

leasing regulations BLM has identified and considered other alternative tract configurations that would add or subtract Federal coal to avoid bypassing coal or to increase estimated fair market value of the unleased Federal coal in this area. The Draft EA also analyzes the No Action Alternative of rejecting the application to lease Federal coal. The Proposed Action and Alternative considered are in conformance with the Green River Resource Management Plan (1997).

The Office of Surface Mining Reclamation and Enforcement (OSM) is a cooperating agency in the preparation of the Draft EA. If the tract is leased, it must be incorporated into the existing mining and reclamation plan for the adjacent Bridger coal mine. Before the Federal coal in this tract can be mined the Secretary of the Interior must approve each revision to the MLA (Mineral Leasing Act) mining plan. OSM is the Department of the Interior agency that would be responsible for recommending approval, approval with conditions, or disapproval of the revised MLA plan to the Secretary of the Interior.

Dated: August 1, 2003.

Alan L. Kesterke,
Associate State Director.

Editorial Note: This document was received at the Officer of the **Federal Register** on January 16, 2004.

[FR Doc. 04-1360 Filed 2-2-04; 8:45 am]

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DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR

Bureau of Land Management

Notice of Public Meeting: Resource Advisory Council to the Lower Snake River District, Bureau of Land Management, U.S. Department of the Interior

AGENCY: Bureau of Land Management, U.S. Department of the Interior.

ACTION: Notice of public meeting.

SUMMARY: In accordance with the Federal Land Policy and Management Act (FLPMA) and the Federal Advisory Committee Act of 1972 (FACA), the U.S. Department of the Interior, Bureau of Land Management (BLM) Lower Snake River District Resource Advisory Council (RAC), will meet as indicated below.

DATES: The meeting will be held January 28, 2004, beginning 9 a.m. at the Bureau of Land Management, Lower Snake River District Office Sage Brush Conference Room, located at 3948

Development Ave, Boise, Idaho 83705. Public comment periods will be held after topics on the agenda. The meeting will adjourn at 4:30 p.m.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: MJ Byrne, Public Affairs Officer and RAC Coordinator, Lower Snake River District, 3948 Development Ave., Boise, ID 83705, Telephone (208) 384-3393.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: The 15-member Council advises the Secretary of the Interior, through the Bureau of Land Management, on a variety of planning and management issues associated with public land management in southwestern Idaho. At this meeting, the following actions will occur/topics will be discussed:

- Election of Officers;
- Review and finalize 2004 Annual Work Plan;
- Update on status of the Owyhee Initiative;
- Status of BLM-Idaho's Organizational Refinement;
- Briefing and discussion of the BLM proposed changes to grazing regulations;
- Status on the review of Idaho-BLM Rangeland Standards and Guidelines, status of the report, and implemented of recommendations;
- Status of BLM Idaho's OHV Strategic Plan, timeline and actions anticipated in implementation;
- Update on status of District's Fire Management Plan;
- Subcommittee Reports;
- Grouse Habitat Management, Off-Highway Vehicles (OHV) and Transportation Management, River Recreation and Resource Management Plans, and Fire and Fuels Management;
- Three Field Office Managers and Acting District Fire Manager provide updates on current issues and planned activities in their field office and the District.

Agenda items may change due to changing circumstances. All meetings are open to the public. The public may present written comments to the Council. Each formal Council meeting will also have time allocated for hearing public comments. Depending on the number of persons wishing to comment and time available, the time for individual oral comments may be limited. Individuals who plan to attend and need special assistance, such as sign language interpretation, tour transportation or other reasonable accommodations, should contact the BLM as provided below. Expedited publication is requested to give the public adequate notice.

Dated: January 28, 2004.

Howard Hedrick,

Associate District Manager.

[FR Doc. 04-2250 Filed 2-2-04; 8:45 am]

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DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR

Minerals Management Service

Agency Information Collection Activities: Proposed Collection, Comment Request

AGENCY: Minerals Management Service (MMS), Interior.

