

to be offered is limited to coal recoverable by underground mining methods. One purpose of the hearing is to obtain public comments on the EA and on the following items:

(1) The method of mining to be employed to obtain maximum economic recovery of the coal,

(2) The impact that mining the coal in the proposed leasehold may have on the area, and

(3) The methods of determining the fair market value of the coal to be offered.

In addition, the public is invited to submit written comments concerning the MER and FMV of the coal resource. Public comments will be utilized in establishing FMV for the coal resource in the described lands. Comments should address specific factors related to fair market value including, but not limited to:

1. The quality and quantity of the coal resource.

2. The price that the mined coal would bring in the market place.

3. The cost of producing the coal.

4. The interest rate at which anticipated income streams would be discounted.

5. Depreciation and other accounting factors.

6. The mining method or methods which would achieve maximum economic recovery of the coal.

7. Documented information on the terms and conditions of recent and similar coal land transactions in the lease area, and

8. Any comparable sales data of similar coal lands in the lease area.

Written requests to testify orally at the March 30, 2006, public hearing should be received at the Little Snake Field Office prior to the close of business March 30, 2006. Those who indicate they wish to testify when they register at the hearing may have an opportunity if time is available.

As provided by 43 CFR 3422.1(a), proprietary data marked as confidential may be provided in response to this solicitation of public comments. Data so marked shall be treated in accordance with the laws and regulations governing the confidentiality of such information. A copy of the comments submitted by the public on FMV and MER, except those portions identified as proprietary and meeting exemptions stated in the Freedom of Information Act (FOIA), will be available for public inspection at the BLM office noted above. If you wish to withhold your name or address from public review or from disclosure under the FOIA, you must state this prominently at the beginning of your written comments. Such requests will

be honored to the extent allowed by the FOIA. All submissions from organizations, businesses and individuals identifying themselves as representatives or officials of organizations or businesses will be available for public inspection in its entirety. Written comments on the EA, MER, and FMV should be sent to the Little Snake Field Office at the above address prior to the close of business on April 13, 2006, the end of the 30 day public comment period.

Substantive comments, whether written or oral, will receive equal consideration prior to any lease offering. A copy of the EA, the case file, and the comments submitted by the public, except those portions identified as proprietary by the commenter and meeting exemptions stated in the FOIA, will be available for public inspection after June 1, 2006, at the Colorado State Office, 2850 Youngfield, Lakewood, Colorado, 80215.

December 27, 2005.

**Karen Zurek,**

*Solid Minerals Staff, Division of Energy, Lands and Minerals.*

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**BILLING CODE 3410-JB-P**

## DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR

### Bureau of Land Management

[4310-32-P HAG-06-0036]

#### Notice of Intent To Prepare a Resource Management Plan for the John Day Basin Portion of the Central Oregon Resource Area and Associated Environmental Impact Statement

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

**ACTION:** Notice of intent.

**SUMMARY:** The Bureau of Land Management (BLM), Prineville District Office, intends to prepare a Resource Management Plan (RMP) with an associated Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) for the John Day Basin, and by this notice is announcing public scoping meetings. The RMP will amend or replace certain decisions within the John Day RMP (1985) and the portions of the Two Rivers RMP (1986) and Baker RMP (1989) that guide the management of public lands located in the Planning Area.

**DATES:** The BLM will announce public scoping meetings through local news media, newsletters, and the BLM Web site at <http://www.or.blm.gov/landuseplanning.htm> at least 15 days prior to the first meeting. We will

provide formal opportunities for public participation upon publication of the Draft RMP/EIS.

**ADDRESSES:** You may submit scoping comments by any of the following methods:

- E-mail:

*John\_Day\_Basin\_RMP@blm.gov.*

- Fax: (541) 416-6798.

- Mail: BLM, Prineville District Office, 3050 NE 3rd St., Prineville, OR 97754.

Documents pertinent to this proposal may be examined at the BLM Prineville Field Office.

**FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:** For further information or to have your name added to our mailing list, please contact Brent Ralston, Planning Team Leader, telephone (541) 416-6713; or e-mail: *John\_Day\_Basin\_RMP@blm.gov.*

**SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:** The planning area is located in parts of Sherman, Gilliam, Morrow, Umatilla, Grant, Wheeler, Jefferson, and Wasco Counties in the State of Oregon. This planning area encompasses approximately 452,000 acres of BLM-managed land. The plan will fulfill the needs and obligations set forth by the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA), the Federal Land Policy and Management Act (FLPMA), and BLM management policies. The BLM will work collaboratively with interested parties to identify the management decisions that are best suited to local, regional, and national needs and concerns.

The public scoping process identifies relevant issues that will influence the scope of the environmental analysis and EIS alternatives. These issues also guide the planning process. You may submit comments on issues and planning criteria in writing to the BLM at any public scoping meeting, or you may submit them to the BLM using one of the methods listed in the **ADDRESSES** section above. To be most helpful, you should submit formal scoping comments within 30 days after the last public meeting. The minutes and list of attendees for each meeting will be available to the public and open for 30 days after the meeting to any participants who wish to clarify the views they expressed. 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 comment. Such requests will be honored to the extent allowed by law. 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.

