

Most of the acreage offered has been determined to be suitable for mining. The acreage coincident with the main line railroad right-of-way along the western boundary of the tract is not suitable for mining. Features such as utilities and pipelines can be moved to permit coal recovery. In addition, numerous producing coal bed natural gas wells have been drilled on the tract. The estimate of the bonus value of the coal lease will include consideration of the future production from these wells and the successful coal lessee's interaction with gas producers regarding any pre-existing rights of such producers. An economic analysis of this future income stream will consider reasonable compensation for lost production when the wells are bought out since mining will eliminate the gas reservoir. Some of the surface estate of the tract is owned by Thunder Basin Coal Company, but most of the surface is part of the Thunder Basin National Grassland managed by the United States Forest Service.

The tract contains surface mineable coal reserves in the Wyodak-Anderson coal zone currently being recovered in the adjacent, existing mine. On the LBA tract, there are generally two recoverable seams, the shallower Upper Wyodak and the deeper Middle Wyodak. The Upper Wyodak is found in the northern third of the LBA and averages about 13 feet thick. The Middle Wyodak is the primary coal seam and is continuous over the entire LBA. It varies from 67 feet to 75 feet thick. The interburden between the Upper and Middle Wyodak seams varies in thickness from 41 feet to 118 feet. There are up to three thin seams that split from the bottom of the Middle Wyodak which are generally mineable only when they are merged with the Middle Wyodak seam. Overburden depths to the top of the Upper Wyodak seam range from about 170 feet to 400 feet on the LBA.

The tract contains an estimated 222,676,000 tons of mineable coal. This estimate of mineable reserves includes both of the seams mentioned above but does not include any tonnage from localized seams or splits containing less than 5 feet of coal. The estimated reserve excludes coal within and along the railroad right-of-way as required by typical mining practices. The total mineable stripping ratio of the coal in bank cubic yards per ton is approximately 4.2:1. Potential bidders for the LBA should consider the recovery rate expected from thick seam and multiple seam mining.

The South Hilight Field LBA coal is ranked as subbituminous C. The overall average quality on an as-received basis

is 9,011 British Thermal Units per pound containing approximately 0.27 percent sulfur. These quality averages place the coal reserves at the high end of the range of coal quality currently being mined in the Wyoming portion of the Powder River Basin.

The tract will be leased to the qualified bidder of the highest cash amount provided that the high bid meets or exceeds the BLM's estimate of the fair market value of the tract. The minimum bid for the tract is \$100 per acre or fraction thereof. No bid that is less than \$100 per acre, or fraction thereof, will be considered. The bids should be sent by certified mail, return receipt requested, or be hand delivered. The BLM Wyoming State Office Cashier will issue a receipt for each hand-delivered bid. Bids received after 4 p.m. local time, on Tuesday, December 13, 2011, will not be considered. The minimum bid is not intended to represent fair market value. The fair market value of the tract will be determined by the Authorized Officer after the sale. The 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 payment to the United States of 12.5 percent of the value of coal produced by surface mining methods. No coal is to be mined by underground methods since the only coal resources to be offered are those coal resources recoverable by surface mining methods. The value of the coal will be determined in accordance with 30 CFR 206.250.

This LBA was initiated before the case-by-case cost recovery fees at 43 CFR 3473.2(f) became effective. Therefore, case-by-case processing fees are not applicable to this lease sale. See 43 CFR 3000.10(d).

Bidding instructions for the LBA tract offered and the terms and conditions of the proposed coal lease are available from the BLM Wyoming State Office at the address above. Case file documents, WYW174596, are available for inspection at the BLM Wyoming State Office.

**Donald A. Simpson,**  
State Director.

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**BILLING CODE 4310-22-P**

## DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR

### Bureau of Land Management

[LLCON01000 L16100000.DP0000]

#### Notice of Availability of Record of Decision for the Little Snake Resource Management Plan/Environmental Impact Statement

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

**ACTION:** Notice of availability.

**SUMMARY:** The Bureau of Land Management (BLM) announces the availability of the Record of Decision (ROD)/Approved Resource Management Plan (RMP) for the Little Snake Field Office located in northwest Colorado. The Colorado State Director signed the ROD in October 2011, which constitutes the final decision of the BLM and makes the Approved RMP effective immediately.

**ADDRESSES:** Copies of the ROD/Approved RMP are available upon request from the Little Snake Field Office, Bureau of Land Management, 455 Emerson St., Craig, Colorado 81625 or at the following Web site: [http://www.blm.gov/co/st/en/fo/lso/plans/rmp\\_revision.html](http://www.blm.gov/co/st/en/fo/lso/plans/rmp_revision.html). Copies of the ROD are also available for public inspection at the following location: Bureau of Land Management, Colorado State Office, 2850 Youngfield Street, Lakewood, Colorado 80215.

**FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:** For further information contact Matt Anderson, Associate Field Manager/RMP Project Manager, Little Snake Field Office, telephone (970) 826-5000, at the address above, or e-mail: [m40ander@blm.gov](mailto:m40ander@blm.gov). Persons who use a telecommunications device for the deaf (TDD) may call the Federal Information Relay Service (FIRS) at (800) 877-8339 to contact the above individual during normal business hours. The FIRS is available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, to leave a message or question with the above individual. You will receive a reply during normal business hours.

**SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:** The planning area is located in northwest Colorado in Moffat, Routt, and Rio Blanco counties. The plan provides management decisions on approximately 1.3 million acres of BLM-administered public lands and 1.1 million acres of BLM-administered subsurface mineral estate.

