

species. The coastal salt marsh and upland areas within the Sweetwater Marsh Unit support 6 federally listed species, including 3 listed birds that nest within the Unit, 1 State-listed endangered species, and 26 species of birds identified by the Service as Birds of Conservation Concern.

The South San Diego Bay Unit was established in 1999 as a unit of the San Diego National Wildlife Refuge for the purpose of protecting, managing, and restoring habitats for federally listed endangered and threatened species and migratory birds. The Service currently manages approximately 2,300 acres of the 3,940 acres included within the Unit's approved acquisition boundary. The majority of this management area is leased to the Service by the California State Lands Commission. Included within this Unit is the largest remaining expanse of intertidal mudflats in San Diego Bay. This and other habitats within the Unit support 5 federally listed endangered and threatened species, 1 State-listed endangered species, and 19 species of birds identified by the Service as Birds of Conservation Concern. Open water is the dominant habitat, followed by intertidal mudflats, disturbed uplands, salt marsh, and freshwater wetlands. The Unit includes an active commercial solar salt operation that is managed under a Special Use Permit. The salt pond levees provide important nesting habitat for a variety of colonial nesting seabirds, and the brine invertebrates present in some ponds provide foraging habitat for various migratory birds, including phalaropes and eared grebes.

The proposed action is to adopt and implement a CCP that best achieves the purposes for which the Refuge was established, furthers its vision and goals, contributes to the mission of the National Wildlife Refuge System, addresses significant issues and applicable mandates, and is consistent with the principles of sound fish and wildlife management. Implementing the CCP will enable the Refuge to fulfill its role in the conservation and management of fish and wildlife resources within the Pacific Flyway, including the conservation of important coastal wetlands, and to provide refuge visitors with opportunities to enjoy the Refuge's resources through high-quality opportunities for wildlife observation, environmental education, and environmental interpretation. A Predator Management Plan, prepared pursuant to the Service's endangered species management responsibilities, is also included in the CCP/EIS as a step-down plan. The predator management plan, which benefits the Federally listed

endangered California least tern and light-footed clapper rail and the threatened western snowy plover, has been developed as a comprehensive wildlife damage control program that addresses a range of management actions from vegetation control and nesting habitat enhancement to non-lethal and lethal control of both mammalian and avian predators. Under this plan, the most effective, selective, and humane techniques available to deter or remove individual predators or species would be implemented.

This CCP will also satisfy a condition of the Public Agency Lease between the California State Lands Commission and the Service, requiring management and public access plans for the South San Diego Bay Unit, as well as fulfill the Service's obligation described in a Cooperative Agreement between the Service and the Unified Port of San Diego to prepare "a holistic habitat restoration plan" for a 1,035-acre portion of the existing salt ponds within the South San Diego Bay Unit.

The Service analyzed various alternatives for future management of the Refuge, including three alternatives for the Sweetwater Marsh Unit and four alternatives for the South San Diego Bay Unit. Sweetwater Marsh Unit, Alternative C, and South San Diego Bay Unit, Alternative D, have been identified as the Service's preferred alternatives.

Alternative C for the Sweetwater Marsh Unit would improve habitat quality and restore intertidal and upland habitats to support six Federally listed species, along with the Refuge's other plant and animal resources. The existing trail system on Gunpowder Point would be redesigned and new interpretive elements would be provided to better complement the existing environmental education programs supported by the Refuge.

Alternative D for the South San Diego Bay Unit would enhance nesting opportunities in and around the salt ponds for the California least tern, western snowy plover, and various other colonial seabirds; restore to native coastal habitats up to 410 acres of previous agricultural land in the Otay River floodplain; restore 650 acres of commercial solar salt ponds to tidal influence to support intertidal mudflat and coastal salt marsh habitats; and manage the water and salinity levels in an additional 275 acres of salt ponds. Opportunities for wildlife observation, photography, and environmental interpretation would be expanded; a pedestrian pathway would be constructed along the southern end of the Refuge to improve wildlife

observation opportunities for Refuge visitors; and the other public uses (*i.e.*, fishing, environmental education, and boating) currently provided on the Refuge would be maintained.