Preliminary issues and management concerns have been identified by BLM personnel, other agencies, and various individuals and user groups. The major preliminary issues to be addressed in this planning effort include: vegetation management (including upland and watershed management, riparian areas and wetlands, forests and woodlands, fire and fuels management, wildlife habitat management, special status species, and noxious weeds), water quality/aquatic resources/fisheries, special management areas (including Areas of Critical Environmental Concern, significant caves, wild and scenic rivers, and wilderness study areas); recreation management; cultural and paleontological resources; socioeconomic and environmental justice; energy and minerals; lands and realty; and transportation (including off highway vehicle management and public access).

After public comments are gathered on these and other issues that the plan should address, they will be placed in one of three categories:

1. Issues to be resolved in the plan;
2. Issues to be resolved through policy or administrative action; or
3. Issues beyond the scope of this plan.

The BLM will provide an explanation in the plan as to why we placed an issue in category two or three. In addition to these major issues, a number of management questions and concerns will be addressed in the plan. The public is encouraged to help identify these questions and concerns during the scoping phase.

The BLM will use an interdisciplinary approach to develop the plan in order to consider the variety of resource issues and concerns identified. Specialists with expertise in the following disciplines will be involved in the planning process: Rangeland management, minerals and geology, forestry, fire and fuels, botany, outdoor recreation, archaeology, paleontology, wildlife and fisheries, lands and realty, hydrology, soils, civil engineering, sociology, and economics.

Dated: December 19, 2005.

**Elaine M. Brong,**

*State Director, Oregon/Washington BLM.*

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## DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR

### Bureau of Land Management

[NV-040-5101-ER-F336; 6-08807]

#### Notice of Intent To Prepare an Environmental Impact Statement for a Proposed Coal-Fired Electric Power Generating Plant in Southeastern Lincoln County and Notice of Public Scoping Meetings; Nevada

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

**ACTION:** Notice of Intent to Prepare an Environmental Impact Statement and Initiate Scoping.

**SUMMARY:** Pursuant to section 102 (2)(C) of the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969, the Bureau of Land Management (BLM), Ely Field Office, will be directing the preparation of an environmental impact statement (EIS) and conducting public scoping meetings for the proposed Toquop Energy Power Project, which is a coal-fired electric power generating plant and associated ancillary facilities. BLM has received right-of-way applicants for this project from Toquop Energy Inc. The EIS will assess the potential impacts of a right-of-way for a proposed coal-fired facility and a new railroad line to transport coal to the facility. The Toquop Energy Power Project was previously analyzed in a March 2003 EIS as an 1100 MW gas-fired electric generating facility. Use of an alternative fuel such as coal was eliminated from the 2003 EIS and never analyzed due to economics and other factors at the time.

**DATES:** The publication of this notice initiates the public scoping comment period. Comments on the scope of the EIS, including concerns, issues, or proposed alternatives that should be considered in the EIS must be submitted in writing to the address below. Comments will be accepted until March 23, 2006. Four public scoping meetings are planned during the 30-day scoping period. The meetings will provide the public an opportunity to present comments concerning the Proposed Action that will be addressed in the EIS. The meetings will be held in Reno, Caliente, Mesquite, and Las Vegas, Nevada. The dates, locations, and times of the meetings will be distributed by mail and announced in the local news media on or about the date of this notice.

All comments received at the public scoping meetings or through submitted written comments will aid the BLM in identifying alternatives and mitigating measures to assure all issues are analyzed in the EIS.

**ADDRESSES:** Please mail written comments to the BLM, Ely Field Office, HC 33 Box 33500, Ely, NV 89301, or by visiting the Ely Field Office at 702 North Industrial Way. Comments submitted during this EIS process, including names and street addresses of respondents, will be available for public review at the Ely Field Office during regular business hours 7:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m., Monday through Friday, except holidays. Individual respondents may request confidentiality. If you wish to withhold your name and address from public review or disclosure under the Freedom of Information Act, you must state this prominently at the beginning of your comments. Such requests will be honored to the extent allowed by law. All submissions from organizations or businesses, and from individuals identifying themselves as representatives or officials of organizations or business, will be made available for public inspection in their entirety.

**FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:** Doris Metcalf at (775) 289-1852, or e-mail [Doris\\_Metcalf@nv.blm.gov](mailto:Doris_Metcalf@nv.blm.gov). You may also contact Ms. Metcalf at the address above.

**SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:** On June 15 and June 28, 2001, Toquop Energy Inc. filed applications for Federal Land Policy and Management Act rights-of-way and a temporary use permit to construct and operate an 1100 MW gas-fired power plant to be located in southeast Lincoln County. The applications sought rights-of-way for: (1) An access road from Interstate 15 to the planned project site; (2) a water pipeline, electrical line and well field access road easement running from the proposed power plant site to a terminus point in a proposed well field site in the Tule Desert Area; and (3) a well field in the Tule Desert area and an associated water pump station and equalizer tank. In March 2003, the BLM completed a Final EIS in support of this request. The EIS evaluated the proposed rights-of-way and a No Action alternative. The BLM granted Toquop Energy Inc. the rights-of-way in 2003.

The March 2003 EIS considered evaluating several project and right-of-way alternatives, among which was the use of an alternative fuel such as coal. This alternative was eliminated from the 2003 EIS because project economics did not support such an alternative at the time. Therefore, a coal-fired plant was never analyzed. However, a recent change in market conditions, driven by the ever higher and volatile prices of natural gas, is making this alternative more desirable and economically viable.