DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR

Office of Surface Mining Reclamation and Enforcement

30 CFR Part 914

[SPATS No. IN–147–FOR]

Indiana Regulatory Program

AGENCY: Office of Surface Mining Reclamation and Enforcement, Interior.

ACTION: Proposed rule; public comment period and opportunity for public hearing.

SUMMARY: The Office of Surface Mining Reclamation and Enforcement (OSM) is announcing receipt of a proposed amendment to the Indiana regulatory program (Indiana program) under the Surface Mining Control and Reclamation Act of 1977 (SMCRA).

Indiana proposes revisions to its statutes that would allow the use of money from its post-1977 abandoned mine reclamation fund, under specified circumstances, to replace domestic water supplies disrupted or affected by surface coal mining and reclamation operations. Indiana intends to revise its program in order to provide additional protection to society and the environment from the adverse effects of surface coal mining operations.

This document gives the times and locations that the Indiana program and amendment to that program are available for your inspection, the comment period during which you may submit written comments on the amendment, and the procedures that we will follow for the public hearing, if one is requested.

DATES: We will accept written comments until 4:00 p.m., e.s.t., April 10, 2000. If requested, we will hold a public hearing on the amendment on April 3, 2000. We will accept requests to speak at the hearing until 4:00 p.m., e.s.t. on March 24, 2000.

ADDRESSES: You should mail or hand deliver written comments and requests to speak at the hearing to Andrew R. Gilmore, Director, Indianapolis Field Office, at the address listed below.

You may review copies of the Indiana program, the amendment, a listing of any scheduled public hearings, and all written comments received in response to this document at the addresses listed below during normal business hours, Monday through Friday, excluding holidays. You may receive one free copy of the amendment by contacting OSM’s Indianapolis Field Office.

Andrew R. Gilmore, Director, Indianapolis Field Office, Office of Surface Mining Reclamation and Enforcement, Minton-Capehart Federal Building, 575 North Pennsylvania Street, Room 301, Indianapolis, IN 46204, Telephone: (317) 226–6700.

Indiana Department of Natural Resources, Bureau of Mine Reclamation, 402 West Washington Street, Room W–295, Indianapolis, Indiana 46204, Telephone: (317) 232–1291.

Indiana Department of Natural Resources, Division of Reclamation, R.R. 2, Box 129, Jasonville, Indiana 47438–9517, Telephone: (812) 665–2207.


SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

I. Background on the Indiana Program

On July 29, 1982, the Secretary of the Interior conditionally approved the Indiana program. You can find background information on the Indiana program, including the Secretary’s findings, the disposition of comments, and the conditions of approval in the Federal Register (47 FR 32107). You can find later actions on the Indiana program at 30 CFR 914.10, 914.15, and 914.16.

II. Description of the Proposed Amendment

By letter dated February 25, 2000 (Administrative Record No. IND–1686), Indiana sent us an amendment to its program under SMCRA. Indiana sent the amendment at its own initiative. Indiana proposes to revise the Indiana Surface Coal Mining and Reclamation Act at Indiana Code (IC) 14–34. The Indiana General Assembly amended IC 14–34–6–15, effective July 1, 1999 (House Enrolled Act No. 1568).

IC 14–34–6–15, Abandoned Mine Reclamation Fund

1. Indiana revised IC 14–34–6–15(b) by adding a new provision at subdivision (2) and reformulating the existing provisions. The revised subsection reads as follows:

(b) The post-1977 abandoned mine reclamation fund is established. The fund consists of bond forfeiture money collected under section 16 of this chapter and the civil penalties described in IC 14–34–16–9. The fund may be used as follows:

1. To effect the restoration of land not otherwise eligible for federal funding on which there has been surface mining activity after August 3, 1977.

2. To replace domestic water supplies disrupted or affected by a surface coal mining and reclamation operation, including the disposal of coal combustion waste (as defined in IC 13–19–3–3), where the surface coal mining and reclamation operation has been completed and is no longer subject to IC 14–34.

The money held for this purpose may not exceed an amount established by the department that is sufficient to enable the director to cover the anticipated cost of restoration.

2. Indiana revised subsection (c) by adding the language “or replacement of water.” The revised subsection reads as follows:

(c) At least five hundred thousand dollars ($500,000) in the fund is dedicated as collateral for the bond pool under IC 14–34–8 and may not be used for the restoration of land or replacement of water described in subsection (b).

III. Public Comment Procedures

Under the provisions of 30 CFR 732.17(h), we are requesting comments on whether the amendment satisfies the applicable program approval criteria of 30 CFR 732.15. If we approve the amendment, it will become part of the Indiana program.

