

million tons of in-place Federal coal reserves in Campbell County, Wyoming.

**DATES:** Written comments on the FEIS will be accepted for 30 days following the date that the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) publishes their notice of availability of the FEIS in the **Federal Register**. The BLM will notify all parties on this project's mailing list of the dates when comments will be accepted.

**ADDRESSES:** Please address questions, comments or requests for copies of the FEIS to the Casper Field Office, Bureau of Land Management, Attn: Nancy Doelger, 2987 Prospector Drive, Casper, Wyoming 8260; or you may e-mail them to the attention of Nancy Doelger at [casper\\_wymail@blm.gov](mailto:casper_wymail@blm.gov); or fax them to (307) 261-7587.

**FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:** Nancy Doelger or Mike Karbs at the above address, or phone: 307-261-7600.

**SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:** The application for the North Jacobs Ranch tract was filed as a maintenance tract coal lease-by-application (LBA) under the provisions of 43 CFR 3425.1

On October 2, 1998, JRCC filed coal lease application WYW146744 for the North Jacobs Ranch Federal coal tract with the BLM for the following lands:

#### Sixth Principal Meridian

T. 44N., R. 70 W.,

- Sec 26, lots 9 and 10;
- Sec 27, lots 1 to 16, inclusive;
- Sec 28, lots 1 to 16, inclusive;
- Sec 29, lots 1 to 16, inclusive;
- Sec 30, lots 5 to 20, inclusive;
- Sec 31, lots 5 to 20, inclusive;
- Sec 32, lots 1 to 16, inclusive;
- Sec 33, lots 4, 5, 12, and 13.

#### Sixth Principal Meridian

T. 44 N., R. 71 W.,  
sec 25, lots 1 to 16, inclusive.

*Total surface area applied for:*  
4,821.19 acres.

The Powder River Regional Coal Team (RCT) reviewed this competitive lease application at public meetings held on February 23, 1999, in Billings, Montana; October 27, 1999, in Gillette, Wyoming; and October 25, 2000, in Cheyenne, Wyoming. At the most recent meeting, the RCT recommended that BLM continue to process this LBA.

The Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS) was mailed to the public in December, 2000. The EPA and the BLM each published a Notice of Availability in the **Federal Register** on December 15, 2000. A formal public hearing on this application was held, pursuant to 43 Code of Federal Regulations (CFR) 3425.4, at 7:00 P.M. MDT, on January 17, 2000 at the Clarion Western Plaza Motel, 2009 S. Douglas

Highway, Gillette, Wyoming. The purpose of the hearing was to solicit public comments on the DEIS, the fair market value, the maximum economic recovery, and the proposed competitive sale of the coal included in the proposed North Jacobs Ranch Federal coal tract. The 60-day comment period on the DEIS ended on February 13, 2001.

The Jacobs Ranch Mine, which is adjacent to the lease application area, has an approved mining and reclamation plan from the Land Quality Division of the Wyoming Department of Environmental Quality and an approved air quality permit from the Air Quality Division of the Wyoming Department of Environmental Quality to mine up to 38 million tons of coal per year through 2001, and 50 million tons of coal per year to be mined in 2002 through 2004. According to the application filed for the North Jacobs Ranch tract, the maintenance tract would be mined to extend the life of the existing mine. JRCC estimates that, under the current mine plan, the existing recoverable reserves at the Jacobs Ranch Mine will be mined out in about 7 years at an average production rate of 24.5 million tons per year. The Black Thunder Mine is also contiguous to the lease application area.

JRCC previously acquired a maintenance coal lease (serial number WYW117924, issued effective 10/1/92) containing approximately 1,709 acres adjacent to the Jacobs Ranch Mine using the LBA process.

The FEIS analyzes four alternatives. The Proposed Action is to lease the North Jacobs Ranch tract as applied for to the successful bidder at a competitive sealed bid sale. Alternative 1, is the No Action Alternative, which assumes that the application for the North Jacobs Ranch tract is rejected. Alternative 3, the BLM's preferred alternative, evaluates issuing a lease for the tract as modified by the BLM to avoid a potential bypass situation. Under Alternative 3, approximately 160 acres would be added to the east of the tract as applied for. Alternative 4 evaluates issuing a lease for a smaller tract that would be modified to reduce multiple mineral development conflicts with existing oil and gas development.