The Little Snake Field Office has worked extensively with interested and affected groups, individuals and cooperating agencies to develop the ROD/RMP. Cooperating agencies

include: Moffat County, Colorado Department of Natural Resources; U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Division of Ecological Services, the City of Steamboat Springs; and the Juniper Water Conservancy District. An independent stewardship group called the Northwest Colorado Stewardship participated in the Draft RMP/Draft Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) collaborative process.

The management actions in the ROD/RMP seek a balance of resource protection and resource use. Some of the key decisions in the ROD are:

- Seven Special Recreation Management Areas are designated in the ROD.

- Irish Canyon is designated as an Area of Critical Environmental Concern (ACEC). The ACEC objective would be to protect sensitive plants, remnant plant communities, cultural and geologic values, and scenic quality. Several areas formerly managed as ACECs are not designated as ACECs in the ROD because they were deemed as not warranting special management attention. These areas are: Lookout Mountain, Limestone Ridge, and Cross Mountain Canyon ACECs. Management prescriptions would still be in place to protect relevant and important values in these areas.

- The ROD outlines management actions to protect wilderness characteristics in 4 areas of the planning area: Cold Springs Mountain, Vermillion Basin, Dinosaur North, and Little Yampa Canyon. The management objectives for these areas would be to protect naturalness, opportunities for semi-primitive recreation and solitude. Cold Spring Mountain, Dinosaur North and Vermillion Basin are closed to oil and gas leasing and development. Little Yampa Canyon is subject to no surface occupancy stipulations.

- The majority of lands (86 percent) within the Little Snake Field Office will be Limited to Existing Routes or Limited to Designated Routes in the ROD. Seven percent will be open to cross country travel, and 6 percent will be closed to motorized vehicle use.

- Many wildlife populations are protected by timing limitation stipulations and no surface occupancy buffers around nests.

- The majority (more than 90 percent) of recoverable fluid minerals can be developed within the constraints of the ROD.

- Disturbance limits are placed in areas of important wildlife habitat, especially sagebrush ecosystems.

- The ROD lays out a framework that would allow the BLM to use “adaptive management” at the implementation

stage, giving the BLM greater flexibility and promoting proactive management.

The Approved RMP was prepared under the authorities of the Federal Land Policy and Management Act of 1976 and the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969. The BLM released the Draft RMP/Draft EIS for a 90-day public review period in February 2007. The BLM released the Proposed RMP/Final EIS in August 2010. The Approved RMP is nearly identical to the Proposed Plan (Alternative C) presented in the 2010 Proposed RMP/Final EIS. No inconsistencies were identified during the Governor’s consistency review of the Proposed RMP/Final EIS. Decisions in the ROD are land use planning decisions that are protestable under BLM planning regulations (43 CFR subpart 1610.5). The BLM received 8 valid protest letters during the 30-day protest period after publishing the Proposed RMP/Final EIS. The BLM Director addressed all the protests without making significant changes to the Proposed RMP; minor corrections and clarifications are included in the “Clarifications” section of the ROD. There are no appealable decisions included in the ROD, as the ROD did not include any implementation-level decisions.

**Anna Marie Burden,**

*Acting Colorado State Director.*

**Authority:** 40 CFR 1506.6; 43 CFR 1610.2(g), 1610.5–1(b).

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## DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR

### Bureau of Land Management

[LLOR957000–L14200000–BJ0000: HAG12–003]

#### Filing of Plats of Survey: Oregon/Washington

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

**ACTION:** Notice.

**SUMMARY:** The plats of survey of the following described lands are scheduled to be officially filed in the Bureau of Land Management Oregon/Washington State Office, Portland, Oregon, 30 days from the date of this publication.

#### Willamette Meridian

##### Oregon

T. 19 S., R. 8 W., accepted September 19, 2011.

T. 24 S., R. 7 W., accepted September 19, 2011.

T. 3 W., R. 5 E., accepted September 23, 2011.

T. 8 S., R. 4 E., accepted September 23, 2011.

T. 29 S., R. 8 W., accepted September 23, 2011.

T. 40 S., R. 10 E., accepted September 23, 2011.

T. 18 S., R. 14 E., accepted September 29, 2011.

T. 18 S., R. 13 E., accepted September 29, 2011.

T. 26 S., R. 3 W., accepted September 29, 2011.

T. 8 S., R. 10 E., accepted September 29, 2011.

T. 38 S., R. 2 E., accepted September 30, 2011.

##### Washington

T. 30 N., R. 5 E., accepted September 29, 2011.

T. 10 N., R. 16 E., accepted September 29, 2011.

T. 36 N., R. 4 W., accepted September 29, 2011.

T. 33 and 34 N., R. 2 E., accepted September 30, 2011.

**ADDRESSES:** A copy of the plats may be obtained from the Land Office at the Bureau of Land Management, Oregon/Washington State Office, 333 SW., 1st Avenue, Portland, Oregon 97204, upon required payment. A person or party who wishes to protest against a survey must file a notice that they wish to protest (at the above address) with the Oregon/Washington State Director, Bureau of Land Management, Portland, Oregon.

**FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:** Kyle Hensley, (503) 808–6124, Branch of Geographic Sciences, Bureau of Land Management, 333 SW., 1st Avenue, Portland, Oregon 97204. Persons who use a telecommunications device for the deaf (TDD) may call the Federal Information Relay Service (FIRS) at 1–800–877–8339 to contact the above individual during normal business hours. The FIRS is available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, to leave a message or question with the above individual. You will receive a reply during normal business hours.

**SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:** 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.

**Fred O’Ferrall,**

*Chief, Branch of Land, Mineral, and Energy Resources.*

[FR Doc. 2011–26799 Filed 10–14–11; 8:45 am]

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