ACTION: Notice of an extension of a currently approved information collection (OMB Control Number 1010-0090).

SUMMARY: To comply with the Paperwork Reduction Act (PRA) of 1995, we are inviting comments on a collection of information that we will submit to the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) for review and approval. The information collection request (ICR) is titled "30 CFR 216.57—Stripper Royalty Rate Reduction Notification (Form MMS-4377, Stripper Royalty Rate Reduction Notification)."

DATES: Submit written comments on or before April 5, 2004.

ADDRESSES: Submit written comments to Sharron L. Gebhardt, Lead Regulatory Specialist, Minerals Management Service, Minerals Revenue Management, P.O. Box 26165, MS 320B2, Denver, Colorado 80225. If you use an overnight courier service, our courier address is Building 85, Room A-614, Denver Federal Center, Denver, Colorado 80225. You may also email your comments to us at mrm.comments@mms.gov. Include the title of the information collection and the OMB control number in the "Attention" line of your comment. Also include your name and return address. Submit electronic comments as an ASCII file avoiding the use of special characters and any form of encryption. If you do not receive a confirmation we have received your email, contact Ms. Gebhardt at (303) 231-3211.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:

Sharron L. Gebhardt, telephone (303) 231-3211, Fax (303) 231-3781 or email sharron.gebhardt@mms.gov.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

Title: 30 CFR 216.57—Stripper Royalty Rate Reduction Notification (Form MMS-4377, Stripper Royalty Rate Reduction Notification).

OMB Control Number: 1010-0090.

Bureau Form Number: Form MMS-4377.

Abstract: The Secretary of the U.S. Department of the Interior (DOI) is responsible for collecting royalties from lessees who produce minerals from leased Federal and Indian lands. The Secretary is required by various laws to manage mineral resources production on Federal and Indian lands, collect the royalties due, and distribute the funds in accordance with those laws. MMS performs the royalty management functions for the Secretary.

The Bureau of Land Management, the surface management agency for Federal onshore leases, grants royalty rate reductions to operators of stripper oil properties producing an average of less than 15 barrels of oil per eligible well per well-day. See 43 CFR 3103.4-2. The purpose of these royalty rate reductions is to encourage continued production, provide an incentive for enhanced oil

recovery projects, discourage abandonment of properties producing less than an average or less than 15 barrels of oil per eligible well per well-day, and reduce the operator's expenses. The royalty rate for a stripper oil property is lower than the royalty rate reflected in the lease and thus reduces the amount of revenues paid to the Federal Government. In order to perform the royalty management functions for DOI, MMS must receive a timely notification of any royalty rate changes. Reporters use the Form MMS-4377 to notify MMS of royalty rate changes.

No proprietary information will be submitted to MMS under this collection. No items of a sensitive nature are collected. The decision to request a royalty rate reduction is voluntary; however, failure to timely submit the

notification will result in the rate being denied.

We have also changed the title of this ICR from "Stripper Royalty Rate Reduction Notification (Form MMS-4377)" to "30 CFR 216.57—Stripper Royalty Rate Reduction Notification (Form MMS-4377, Stripper Royalty Rate Reduction Notification)" to clarify the regulatory language we are covering under 30 CFR 216.57.

Frequency of Response: Annually.

Estimated Number and Description of Respondents: 900 operators of stripper oil properties producing an average of less than 15 barrels of oil per eligible well per well-day.

Estimated Annual Reporting and Recordkeeping "Hour" Burden: 1,080 hours. The following chart shows the breakdown of the estimated burden hours by CFR section and paragraph:

RESPONDENT ANNUAL BURDEN HOUR CHART

CFR Section	Reporting requirement	Burden hours per response	Annual number of responses	Annual burden hours
30 CFR 216.57	Stripper royalty rate reduction notification. In accordance with its regulations at 43 CFR 3103.4-1, title "Waiver, suspension, or reduction of rental, royalty, or minimum royalty," the Bureau of Land Management (BLM) may grant reduced royalty rates to operators of low producing oil leases to encourage continued production. Operators who have been granted a reduced royalty rate(s) by BLM must submit a Stripper Royalty Rate Reduction Notification (Form MMS-4377) to MMS for each 12-month qualifying period that a reduced royalty rate(s) is granted. [58 FR 64903, Dec 10, 1993]. Please note the BLM citation and title changed to 43 CFR 3103.4-2 Stripper well royalty reductions.	1.2	900	1,080
Total	1.2	900	1,080

Estimated Annual Reporting and Recordkeeping "Non-hour Cost" Burden: We have identified no "non-hour" cost burdens.