The following substantive changes were made between the Draft and Final CCP/EIS:

1. We revised Appendix D (CCP Implementation) to clarify the phasing plan for restoration of the salt ponds under scenario 2 and to more clearly describe the step-down planning process for future restoration and enhancement proposals on the South San Diego Bay Unit.

2. We expanded the biological resources information provided in Chapter 3, Affected Environment, to address comments received during public review.

Public comments were requested, considered, and incorporated throughout the planning process. Public outreach included public meetings and workshops, planning update mailings, and **Federal Register** notices. Three previous notices were published in the **Federal Register** concerning the development of this CCP (65 FR 39172, June 23, 2000; 67 FR 19583, April 22, 2002; 70 FR 42359, July 22, 2005). During the public review and comment period for the Draft CCP/EIS, which occurred from July 22 to September 19, 2005, the Service received 38 written comments and four verbal comments. All substantive issues raised in these comments have been addressed through changes incorporated in the Final CCP/EIS and/or through responses to the comments, which are included in Appendix P, Responses to Comments, of the Final CCP/EIS.

Dated: August 11, 2006.

Ken McDermond,

Acting Manager, California/Nevada Operations, Sacramento, California.

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DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR

Bureau of Land Management

[MT-030-1320-EL, NDM 95104]

Notice of Competitive Coal Lease Sale, North Dakota

AGENCY: Bureau of Land Management, Interior.

ACTION: Notice of competitive coal lease sale, lease application NDM 95104.

SUMMARY: Notice is hereby given that the United States Department of Interior (DOI), Bureau of Land Management (BLM), Montana State Office, will offer

coal reserves in the lands described below in Oliver County, North Dakota, hereinafter described as Federal coal lease application (LBA) NDM 95104 for competitive lease by sealed bid in accordance with the provisions for competitive lease sales in 43 CFR 22.2(a), and the Mineral Leasing Act of 1920, as amended and supplemented (30 U.S.C. 181 *et seq.*).

DATES: The lease sale will be held at 11 a.m., Tuesday, September 12, 2006. Sealed bids must be sent by certified mail, return receipt requested, or be hand delivered to the address indicated below, and must be received on or before 10 a.m., September 12, 2006.

ADDRESSES: The lease sale will be held in the BLM Montana State Office, 920 Conference Room, 5001 Southgate Drive, Billings, Montana 59101-4669. Sealed bids clearly marked "Sealed Bid for NDM 95104 Coal Sale-Not to be opened before 11 a.m., Tuesday, September 12, 2006" must be submitted to the Cashier, BLM Montana State Office, at the address given above. The cashier will issue a receipt for each hand delivered sealed bid.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Connie Schaff, Land Law Examiner, or Rebecca Spurgin, Coal Coordinator, at 406-896-5060 or 406-896-5080, respectively.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: This sale is being held in response to a LBA filed by The BNI Coal, Ltd on September 29, 2005. All coal LBAs submitted to BLM for processing prior to November 7, 2005 are not subject to cost recovery on a case-by-case basis (See 43 CFR 3000.10(d)(1), 70 FR 58872, October 7, 2005). The Federal coal resource to be offered consists of all recoverable reserves in the following described lands:

T. 142 N., R. 84 W., 5th P. M.
Sec. 28: W^{1/2}.

Containing approximately 320 acres in Oliver County, North Dakota.

The LBA's total recoverable coal reserves are estimated to be 8.3 million tons (averaging 15.3 feet in thickness) and the average overburden depth is 100 feet.

The estimated coal quality on an as-received basis is as follows:

BTU	6,765 BTU/lb.
Volatile Matter	25.73 %
Fixed Carbon	28.72 %
Moisture	38.46 %
Sulfur Content	0.91 %
Ash Content	7.09 %

The tracts will be leased to the qualified bidder of the highest cash amount, provided that the high bid meets or exceeds the BLM's pre-sale

estimate of fair market value (FMV). No bid that is less than \$100 per acre, or fraction thereof, will be considered. The DOI has established a minimum bid of \$100 per acre or fraction thereof for Federal coal tracts. The minimum bid is not intended to represent FMV. The FMV will be determined by the Authorized Officer after the sale. In the event identical high sealed bids are received, the tying high bidders will be requested to submit follow-up bids until a high bid is received. All tie-breaking sealed-bids must be submitted within 15 minutes following the Sale Official's announcement at the sale that identical high bids have been received.

