law, constitute a taking of a property interest rather than an appropriate exercise of regulatory authority, the plan of operations may be approved if the operations would be conducted in accordance with paragraph (a)(1) of this section, unless a decision is made to acquire the mineral interest.

(3) For operations at a site the surface estate of which is owned or controlled by the Federal government, where operations would substantially interfere with management of the unit to ensure the preservation of its natural and ecological integrity in perpetuity, or would significantly injure the federally-owned or controlled lands or waters; Provided, however, That if the application of this standard would, under applicable law, constitute a taking of a property interest rather than an appropriate exercise of regulatory authority, the plan of operations may be approved if the operations would be conducted in accordance with paragraph (a)(1) of this section, unless a decision is made to acquire the mineral interest.

(4) Where the plan of operations does not satisfy each of the requirements of §9.36 applicable to the operations proposed.

(b) Within sixty (60) days of the receipt of a plan of operations, the Regional Director shall make an environmental analysis of such plan, and:

(1) Notify the operator that the plan of operations has been approved or rejected, and, if rejected, the reasons for the rejection; or

(2) Notify the operator that the plan of operations has been conditionally approved, subject to the operator's acceptance of specific provisions and stipulations; or

(3) Notify the operator of any modification of the plan of operations which is necessary before such plan will be