

of agricultural drainwater. Of the action alternatives, ecological integrity and health would be highest under Alternative 4 over the long term. Consequently, Alternative 4 has been identified as the environmentally preferred alternative.

Mitigation and Monitoring: Whereas Alternative 2 was put forth in the draft EIS as the Service's proposed course of action and would provide the wetlands with a more secure supply of higher quality water, Alternative 5 was selected for implementation in large part because it provides a broader approach by minimizing adverse impacts to farmland, the agricultural community, groundwater recharge, and related resources in the Carson Division. Adverse impacts will be minimized primarily by minimizing the purchase of Carson Division water rights. Of the action alternatives, Alternative 5 would have the least impact on these resources. By implementing Alternative 5, with the mitigation provisions identified in the ROD, all practicable means to avoid or minimize environmental harm have been adopted.

Potential mitigation measures were identified in the final EIS for reducing or avoiding adverse impacts to agriculture, groundwater recharge, and wildlife habitat. The ROD lists several of these mitigation measures that the Service has committed to undertake. The Service will implement the specified mitigation measures as part of the water rights acquisition program. The ROD also outlines a monitoring program to which the Service is committed. The Service will continue monitoring the acreage of wetland habitat. Once a long-term average of 25,000 acres of primary wetland habitat is being sustained and it is determined that this long-term average can be sustained, the Service will terminate water rights purchases.

The Decision: The decision of the Service is to implement Alternative 5, the Preferred Alternative. Implementation of Alternative 5, as described in Section 2.5.5 of the final EIS, and the mitigation and monitoring identified above, will take effect on December 19, 1996, 45 days after the signing of the ROD.

Dated: November 5, 1996.

Richard B. Moore,

*Acting Regional Director, Pacific Region,
Portland, Oregon.*

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Availability of a Draft Environmental Assessment on Permits for Control of Injurious Canada Geese and Request for Comments on Potential Regulations

AGENCY: Fish and Wildlife Service, Interior.

ACTION: Notice of availability; extension of comment period.

SUMMARY: The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (hereinafter the Service) announces the extension of the comment period for the Service's September 3, 1996, Federal Register publication from October 18 to November 22, 1996.

DATES: Written comments are requested by November 22, 1996.

ADDRESSES: Copies of the Draft Environmental Assessment can be obtained by writing to the Chief, Office of Migratory Bird Management, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, room 634—Arlington Square, Washington, DC 20240. Written comments can be sent to the same address.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:

Mr. Paul R. Schmidt, Chief, Office of Migratory Bird Management, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, (703) 358-1714.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: The Service announced in the September 3, 1996, Federal Register (61 FR 46431) the availability of a Draft Environmental Assessment reviewing the existing regulations governing issuance of permits to control injurious Canada geese. The Assessment deals only with how permits are issued and does not address specific control measures used to control injury problems in the field. The Service's proposed action is to issue a blanket permit, which will be available only for the period of March 11 through August 31, to State Conservation Agencies and/or the U.S. Department of Agriculture on a State-specific basis. Three alternatives, including the proposed action, are considered.

Dated: November 6, 1996.

Donald J. Barry,

*Acting Assistant Secretary for Fish and
Wildlife and Parks.*

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Bureau of Land Management

[MT-020-1320-00, MTM 057934A, MTM 061685]

Notice of Intent to Plan; Montana

AGENCY: Bureau of Land Management (BLM), Montana, Miles City District, Interior.

ACTION: Notice of intent to conduct scoping and prepare an environmental analysis on the proposed lease tracts.

SUMMARY: On May 6, 1996, Decker Coal Company applied for Modification to Leases MTM 057934A and MTM 061685, for federal coal resources within the Powder River Coal Region. The land included in the application is located in Big Horn County, Montana and is described as follows:

MTM 057934A

T. 8 S., R. 40 E., P.M.M.

Sec 34: NW¹/₄SW¹/₄NE¹/₄,
SW¹/₄NE¹/₄NW¹/₄, SE¹/₄NW¹/₄,
N¹/₂NE¹/₄SW¹/₄, SW¹/₄NE¹/₄SW¹/₄,
W¹/₂SE¹/₄SW¹/₄, SE¹/₄SE¹/₄SW¹/₄

T. 9 S., R. 40 E., P.M.M.

Sec. 3: W¹/₂SW¹/₄NE¹/₄, W¹/₂NW¹/₄SE¹/₄

MTM 061685

T. 8 S., R. 40 E., P.M.M.

Sec. 34: W¹/₂W¹/₂

Decker Coal Company has also expressed an interest in an additional 80 acres in T. 9 S., R. 40 E., Sec. 3, for "future leasing and modification to lease MTM 057934A".

The 320-acre lease application contains an estimated 8.3 million tons of coal to be added to the two leases.

An Environmental Analysis (EA) will be prepared to analyze the proposed lease of the federal coal resource and the reasonably foreseeable consequences of this action as well as the impacts of development of the coal. The scope of this EA will be expanded to include the additional 80 acres Decker Coal Mine has expressed interest in for future leasing.

This EA will comply with all applicable provisions of the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969 (NEPA) and all subsequent applicable regulations implementing this law (Council on Environmental Quality (CEQ) regulations, 40 CFR, Part 1500-1508) and Department of Interior requirements listed in the Departmental Manual 516 'Environmental Quality'. It will also comply with the guidance listed in the BLM's Environmental Handbook, H-1790-1, 10/88.

DATES: Any issues, concerns or comments regarding this proposal