A lease issued as a result of this offering will provide for payment of an annual rental of \$3 per acre, or fraction thereof; and a royalty payable to the United States of 12.5 percent of the value of coal mined by surface methods and 8.0 percent of the value of coal mined by underground methods. The value of the coal will be determined in accordance with 30 CFR 206.250.

Bidding instructions for the tracts offered and the terms and conditions of the proposed coal lease are included in the Detailed Statement of Lease Sale. Copies of the Detailed Statement and the proposed coal lease are available at the Montana State Office at the address given above. Casefile NDM 95104 is available for inspection at the Montana State Office during normal business hours at the address above.

Dated: July 12, 2006.

Glenwood F. Kerestes,

Acting Chief, Branch of Solid Minerals.

[FR Doc. E6-13608 Filed 8-17-06; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 4310--SS-P

DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR

Bureau of Land Management

[WY-920-1320-EL, WYW172929]

Notice of Invitation for Coal Exploration License Application, Wyoming

AGENCY: Bureau of Land Management, Interior.

ACTION: Notice of Invitation for Coal Exploration License Application, Jacobs Ranch Coal Company, WYW172929, Wyoming.

SUMMARY: Pursuant to section 2(b) of the Mineral Leasing Act of 1920, as amended by section 4 of the Federal Coal Leasing Amendments Act of 1976, 90 Stat. 1083, 30 U.S.C. 201(b), and to the regulations adopted as 43 Code of Federal Regulations (CFR) 3410, all

interested qualified parties, as provided in 43 CFR 3472.1, are hereby invited to participate with Jacobs Ranch Coal Company on a pro rata cost sharing basis in a program for the exploration of coal deposits owned by the United States of America in the following-described lands in Campbell County, Wyoming:

T. 44 N., R. 70 W., 6th P.M., Wyoming,

Sec. 21: Lots 1 through 16;

T. 43 N., R. 71 W., 6th P.M., Wyoming,

Sec. 3: Lots 2, 5 through 19;

Sec. 4: Lots 5 through 20;

Sec. 5: Lots 5 through 20;

Sec. 6: Lots 8, 15, 16, 23;

T. 44 N., R. 71 W., 6th P.M., Wyoming,

Sec. 15: Lots 9 through 16;

Sec. 20: Lots 9, 10, 14, 15;

Sec. 21: Lots 1 through 16;

Sec. 22: Lots 1 through 16;

Sec. 27: Lots 1 through 16;

Sec. 28: Lots 1 through 16;

Sec. 29: Lots 1 through 15, SE^{1/4}SE^{1/4},

Sec. 30: Lots 5, 12, 13, 20;

Sec. 31: Lots 5, 12, 13, 20;

Sec. 32: Lots 1 through 15, SW^{1/4}SE^{1/4};

Sec. 33: Lots 1 through 15, NE^{1/4}SE^{1/4};

Sec. 34: Lots 1 through 16;

Containing 9,260.58 acres, more or less.

DATES: Any party electing to participate in this exploration program must send written notice to both the Bureau of Land Management and Jacobs Ranch Coal Company, as provided in the **ADDRESSES** section below, no later than thirty days after publication of this invitation in the **Federal Register**.

ADDRESSES: Copies of the exploration plan are available for review during normal business hours in the following offices (serialized under number WYW172929): Bureau of Land Management, Wyoming State Office, 5353 Yellowstone Road, P.O. Box 1828, Cheyenne, WY 82003; and, Bureau of Land Management, Casper Field Office, 2987 Prospector Drive, Casper, WY 82604. The written notice should be sent to the following addresses: Jacobs Ranch Coal Company, c/o Rio Tinto Energy America, Attn: Tom Suchomel, Caller Box 3009, Gillette, WY 82717, and the Bureau of Land Management, Wyoming State Office, Branch of Solid Minerals, Attn: Mavis Love, P.O. Box 1828, Cheyenne, WY 82003.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: All of the coal in the above-described land consists of unleased Federal coal within the Powder River Basin Known Coal Leasing Area. The purpose of the exploration program is to obtain supplemental geotechnical data from two previous drilling programs and to assist with the planning of future expansions to the Jacobs Ranch Mine. This notice of invitation will be published in The News-Record of Gillette, WY, once each week for two