

rule changes in the future. The Commission's detailed statement of reasons for denial of the petitions is the product of a careful review of the petitioners' assertions and other associated public comments, and is supported by the facts before us. In these circumstances, the Commission does not believe the petitioners' request can fairly, or reasonably, be "granted" in part based on a future undertaking which itself had no genesis in the petitioners' requests.

The Commission's timely and decisive action in response to the two petitions serves the interests of the Commission and other participants in an effective, disciplined, and efficient rulemaking petition process. In this instance, a decision now has particular value since it directly addresses the petitioners' statements of significant concern about certain, generic aspects of ongoing and future license renewal reviews. While the analyses performed to respond to these petitions will also undoubtedly inform NRC staff proposals regarding the next update of the GEIS, the Commission does not yet have such proposals before it. Any final Commission decisions on an updated GEIS would be preceded by proposed changes, solicitation of public comment, and evaluation of all pertinent information and public comments. Furthermore, a partial "granting" of the petition could imply that the Commission endorses the petitioners' requests and will give them greater weight than other points of view during the GEIS rulemaking.

As to the other matter raised in Commissioner Jaczko's dissent—that of agency review and disposition of petitions for rulemaking more generally—while petitions for rulemaking are indeed opportunities for stakeholders to suggest new considerations and approaches for regulation, Commissioner Jaczko's general concerns about the agency's process for handling rulemaking petitions go beyond the subject of the Commission's action on these petitions. However, this subject matter is being considered, as the Commission has instructed NRC staff [SRM dated August 6, 2007] to conduct a review of the agency's PRM process. At such time as staff may recommend, as an outgrowth of this review, specific proposals for Commission action which would strengthen the agency PRM process, the Commission will assess such recommendations and act on them, as appropriate.

Dated at Rockville, Maryland, this 1st day of August 2008.

For the Nuclear Regulatory Commission.

**Annette L. Vietti-Cook,**

*Secretary of the Commission.*

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## DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR

### Office of Surface Mining Reclamation and Enforcement

#### 30 CFR Part 901

[SATS No. AL-074-FOR; Docket No. OSM-2008-0015]

#### Alabama Regulatory Program

**AGENCY:** Office of Surface Mining Reclamation and Enforcement, Interior.

**ACTION:** Proposed rule; public comment period and opportunity for public hearing on proposed amendment.

**SUMMARY:** We, the Office of Surface Mining Reclamation and Enforcement (OSM), are announcing receipt of a proposed amendment to the Alabama regulatory program (Alabama program) under the Surface Mining Control and Reclamation Act of 1977 (SMCRA or the Act). Alabama proposes revisions to its regulations regarding permit fees and civil penalties. Alabama intends to revise its program to improve operational efficiency.

This document gives the times and locations that the Alabama program and proposed amendment to that program are available for your inspection, the comment period during which you may submit written comments on the amendment, and the procedures that we will follow for the public hearing, if one is requested.

**DATES:** Comments on the proposed rule must be received on or before 4 p.m., c.t., September 8, 2008, to ensure our consideration. If requested, we will hold a public hearing on the amendment on September 2, 2008. We will accept requests to speak at a hearing until 4 p.m., c.t. on August 25, 2008.

**ADDRESSES:** You may submit comments by either of the following two methods:

- *Federal eRulemaking Portal:* <http://www.regulations.gov>. The proposed rule is listed under the agency name "OFFICE OF SURFACE MINING RECLAMATION AND ENFORCEMENT" and has been assigned Docket ID: OSM-2008-0015. If you would like to submit comments through the Federal eRulemaking Portal, go to [www.regulations.gov](http://www.regulations.gov) and do the following. Click on the "Advanced Docket Search" button on the right side of the screen. Type in the Docket ID

OSM-2008-0015 and click the submit button at the bottom of the page. The next screen will display the Docket Search Results for the rulemaking. If you click on OSM-2008-0015, you can view the proposed rule and submit a comment. You can also view supporting material and any comments submitted by others.

- *Mail/Hand Delivery/Courier:* Sherry Wilson, Director, Birmingham Field Office, Office of Surface Mining Reclamation and Enforcement, 135 Gemini Circle, Suite 215, Homewood, Alabama 35209. Please include the Docket ID (OSM-2008-0015) with your comments.

