

located in the reserve set aside for the Cheboygan band by the 1855 Treaty of Detroit. However, John B. Vincent did not participate in the band's allotment selections of 1857 and 1864, and the petitioner did not provide any documentation demonstrating that John B. Vincent descended from the Cheboygan band. John B. Vincent did not appear on any Ottawa and Chippewa annuity list furnished by the petitioner. Since individuals from Ottawa and Chippewa bands other than Cheboygan obtained allotments in 1875 in the Cheboygan reserve, the 1875 list of allottees in that reserve is not a list of members of the Cheboygan band. Earlier allotment selection records of 1857 and 1864 contain band affiliation information, are deemed reliable evidence of Cheboygan members, and do not include John B. Vincent.

The BLB petitioner meets criterion 83.7(f), which requires that a petitioning group be composed principally of persons who are not members of any acknowledged North American Indian tribe. Enrollment of some of the petitioner's members in federally recognized tribes has occurred since at least 1994, the first year in which written relinquishments gave the reason as "enrollment at Little Traverse Bay Bands."

Fifty of the 490 current members of the BLB petitioner are also members of the federally acknowledged LTBB or the Sault Ste. Marie Band of Chippewa Indians without having formally relinquished their membership in the petitioner. As 90 percent of the group is not enrolled elsewhere, the petitioner meets this criterion.

The BLB petitioner meets criterion 83.7(g), because there is no evidence in the record that the petitioner or its members have been explicitly terminated or forbidden a Federal relationship by an act of Congress.

Based on this preliminary factual determination, the Department proposes not to extend Federal Acknowledgment under 25 CFR part 83 to the petitioner known as the Burt Lake Band of Ottawa and Chippewa Indians, Inc.

As provided by 25 CFR 83.10(h) of the regulations, a report summarizing the evidence, reasoning, and analyses that are the basis for the proposed decision will be provided to the petitioner and interested parties, and is available to other parties upon written request.

Comments on the proposed finding and/or requests for a copy of the report of evidence should be addressed to the Office of the Assistant Secretary—Indian Affairs, 1951 Constitution Avenue, NW., Washington, DC 20240,

Attention: Office of Federal Acknowledgment, Mail Stop 34B-SIB.

Comments on the proposed finding should be submitted within 180 calendar days from the date of publication of this notice. The period for comment on a proposed finding may be extended for up to an additional 180 days at the AS-IA's discretion upon a finding of good cause (83.10(i)). Comments by interested and informed parties must be provided to the petitioner as well as to the Federal government (83.10(h)). After the close of the 180-day comment period, and any extensions, the petitioner has 60 calendar days to respond to third-party comments (83.10(k)). This period may be extended at the AS-IA's discretion, if warranted by the extent and nature of the comments.

After the expiration of the comment and response periods described above, the Department will consult with the petitioner concerning establishment of a schedule for preparation of the final determination. After consideration of the written arguments and evidence rebutting the proposed finding and within 60 days after beginning preparation of the final determination, the AS-IA will publish the final determination of the petitioner's status in the **Federal Register** as provided in 25 CFR 83.10(1).

Dated: April 5, 2004.

**Aurene M. Martin,**

*Principal Deputy Assistant Secretary—Indian Affairs.*

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## DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR

### Bureau of Land Management

[MT-069-1310-DB-034E]

#### Notice of Intent To Conduct Scoping and Prepare an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) for the Blackleaf Project, Teton County, MT

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

**ACTION:** Notice of intent.

**SUMMARY:** Startech Energy, Inc. (Operator of the Blackleaf Unit, a Federal Oil and Gas Unit), hereinafter referred to as "Startech" has submitted to the Bureau of Land Management (BLM) Applications for Permit to Drill for natural gas on lease, MTM 24615. This lease is located on BLM managed land, in Teton County along the Rocky Mountain Front. The proposed drilling location is within the Montana Thrust

Belt, approximately 75 miles northwest of Great Falls, Montana.

Under provisions of section 102(2)(C) of the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) and pertinent Federal regulations, the BLM announces its intention to prepare an EIS, and to solicit public comments regarding issues, concerns and resource information pertaining to this proposed project.

Comments, including names and street addresses of respondents, will be available for public review at the BLM Lewistown Field Office during regular business hours 7:45 a.m. to 4:30 p.m., Monday through Friday, except holidays, and may be published as part of the 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 comments. Such requests will be honored to the extent allowed by law. Anonymous comments will not be accepted. All submissions from organizations and businesses, and from individuals identifying themselves as representatives or officials of organizations or businesses, will be available for public inspection in their entirety.