Comments: The PRA (44 U.S.C. 3501, *et seq.*) provides an agency may not conduct or sponsor, and a person is not required to respond to, a collection of information unless it displays a currently valid OMB control number. Before submitting an ICR to OMB, PRA Section 3506(c)(2)(A) requires each agency *** to provide notice *** and otherwise consult with members of the public and affect agencies concerning each proposed collection of information ***. Agencies must specifically solicit comments to: (a) Evaluate whether the proposed collection of information is necessary for the agency to perform its duties, including whether the information is useful; (b) evaluate the accuracy of the agency's estimate of the burden of the

proposed collection of information; (c) enhance the quality, usefulness, and clarity of the information to be collected; and (d) minimize the burden on the respondents, including the use of automated collection techniques or other forms of information technology.

The PRA also requires agencies to estimate the total annual reporting "non-hour cost" burden to respondents or recordkeepers resulting from the collection of information. We have not identified non-hour cost burdens for this information collection. If you have costs to generate, maintain, and disclose this information, you should comment and provide your total capital and startup cost components or annual operation, maintenance, and purchase of service components. You should describe the methods you use to estimate major costs factors, including system and technology acquisition, expected useful life of capital

equipment, discount rate(s), and the period over which you incur costs. Capital and startup costs include, among other items, computers and software you purchase to prepare for collecting information; monitoring, sampling, and testing equipment; and record storage facilities. Generally, your estimates should not include equipment or services purchased: (i) Before October 1, 1995; (ii) to comply with requirements not associated with the information collection; (iii) for reasons other than to provide information or keep records for the Government; or (iv) as part of customary and usual business or private practices.

We will summarize written responses to this notice and address them in our ICR submission for OMB approval, including appropriate adjustments to the estimated burden. We will provide a copy of the ICR to you without charge upon request, and the ICR will also be

posted on our Web site at http://www.mrm.mms.gov/Laws_R_D/FRNotices/FRInfColl.htm.

Public Comment Policy: We will post all comments in response to this notice on our Web site at http://www.mrm.mms.gov/Laws_R_D/FRNotices/FRInfColl.htm. We will also make copies of the comments available for public review, including names and addresses of respondents, during regular business hours at our offices in Lakewood, Colorado. Individual respondents may request we withhold their home address from the public record, which we will honor to the extent allowable by law. There also may be circumstances in which we would withhold from the rulemaking record a respondent's identity, as allowable by law. If you request that we withhold your name and/or address, 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.

MMS Federal Register Liaison Officer:
Denise Johnson (202) 208-3976.

Dated: January 22, 2004.

Lucy Querques Denett,
Associate Director for Minerals Revenue Management.

[FR Doc. 04-2087 Filed 2-2-04; 8:45 am]

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DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR

Bureau of Reclamation

Upper San Joaquin River Basin Storage Investigation, Central Valley Project, CA

AGENCY: Bureau of Reclamation, Interior.

ACTION: Notice of intent to prepare an environmental impact statement (EIS).

SUMMARY: The Department of the Interior, Bureau of Reclamation (Reclamation), will prepare an EIS, pursuant to the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA), to evaluate proposed actions to increase the storage of water from the San Joaquin River. Potential uses of stored water may include: contribution to future restoration of the San Joaquin River, improvement of water quality in the San Joaquin River, or water deliveries that could facilitate additional conjunctive management or exchanges that improve the quality of water to urban areas.