The Office of Surface Mining Reclamation and Enforcement is a cooperating agency in the preparation of this EIS because it is the Federal agency that would recommend approval or disapproval of the mining plan for the North Jacobs Ranch LBA tract to the Secretary of the Interior, if a lease is issued for the tract.

Fourteen written comments were received during the comment period on the Draft EIS, and four oral comments were recorded at the public hearing. The issues that were identified in the comment letters and at the hearing included potential conflicts with existing conventional oil and gas and coalbed methane development; potential cumulative impacts of increasing mineral development in the Powder River Basin; validity and currency of resource data; public access; potential impacts to threatened and endangered species and other species of concern; potential cumulative air quality impacts; potential impacts of nitrogen oxide emissions resulting from blasting of coal and overburden; and cumulative impacts of reasonably foreseeable actions such as the construction and operation of the DM&E railroad in the cumulative analysis.

Comments, including names and street addresses of respondents, will be available for public review at the Bureau of Land Management, Casper Field Office, 2987 Prospector Drive, Casper, Wyoming, during regular business hours (8 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.), Monday through Friday, except holidays, and may be published as part of the final EIS.

Individual respondents may request confidentiality. If you wish to withhold your name or street address from public review or from disclosure under the Freedom of Information Act, 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 of officials of organizations or businesses, will be made available for public inspection in their entirety.

Dated: July 3, 2001.

**Alan R. Pierson,**

*State Director.*

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**BILLING CODE 4310-22-P**

## DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR

### Bureau of Land Management

[ES-020-01-1610-DU]

#### Notice of Availability of the Draft Planning Analysis for Arkansas and Louisiana

**AGENCY:** Bureau of Land Management, Department of the Interior.

**ACTION:** Notice of availability.

**SUMMARY:** The Bureau of Land Management (BLM) has prepared a Draft

Planning Analysis and Environmental Assessment (PA/EA) for public domain lands in Arkansas and Louisiana. The PA/EA describes and analyzes alternatives for future management of approximately 575 acres in Arkansas and 378 acres in Louisiana. These public lands are isolated tracts in seven counties in Arkansas and four parishes in Louisiana. The affected counties in Arkansas are: Baxter, Cleburne, Crawford, Fulton, Pike, Searcy and Van Buren. The affected parishes in Louisiana are: Desoto, Natchitoches, Rapides and St. Martin. Split-estate minerals are not included in this PA/EA. These documents were prepared to fulfill the requirements of the Federal Land Policy and Management Act of 1976 (FLPMA) and the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969 (NEPA).

**DATES:** Written comments on the Draft PA/EA must be submitted or postmarked no later than September 5, 2001. Comments may also be presented at a public meeting to be held at 7 p.m. on Thursday, August 23, 2001 at the Civic Center Gymnasium in Marshall, Arkansas. Copies of the draft PA/EA may be obtained from the Jackson Field Office, 411 Briarwood Drive, Suite 404, Jackson, MS 39206. Copies will be available for review at the public library in the seat of government in each county or parish with lands included in the PA/EA. Also, the document may be reviewed on the Internet at [www.es.blm.gov/jfo/pages/lupj.html](http://www.es.blm.gov/jfo/pages/lupj.html).

**ADDRESSES:** Written comments should be addressed to Attn: PA/EA Team, Bureau of Land Management, Jackson Field Office, 411 Briarwood Drive, Suite 404, Jackson, MS 39206.

**FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:** Duane Winters, phone (601) 977-5400.

**SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:** The issues addressed in the Draft PA/EA are: (1) Land Ownership Adjustments and (2) Special Management Areas. All of the BLM-administered public domain tracts in Arkansas and Louisiana are small and isolated, and, therefore, might be considered suitable for disposal. On the other hand, these tracts may have resources of value that should be retained in public ownership and managed by BLM or other agencies. These resources would include sites eligible for listing on the National Register of Historic Places, endangered species, threatened habitats, minerals, or potential for recreational use. The Draft PA/EA presents alternatives with different answers to the following questions: What tracts should be retained in public ownership? What tracts should BLM dispose through sale,

exchange, or other means? What tracts should be identified for special management to protect or enhance specific resources? And how should the resources be managed? The alternatives being considered can be summarized as: (1) No Action or Custodial Management, (2) Disposal, and (3) Management through Partnerships. Under the Custodial Management alternative, the BLM would retain the tracts, but would not pro-actively manage them. There would be no actions taken to manage habitats or other resources. When presented to BLM, applications for use would be evaluated on a case-by-case basis. Because this alternative would essentially be a continuation of the current management approach, it is also referred to as the No Action alternative. With the Disposal alternative, BLM would pursue transfer of the tracts out of Federal ownership through various means including sale, exchange or conveyance under the Recreation and Public Purposes Act. In a sale or exchange, priority would be given to transferring the tracts to adjacent land owners. Disposal of tracts with high resource values would be allowed, but only with restrictive easements to protect the resources. In the Partnership alternative, resource management objectives are developed for each tract. These objectives include the desired conditions, such as type of habitat and recreational opportunity. BLM would actively seek partners, and with their cooperation, develop site specific implementation plans to identify needed management actions. Transfer to other Federal agencies, or conveyance under the Recreation and Public Purposes Act would be allowed, but only for uses primarily directed to attaining the management objectives. In the Draft PA/EA the preferred alternative for three of the tracts in Arkansas is (2) Disposal. The preferred alternative for all other tracts in Arkansas and all four tracts in Louisiana is (3) Management Through Partnerships.

Dated: July 19, 2001.

**Gayle F. Gordon,**

*State Director, Eastern States.*

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**BILLING CODE 4310-GJ-P**

## DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR

### Bureau of Land Management

[ES-910-02-1430-HN-LRTN]

#### Notice of Availability and Protest Period for the Proposed Planning Analysis To Acquire Land in Fairfax County, Virginia by the Bureau of Land Management, U.S. Department of the Interior

**AGENCY:** Bureau of Land Management, Interior.

**ACTION:** Notice of availability and protest period.

**SUMMARY:** The Bureau of Land Management (BLM), Eastern States, has prepared a Proposed Planning Analysis (Proposed Plan), an Environmental Assessment (EA), and a Finding of No Significant Impact (FONSI) that address acquiring approximately 805 acres of land known as Meadowood Farm, located on Mason Neck in Fairfax County, Virginia. These documents were prepared to fulfill the requirements of the Federal Land Policy and Management Act of 1976 (FLPMA) and the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969 (NEPA).

**DATES:** The Proposed Plan, EA, and FONSI can be reviewed Mondays through Fridays, from 8 a.m. to 4 p.m., at the BLM's Eastern States Office, 7450 Boston Boulevard in Springfield, Virginia 22153, or by visiting the website at [www.es.blm.gov](http://www.es.blm.gov). Protests to the Proposed Plan must be postmarked on or before August 27, 2001.

**ADDRESSES:** All protests must be filed only with the Director of the BLM and submitted by mail or overnight mail as follows: The address for regular mail is: Director, Bureau of Land Management, Attn: Ms. Brenda Williams, Protest Coordinator, WO 210/LS-1075, U.S. Department of the Interior, 1849 C Street, NW., Washington, DC 20240; The address for overnight mail is: Director, Bureau of Land Management, Attn: Ms. Brenda Williams, Protest Coordinator (WO 210); 1620 L Street, NW., Room 1075, Washington, DC 20036. Phone: (202) 452-5110.

**FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:** Charles Bush, BLM Eastern States, (703) 440-1745 or Horace Traylor at (703) 440-1509.

**SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:** The Proposed Plan, EA, and FONSI address acquiring approximately 805 acres of land known as Meadowood Farm, located on Mason Neck in Fairfax County, Virginia. This acquisition is provided for through PL 106-522, the DC Appropriations Act, 2001