**DATES:** This Notice initiates the public scoping process. The BLM can best determine the scope of this EIS if issues/concerns are submitted within 45 days of the publication of this Notice. Scoping meeting dates and locations will be announced in local newspapers, on local radio stations, by mail and on the BLM Lewistown Field Office Web page (<http://www.mt.blm.gov/ldo/index.html>). Public scoping meeting announcements will be made at least 15 days prior to the meetings. All comments received at the public meetings or submitted in writing by mail or electronically via the internet will aid the BLM in identifying issues, developing a range of alternatives, and analyzing environmental impacts. The BLM will provide additional opportunities for public participation throughout the preparation of the EIS.

**ADDRESSES:** Comments should be submitted in writing to: Field Manager, Bureau of Land Management, Lewistown Field Office, P.O. Box 1160, Lewistown, Montana 59457, Attn: Blackleaf Project EIS Team Lead; via electronic submittal, the e-mail address is [mt\\_blackleaf\\_eis@blm.gov](mailto:mt_blackleaf_eis@blm.gov).

**FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:** Lynn Ricci, Blackleaf Project EIS Team Lead, BLM, Lewistown Field Office,

P.O. Box 1160, Lewistown, Montana 59457, 406/538-1922.

**SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:** Startech proposes to drill a total of three wells from one location within the existing Blackleaf Exploration Unit at T. 25 N., R. 8 W., section 6. The proposed exploratory/development well would offset a Known Geologic Structure that was tested for natural gas from an exploratory well in Muddy Creek drilled in 1959. The surface location of Startech's proposed drill site is located within BLM's Blind Horse Outstanding Natural Area. In addition to public land managed by the BLM, the proposed action involves privately owned surface estate and land managed by the Montana Department of Fish, Wildlife and Parks.

The first well would be drilled vertically to approximately 6,500 feet, and the next two wells would be drilled directionally from the same drill site to fully develop the natural gas reservoir. Approximately four acres would be disturbed in order to construct a well pad (400 feet by 400 feet) to accommodate the drilling rig and subsequent production equipment. Existing roads and pipelines would be utilized to minimize impacts to the area, though portions of the road system would need to be upgraded. Approximately 200 feet of new road would be constructed from the existing road to the proposed well site. Approximately eight miles of new pipeline would be constructed from the well site to the existing production facility located in T. 26 N., R. 8 W., section 8.

In order to minimize activity at the well site following the drilling and completion of the wells, Startech proposes to produce full well stream fluids to the existing production facility that would be upgraded, located in section 8. Produced fluids would be compressed at this production facility, and then transferred by pipeline to a distant gas processing facility. At the gas plant, hydrocarbon condensate (oil) and water would be separated and recovered. The gas would be sweetened to remove approximately 0.5% hydrogen sulfide (H<sub>2</sub>S) contaminant, and then processed to place it into marketable condition for sale into an existing natural gas pipeline approximately 25 miles north east of the project area. Two shut-in wells, from previous drilling and production activity in the Blackleaf Unit in the 1980s, would be returned to production upon successful completion of the proposed wells.

The EIS will analyze the applicant's proposal and the reasonable foreseeable development scenario (RFD) expected during the life of this project, which includes an additional eight potential locations. The gas processing plant is also a reasonable foreseeable action and therefore, expected impacts would be evaluated but not to the same degree as for the proposed action.

Issues that will be analyzed in the EIS include: cultural heritage resources; visual resource management; social and economic conditions; threatened and endangered species, and sensitive species of wildlife and plants and their habitats; air quality; water quality; recreation; noxious weeds; and reasonable foreseeable future actions.

Dated: April 6, 2004.

**David L. Mari,**

*Lewistown Field Manager.*

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**BILLING CODE 4310--SS-P**

## DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR

### Bureau of Land Management

[NV-055-5853-EU]

#### **Notice of Realty Actions: Competitive Sale of Public Lands in Clark County, NV; Termination of Recreation and Public Purposes Classification and Segregation; Withdrawal of the Formerly Classified Lands by the Southern Nevada Public Land Management Act**

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

**ACTION:** Notice.

**SUMMARY:** The Bureau of Land Management (BLM) proposes to sell federally owned parcels of land in Clark County, Nevada, aggregating approximately 2,532.01 acres. All sales will be conducted on June 2, 2004, in accordance with competitive bidding procedures. The BLM also is terminating the R&PP classification of other lands in Clark County that are withdrawn by the Southern Nevada Public Land Management Act.

