

ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY

[FRL-7047-8]

EPA Region 8 "Best Professional Judgment" (BPJ) Determination of Effluent Limitations That Represent Best Available Technology Economically Achievable (BAT) for Coalbed Methane (CBM) Activities; Announcement of a Meeting**AGENCY:** Environmental Protection Agency (EPA).**ACTION:** Notice, announcement of a meeting.

SUMMARY: EPA Region VIII will conduct an informational meeting on its efforts in developing a "Best Professional Judgment" (BPJ) determination of effluent limitations that represent Best Available Technology Economically Achievable (BAT) for Coalbed Methane (CBM) activities in Region 8. The Agency will provide an overview of the project. In December 2001, EPA intends to finalize the BPJ determination for Coalbed Methane produced waters, for use in Region 8's Clean Water Act National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) permitting activities. The meeting is open to the public, and limited seating is available on a first-come, first-served basis.

DATES: The meeting will be held on September 25, 2001, 1:00 pm to 4:00 pm.

ADDRESSES: Sheraton Billings Hotel (Granite Room), 27 North 27th Street, Billings, MT 59101. For information on accommodations and/or directions, contact the hotel at 406-252-7400.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Michael Reed, NPDES Permits Team, Water Program, Office of Partnerships and Regulatory Assistance, EPA Region VIII, 999 18th Street, Suite 300, Denver, Colorado 80202-2466; telephone (303) 312-6132; e-mail: reed.mike@epa.gov

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: The Clean Water Act, in section 301(b), requires the NPDES permitting authority to consider effluent limits based both on the technology available to treat the pollutants and on protection of the designated uses of the receiving water. These are known as technology-based and water quality-based effluent limitations, respectively. Section 301(b)(2)(A) of the Clean Water Act requires effluent limitations that "shall require the application of the best available technology economically achievable for such category or class, which will result in reasonable further progress toward the national goal of eliminating the discharge of all

pollutants." There are two approaches for developing technology-based limits for industrial facilities: (1) National effluent limitations guidelines (ELGs) and (2) in the absence of ELGs, limitations developed on a case-by-case basis using best professional judgment. Because CBM activities were not significant and widespread when EPA developed the ELGs for the Oil and Gas Point Source Category (40 CFR part 435), EPA did not consider CBM in developing these guidelines and has not applied them to CBM. Therefore, according to 40 CFR 125.3(c)(2), technology-based limits for the CBM permits need to be developed using a BPJ case-by-case analysis.

EPA Region 8, with the assistance of the EPA Office of Science and Technology in Washington, DC, will do an economic analysis to assess disposal options for water that is produced as part of the coalbed methane (CBM) extraction process. The analysis will support a BPJ determination of effluent limitations that represent Best Available Technology Economically Achievable (BAT) for CBM produced waters in Region 8. Several technologies are being considered for both technical and economic feasibility, including several water treatment technologies: zero discharge via reinjection, infiltration and/or evaporation; and beneficial use of the effluent for agriculture and wildlife. The main objectives of this action are to support EPA NPDES permitting in Indian Country, fulfilling our trust responsibility with Tribes to implement environmental laws and regulations, and to inform the states and EPA in the implementation of their NPDES permit programs.

The meeting will provide an update on the development of the BPJ determination for BAT. EPA will discuss CBM operations in EPA Region 8, feasibility and cost of produced water disposal options, and economic and environmental impacts. EPA will also be soliciting additional information prior to development of the draft analysis. The meeting is not a mechanism for submitting formal comments and will not be recorded nor transcribed. A more detailed agenda and other documents related to the BPJ project will be available at the meeting. For those unable to attend the meeting, EPA will make documents available at the EPA website <http://www.epa.gov/region08/water/wastewater/npdeshome/cbm.html>, and they can be obtained by an e-mail or telephone request to Michael Reed at the above address.

Dated: August 15, 2001.

Kerrigan G. Clough,*Assistant Regional Administrator, Office of Partnerships and Regulatory Assistance, Region VIII.*

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ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY

[FRL-7049-2]

National Tribal Conference on Environmental Management**AGENCY:** Environmental Protection Agency.**ACTION:** Notice to Solicit Proposals from Federally-recognized Indian Tribes and Intertribal Consortia.

SUMMARY: The Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) is requesting proposals from federally-recognized Indian Tribes or Intertribal consortia to host the 6th National Tribal Conference on Environmental Management. EPA will be the official sponsor. The Tribal Conference will provide an opportunity for tribal leaders, tribal environmental managers, tribal organizations, Federal agencies, and other interested entities/persons to share information about tribal environmental programs and discuss issues of vital interest to Indian country. EPA is seeking to broaden the scope of the conference to be even more inclusive of the multi-media environmental issues being addressed by Tribes to establish stronger tribal networks and relationships across environmental efforts in Indian country, identify shared lessons learned, and familiarize Tribes with the full extent of tribal and EPA program environmental activities. EPA will award a cooperative agreement to the selected host Tribe to co-sponsor the conference, including personnel, planning, facilities and management expenses.

DATES: Submit proposals on or before October 12, 2001.

ADDRESSES: Mail proposals via U.S. Postal Service (including express and priority mail) to: U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, Attn: Clara Mickles, American Indian Environmental Office, Mailcode: 4101, 1200 Pennsylvania Avenue, NW, Washington, DC 20460. Mail proposals via commercial overnight delivery service (e.g., FedEx, DHL, UPS, etc.) to: U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, Attn: Clara Mickles, American Indian Environmental Office, 9th Floor, Room 913 East Tower, 401 M. Street, S.W., Washington, DC 20460.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Felicia Wright at (202) 260-4410, Caren