Written Comments

Our practice is to make comments, including names and home addresses of respondents, available for public review during regular business hours. Individual respondents may request that we withhold their home address from the administrative record, which we will honor to the extent allowable by law. There also may be circumstances in which we would withhold from the administrative record a respondent’s identity, as allowable by law. If you wish us to withhold your name and/or address, you must state this prominently at the beginning of your comment. However, we will not consider anonymous comments. We will make all submissions from organizations or businesses, and from individuals identifying themselves as representatives or officials of organizations or businesses, available for public inspection in their entirety. Your written comments should be specific and pertain only to the issues.
proposed in this rulemaking. You should explain the reason for any recommended change. In the final rulemaking, we will not necessarily consider or include in the Administrative Record any comments received after the time indicated under DATES or at locations other than the Indianapolis Field Office.

Please submit Internet comments as an ASCII file avoiding the use of special characters and any form of encryption. Please also include “Attn: SPATS No. IN-147-FOR” and your name and return address in your Internet message. If you do not receive a confirmation that we have received your Internet message, contact the Indianapolis Field Office at (317) 226-6700.

Public Hearing

If you wish to speak at the public hearing, contact the person listed under FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT by 4:00 p.m., e.s.t. on March 24, 2000. We will arrange the location and time of the hearing with those persons requesting the hearing. If you are disabled and need special accommodations to attend a public hearing, contact the individual listed under FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT. The hearing will not be held if no one requests an opportunity to speak at the public hearing.

To assist the transcriber and ensure an accurate record, we request that you provide us with a written copy of your testimony. The public hearing will continue on the specified date until all persons scheduled to speak have been heard. If you are in the audience and have not been scheduled to speak and wish to do so, you will be allowed to speak after those who have been scheduled. We will end the hearing after all persons scheduled to speak and persons present in the audience who wish to speak have been heard.

Public Meeting

If only one person requests an opportunity to speak at a hearing, a public meeting, rather than a public hearing, may be held. If you wish to meet with us to discuss the amendment, request a meeting by contacting the person listed under FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT. All such meetings are open to the public and, if possible, we will post notices of meetings at the locations listed under ADDRESSES. We also make a written summary of each meeting a part of the Administrative Record.

IV. Procedural Determinations

Executive Order 12866

The Office of Management and Budget (OMB) exempts this rule from review under Executive Order 12866 (Regulatory Planning and Review).

Executive Order 12988

The Department of the Interior has conducted the reviews required by section 3 of Executive Order 12988 (Civil Justice Reform) and has determined that, to the extent allowed by law, this rule meets the applicable standards of subsections (a) and (b) of that section. However, these standards are not applicable to the actual language of State regulatory programs and program amendments since each program is drafted and promulgated by a specific State, not by OSM. Under sections 503 and 505 of SMCRA (30 U.S.C. 1253 and 1255) and 30 CFR 730.11, 732.15, and 732.17(h)(10), decisions on State regulatory programs and program amendments must be based solely on a determination of whether the submittal is consistent with SMCRA and its implementing Federal regulations and whether the other requirements of 30 CFR Parts 730, 731, and 732 have been met.

National Environmental Policy Act

This rule does not require an environmental impact statement since section 702(d) of SMCRA (30 U.S.C. 1292(d)) provides that agency decisions on State regulatory program provisions do not constitute major Federal actions within the meaning of section 102(2)(C) of the National Environmental Policy Act (42 U.S.C. 4332(2)(C)).

Paperwork Reduction Act

This rule does not contain information collection requirements that require approval by OMB under the Paperwork Reduction Act (44 U.S.C. 3507 et seq.).

Regulatory Flexibility Act

The Department of the Interior has determined that this rule will not have a significant economic impact on a substantial number of small entities under the Regulatory Flexibility Act (5 U.S.C. 601 et seq.). The State submittal which is the subject of this rule is based upon corresponding Federal regulations for which an economic analysis was prepared and certification made that such regulations would not have a significant economic effect upon a substantial number of small entities. Therefore, this rule will ensure that existing requirements previously published by OSM will be implemented by the State. In making this determination as to whether this rule would have a significant economic impact, the Department relied upon the data and assumptions for the corresponding Federal regulations.

Unfunded Mandates

OSM has determined and certifies under the Unfunded Mandates Reform Act (2 U.S.C. 1502 et seq.) that this rule will not impose a cost of $100 million or more in any given year on local, state, or tribal governments or private entities.

List of Subjects in 30 CFR Part 914

Intergovernmental relations, Surface mining, Underground mining.