**DATES:** Comments regarding the proposed sale must be received by BLM on or before June 1, 2004.

Sealed bids must be received by BLM not later than 4:30 p.m., p.d.t., May 26, 2004.

All parcels of land proposed for sale are to be put up for purchase and sale, at public auction, beginning at 10 a.m., p.d.t., June 2, 2004. Registration for oral bidding will begin at 8 a.m., p.d.t., June 2, 2004. The public auction will begin at 10 a.m., p.d.t., June 2, 2004.

Other deadline dates for the receipt of payments, and arranging for certain payments to be made by electronic transfer, are specified in the proposed terms and conditions of sale, as stated herein.

**ADDRESSES:** Comments regarding the proposed sale, as well as sealed bids to be submitted to BLM, should be addressed to: Field Manager, Las Vegas Field Office, Bureau of Land Management, 4701 N. Torrey Pines Drive, Las Vegas, Nevada 89130.

More detailed information regarding the proposed sale and the lands involved may be reviewed during normal business hours (7:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.) at the Las Vegas Field Office (LVFO).

The address for oral bidding registration, and for where the public auction will be held, is: Sam's Town Hotel and Casino, 5111 Boulder Highway, Las Vegas, Nevada.

The auction will take place at Sam's Town Live, located within the Sam's Town Hotel and Casino.

**FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:** You may contact Judy Fry, Program, SALES at (702) 515-5081 or by e-mail at [jfry@nv.blm.gov](mailto:jfry@nv.blm.gov). You may also call (702) 515-5000 and ask to have your call directed to a member of the Sales Team.

**SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:** The following lands have been authorized and designated for disposal under the Southern Nevada Public Land Management Act of 1998 (112 Stat. 2343), as amended by the Clark County Conservation of Public Land and Natural Resources Act of 2002 (116 Stat. 1994), (hereinafter "SNPLMA"). These lands are proposed to be put up for purchase and sale by competitive auction on June 2, 2004, at an oral auction to be held in accordance with the applicable provisions of section 203 and section 209 of the Federal Land Policy and Management Act of 1976 (FLPMA) (43 U.S.C. 1713 and 1719), respectively, and its implementing regulations, 43 CFR part 2710, at not less than the fair market value (FMV) of each parcel, as determined by the authorized officer after an appraisal.

#### **Lands Proposed for Sale**

##### **Mount Diablo Meridian, Nevada**

T.19 S, R. 59 E.,  
 Sec. 2, W<sup>1</sup>/<sub>2</sub>NE<sup>1</sup>/<sub>4</sub>SE<sup>1</sup>/<sub>4</sub>NE<sup>1</sup>/<sub>4</sub>,  
 E<sup>1</sup>/<sub>2</sub>NW<sup>1</sup>/<sub>4</sub>SE<sup>1</sup>/<sub>4</sub>NE<sup>1</sup>/<sub>4</sub>;  
 Sec. 25, SE<sup>1</sup>/<sub>4</sub>SE<sup>1</sup>/<sub>4</sub>NW<sup>1</sup>/<sub>4</sub>.  
 T.19 S, R. 60 E.,  
 Sec. 18, Lots 13 and 14,  
 E<sup>1</sup>/<sub>2</sub>SE<sup>1</sup>/<sub>4</sub>SW<sup>1</sup>/<sub>4</sub>NE<sup>1</sup>/<sub>4</sub>;  
 Sec. 29, NE<sup>1</sup>/<sub>4</sub>NE<sup>1</sup>/<sub>4</sub>SW<sup>1</sup>/<sub>4</sub>NW<sup>1</sup>/<sub>4</sub>,  
 SE<sup>1</sup>/<sub>4</sub>NE<sup>1</sup>/<sub>4</sub>SW<sup>1</sup>/<sub>4</sub>NW<sup>1</sup>/<sub>4</sub>;  
 Sec. 31, NE<sup>1</sup>/<sub>4</sub>NE<sup>1</sup>/<sub>4</sub>NE<sup>1</sup>/<sub>4</sub>NW<sup>1</sup>/<sub>4</sub>,  
 NE<sup>1</sup>/<sub>4</sub>NE<sup>1</sup>/<sub>4</sub>SE<sup>1</sup>/<sub>4</sub>SW<sup>1</sup>/<sub>4</sub>,  
 SE<sup>1</sup>/<sub>4</sub>NE<sup>1</sup>/<sub>4</sub>SE<sup>1</sup>/<sub>4</sub>SW<sup>1</sup>/<sub>4</sub>,