We cannot ensure that comments received after the close of the comment period (see **DATES**) or sent to an address other than the two listed above will be included in the docket for this rulemaking and considered.

For additional information on the rulemaking process and the public availability of comments, see "III. Public Comment Procedures" in the **SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION** section of this document.

You may receive one free copy of the amendment by contacting OSM's Birmingham Field Office. See below **FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT**.

You may review a copy of the amendment during regular business hours at the following locations:

Sherry Wilson, Director, Birmingham Field Office, Office of Surface Mining Reclamation and Enforcement, 135 Gemini Circle, Suite 215, Homewood, Alabama 35209, Telephone: (205) 290-7282, [swilson@osmre.gov](mailto:swilson@osmre.gov).

Randall C. Johnson, Director, Alabama Surface Mining Commission, 1811 Second Avenue, P.O. Box 2390, Jasper, Alabama 35502-2390, Telephone: (205) 221-4130.

**FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:** Sherry Wilson, Director, Birmingham Field Office. Telephone: (205) 290-7282. E-mail: [swilson@osmre.gov](mailto:swilson@osmre.gov).

#### **SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:**

I. Background on the Alabama Program  
 II. Description of the Proposed Amendment  
 III. Public Comment Procedures  
 IV. Procedural Determinations

#### **I. Background on the Alabama Program**

Section 503(a) of the Act permits a State to assume primacy for the regulation of surface coal mining and reclamation operations on non-Federal and non-Indian lands within its borders by demonstrating that its program includes, among other things, " \* \* \* a State law which provides for the regulation of surface coal mining and reclamation operations in accordance

with the requirements of this Act. \* \* \*; and rules and regulations consistent with regulations issued by the Secretary pursuant to this Act.” See 30 U.S.C. 1253(a)(1) and (7). On the basis of these criteria, the Secretary of the Interior (Secretary) conditionally approved the Alabama program on May 20, 1982. You can find background information on the Alabama program, including the Secretary’s findings, the disposition of comments, and the conditions of approval in the May 20, 1982, **Federal Register** (47 FR 22030). You can also find later actions concerning the Alabama program and program amendments at 30 CFR 901.10, 901.15, and 901.16.

## II. Description of the Proposed Amendment

By letter dated July 18, 2008 (Administrative Record No. AL-0658), Alabama sent us an amendment to its program under SMCRA (30 U.S.C. 1201 *et seq.*) at its own initiative. Below is a summary of the changes proposed by Alabama. The full text of the program amendment is available for you to read at the locations listed above under **ADDRESSES**.

Alabama proposes to revise its regulations at Alabama Rule 880-X-8B-.07 regarding permit fees by:

- (1) Increasing the acreage fee,
- (2) Requiring an acreage fee on all bonded acreage covered in a permit renewal, and
- (3) Increasing the basic fees for the following types of applications: permit; coal exploration; permit renewal; permit transfer; permit revision involving only an incidental boundary revision; permit revision involving an insignificant alteration to the mining and reclamation plan; and permit revision involving a significant alteration to the mining and reclamation plan.

Alabama also proposes to revise its regulations at Alabama Rule 880-X-11D-.06 regarding civil penalty amounts by increasing the dollar amounts of the penalties.

## III. Public Comment Procedures

Under the provisions of 30 CFR 732.17(h), we are seeking your comments on whether the amendment satisfies the applicable program approval criteria of 30 CFR 732.15. If we approve the amendment, it will become part of the State program.

### Written Comments

Send your comments to us by one of the two methods specified above. Your written comments should be specific, pertain only to the issues proposed in this rulemaking, and include

explanations in support of your recommendations. We cannot ensure that comments received after the close of the comment period (see **DATES**) or sent to an address other than the two listed above (see **ADDRESSES**) will be included in the docket for this rulemaking and considered.

### Public Availability of Comments

Before including your address, phone number, e-mail address, or other personal identifying information in your comment, you should be aware that your entire comment—including your personal identifying information—may be made publicly available at any time. While you can ask us in your comment to withhold your personal identifying information from public review, we cannot guarantee that we will be able to do so.