DATES: Four scoping meetings will be held to solicit comments from interested parties to assist in determining the scope of the environmental analysis and to identify the significant issues related to the proposed action. The meeting dates are:

- Tuesday, March 16, 2004, 9:30-11:30 a.m., Sacramento, CA
- Tuesday, March 16, 2004, 6-8 p.m., Modesto, CA
- Wednesday, March 17, 2004, 6-8 p.m., Friant, CA
- Thursday, March 18, 2004, 6-8 p.m., Visalia, CA

Written comments on the scope of the environmental document should be mailed to Reclamation at the address below by April 16, 2004.

ADDRESSES: The meeting locations are as follows:

- Sacramento, CA—Federal Building, Cafeteria Conference Room 1, 2800 Cottage Way
- Modesto, CA—Modesto Irrigation District, Multipurpose Room, 1231 11th Street
- Friant, CA—Table Mountain Rancheria, Governmental Building, 23736 Sky Harbour Road
- Visalia, CA—Tulare County Farm Bureau, 737 Ben Maddox Way

Written comments on the scope of the alternatives and impacts to be considered should be sent to Mr. Jason Phillips, Bureau of Reclamation, Division of Planning, 2800 Cottage Way, Sacramento, CA 95825; or by telephone at (916) 978-5070, or faxed to (916) 978-5094.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Mr. Jason Phillips, Bureau of Reclamation, Division of Planning, at (916) 978-5070; or Waiman Yip, Project Manager, California Department of Water Resources, P.O. Box 942836, Sacramento, CA 94236-0001, phone (916) 651-9280. If you would like to be included on the EIS/EIR mailing list, please contact Marian Echeverria at (916) 978-5105 or mecheverria@mp.usbr.gov.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: The CALFED Programmatic EIS Record of Decision (ROD) described five potential surface storage projects and recommended additional study to determine the potential for the projects to meet identified objectives. One such project would involve water storage in the Upper San Joaquin River Basin through the enlargement of Friant Dam or other alternatives. Friant Dam on the San Joaquin River is owned and operated by Reclamation as part of the Central Valley Project (CVP). Federal authorization for preparation of a

feasibility report was provided in Public Law 108-7, Division D, Title II, section 215, the Omnibus Appropriations legislation for Fiscal Year 2003. Reclamation is the responsible Federal agency for preparation of this report.

The ROD recognized that additional storage in the Upper San Joaquin River Basin could contribute to future restoration of the San Joaquin River. The reach of the San Joaquin River from Friant Dam to the confluence with the Merced River does not support a continuous natural riparian and aquatic ecosystem. Since completion of Friant Dam, most of the water supply in the San Joaquin River has been diverted for agricultural and urban uses with the exception of releases to satisfy riparian water rights upstream of Gravelly Ford and flood releases. Consequently, the reach from Gravelly Ford to Mendota Pool is often dry.

The ROD also recognized that releases of water from Friant Dam to the San Joaquin River could result in improved water quality in the San Joaquin River. Water quality in various segments of the San Joaquin River has been a problem for several decades due to low flow and discharges from agricultural areas, wildlife refuges, and municipal and industrial treatment plants. Initial locations of concern for water quality include areas near Stockton and at Vernalis, downstream of the Stanislaus River as the San Joaquin River enters the Delta. Over time, the requirements for water quality in the river have become more stringent, and the number of locations along the river at which specific water quality objectives are identified has increased.

Additional storage in the Upper San Joaquin River Basin could also result in increased reliability of surface water deliveries to CVP Friant Division contractors or other regional water users that could receive water through CVP facilities. Delivery of additional surface water would result in reduced groundwater overdraft conditions regionally, and would provide greater stability in regional water supplies. This improved reliability would increase opportunities for water exchanges with urban water users to improve the quality of urban water supplies.

The development of additional water storage could also provide opportunities to increase levels of flood protection downstream of Friant Dam, provide hydropower generation, increase recreation opportunities, and improve flows into the Delta.

Reclamation, in partnership with the State of California Department of Water Resources, has completed initial studies of potential storage options. Public