### Public Hearing

If you wish to speak at the public hearing, contact the person listed under **FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT** by 4 p.m., c.t. on August 25, 2008. If you are disabled and need reasonable accommodations to attend a public hearing, contact the person listed under **FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT**. We will arrange the location and time of the hearing with those persons requesting the hearing. If no one requests an opportunity to speak, we will not hold a hearing. If there is only limited interest in participating at a public hearing, a public meeting or teleconference rather than a hearing may be held. If we hold a public meeting or teleconference, a notice of the event will be posted to the docket for this rulemaking at [www.regulations.gov](http://www.regulations.gov), and a summary of the event will be included in the docket for this rulemaking.

To assist the transcriber and ensure an accurate record, we request, if possible, that each person who speaks at the public hearing provide us with a written copy of his or her comments. The public hearing will continue on the specified date until everyone scheduled to speak has been given an opportunity to be heard. If you are in the audience and have not been scheduled to speak and wish to do so, you will be allowed to speak after those who have been scheduled. We will end the hearing after everyone scheduled to speak and others present in the audience who wish to speak, have been heard.

## IV. Procedural Determinations

### Executive Order 12630—Takings

This rule does not have takings implications. This determination is

based on the analysis performed for the counterpart Federal regulation.

### Executive Order 12866—Regulatory Planning and Review

This rule is exempted from review by the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) under Executive Order 12866.

### Executive Order 12988—Civil Justice Reform

The Department of the Interior has conducted the reviews required by section 3 of Executive Order 12988 and has determined that this rule meets the applicable standards of subsections (a) and (b) of that section. However, these standards are not applicable to the actual language of State regulatory programs and program amendments because each program is drafted and promulgated by a specific State, not by OSM. Under sections 503 and 505 of SMCRA (30 U.S.C. 1253 and 1255) and the Federal regulations at 30 CFR 730.11, 732.15, and 732.17(h)(10), decisions on proposed State regulatory programs and program amendments submitted by the States must be based solely on a determination of whether the submittal is consistent with SMCRA and its implementing Federal regulations and whether the other requirements of 30 CFR parts 730, 731, and 732 have been met.

### Executive Order 13132—Federalism

This rule does not have Federalism implications. SMCRA delineates the roles of the Federal and State governments with regard to the regulation of surface coal mining and reclamation operations. One of the purposes of SMCRA is to “establish a nationwide program to protect society and the environment from the adverse effects of surface coal mining operations.” Section 503(a)(1) of SMCRA requires that State laws regulating surface coal mining and reclamation operations be “in accordance with” the requirements of SMCRA, and section 503(a)(7) requires that State programs contain rules and regulations “consistent with” regulations issued by the Secretary pursuant to SMCRA.

### Executive Order 13175—Consultation and Coordination With Indian Tribal Governments

In accordance with Executive Order 13175, we have evaluated the potential effects of this rule on Federally-recognized Indian tribes and have determined that the rule does not have substantial direct effects on one or more Indian tribes, on the relationship between the Federal Government and

Indian tribes, or on the distribution of power and responsibilities between the Federal Government and Indian tribes. This determination is based on the fact that the Alabama program does not regulate coal exploration and surface coal mining and reclamation operations on Indian lands. Therefore, the Alabama program has no effect on Federally-recognized Indian tribes.

*Executive Order 13211—Regulations That Significantly Affect the Supply, Distribution, or Use of Energy*

On May 18, 2001, the President issued Executive Order 13211 which requires agencies to prepare a Statement of Energy Effects for a rule that is (1) considered significant under Executive Order 12866, and (2) likely to have a significant adverse effect on the supply, distribution, or use of energy. Because this rule is exempt from review under Executive Order 12866 and is not expected to have a significant adverse effect on the supply, distribution, or use of energy, a Statement of Energy Effects is not required.

*National Environmental Policy Act*

This rule does not require an environmental impact statement because section 702(d) of SMCRA (30 U.S.C. 1292(d)) provides that agency decisions on proposed State regulatory program provisions do not constitute major Federal actions within the meaning of section 102(2)(C) of the National Environmental Policy Act (42 U.S.C. 4332(2)(C)).

*Paperwork Reduction Act*

This rule does not contain information collection requirements that require approval by OMB under the Paperwork Reduction Act (44 U.S.C. 3507 *et seq.*).

*Regulatory Flexibility Act*

The Department of the Interior certifies that this rule will not have a significant economic impact on a substantial number of small entities under the Regulatory Flexibility Act (5 U.S.C. 601 *et seq.*). The State submittal, which is the subject of this rule, is based upon counterpart Federal regulations for which an economic analysis was prepared and certification made that such regulations would not have a significant economic effect upon a substantial number of small entities. In making the determination as to whether this rule would have a significant economic impact, the Department relied upon the data and assumptions for the counterpart Federal regulations.

*Small Business Regulatory Enforcement Fairness Act*

This rule is not a major rule under 5 U.S.C. 804(2), the Small Business Regulatory Enforcement Fairness Act. This rule: (a) Does not have an annual effect on the economy of \$100 million; (b) Will not cause a major increase in costs or prices for consumers, individual industries, Federal, State, or local government agencies, or geographic regions; and (c) Does not have significant adverse effects on competition, employment, investment, productivity, innovation, or the ability of U.S.-based enterprises to compete with foreign-based enterprises. This determination is based upon the fact that the State submittal, which is the subject of this rule, is based upon counterpart Federal regulations for which an analysis was prepared and a determination made that the Federal regulation was not considered a major rule.

*Unfunded Mandates*

This rule will not impose an unfunded mandate on State, local, or tribal governments or the private sector of \$100 million or more in any given year. This determination is based upon the fact that the State submittal, which is the subject of this rule, is based upon counterpart Federal regulations for which an analysis was prepared and a determination made that the Federal regulation did not impose an unfunded mandate.

**List of Subjects in 30 CFR Part 901**

Intergovernmental relations, Surface mining, Underground mining.

Dated: July 23, 2008.

**Len Meier,**

*Acting Regional Director, Mid-Continent Region.*

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**DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR**

**National Park Service**

**36 CFR Part 7**

**RIN 1024-AD71**

**Special Regulation: Areas of the National Park System, National Capital Region**

**AGENCY:** National Park Service, Interior.

**ACTION:** Proposed rule.

**SUMMARY:** The National Park Service (NPS) is proposing to amend regulations governing viewing of the Inaugural

parade by the public, demonstrators, and the Presidential Inaugural Committee. The proposed rule would extend the duration and extent of demonstrations and special events in Washington, DC, including the Inaugural, the Lighting of the National Christmas Tree and Christmas Pathway of Peace, the Cherry Blossom Festival, the Fourth of July Celebration, and the Festival of American Folklife.

**DATES:** Comments must be received by September 22, 2008.

**ADDRESSES:** You may submit your comments, identified by Regulatory Information Number 1024-AD71, by any of the following methods:

- *Federal eRulemaking Portal:* <http://www.regulations.gov>. Follow the instructions for submitting comments.

- *Mail or hand delivery:* National Park Service, Regional Director, Division of Park Programs, 1100 Ohio Drive, SW., Room 128, Washington, DC 20242.

**FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:**

National Park Service, National Capital Region, Division of Park Programs, 1100 Ohio Drive, SW., Room 128, Washington, DC 20242. Telephone: (202) 619-7275. Fax: (202) 401-2430.

**SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:**

**Background**

On March 20, 2008, the District Court in *ANSWER Coalition v. Kempthorne*, 537 F.Supp.2d 183 (D.D.C. March 20, 2008) found that the National Park Service's practice and procedure of submitting an application on behalf of the Presidential Inaugural Committee (PIC) violated its regulations with respect to the duration of special events and the related timing of the submission of the application. The Court stated, however, that "[i]f the government thinks it appropriate to lengthen the amount of time for which permits may be granted under the regulations—perhaps even only for the Inauguration period and no other—the government may explicitly amend the regulations that apply to all permit applicants." 537 F.Supp.2d at 203-204.

Pennsylvania Avenue is among the world's most famous streets and is located in the heart of the Nation's Capital. America's history has marched, paraded, promenaded, and protested its way up and down Pennsylvania Avenue. Areas must be available to the public as well as demonstrators to view the Inaugural parade. "The Inauguration is *not a private event.*" *ANSWER Coalition v. Kempthorne*, 2008 U.S. Dist. Lexis 21443\* 15 (emphasis in original) (referencing *Mahoney v. Babbitt*, 105 F.3d at 1458 D.C. Cir. 1997). And the