



United States Department of the Interior

BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT

Wyoming State Office
P.O. Box 1828
Cheyenne, Wyoming 82003-1828

Dear Reader:

The Bureau of Land Management (BLM) has prepared this Final Environmental Impact Statement (FEIS) to document and disclose the results of an environmental analysis of the proposed Pittsburg and Midway (P&M) Coal Exchange. A copy of this document is provided for your review and comments. The FEIS may also be viewed and downloaded from the BLM Wyoming website www.wy.blm.gov. Copies of the FEIS will also be available for public inspection at the following BLM offices:

Bureau of Land Management
Wyoming State Office
5353 Yellowstone Road
Cheyenne, WY 82009

Bureau of Land Management
Casper Field Office
2987 Prospector Drive
Casper, WY 82604-2968

Bureau of Land Management
Buffalo Field Office
1425 Fort Street
Buffalo, WY 82834

Bureau of Land Management
Pinedale Field Office
432 E. Mill Street
Pinedale, WY 82941

Bureau of Land Management
Rawlins Field Office
1300 N. Third Street
Rawlins, WY 82301

The BLM analyzed two alternatives, the Proposed Action Alternative and the No Action Alternative. The FEIS analyzes a proposal by P&M to exchange privately owned land and some mineral resources for Federal coal. The proposed exchange includes the surface and mineral estate on the parcels which would become Federal estate administered by the USDA Forest Service, Bridger-Teton National Forest (BTNF), (2,447.88 acres); and on 638.37 acres to be administered by BLM and adjacent to the BTNF. BLM would acquire 2,772.25 acres of surface to be administered in the BLM Rawlins and Buffalo Field Offices and 807.69 acres of coal to be administered by the Buffalo Field Office. If the Proposed Action Alternative is selected, the decision to amend the Pinedale Resource Management Plan (RMP), the Rawlins RMP, and the Buffalo RMP would be included.

Under the 43 Code of Federal Regulations (CFR) 2200-Exchanges, lands acquired by the BLM through an exchange automatically become public lands and then managed under the applicable RMP.

- The Pinedale RMP would be maintained to add the Bridger Lands parcel to the identified public lands base. In that the Bridger Lands are contiguous with BLM-administered public lands, those acquired lands would assume the management prescriptions and decisions made for the adjacent BLM lands.
- The Rawlins RMP would be maintained to add the JO Ranch Lands to the identified public lands base. In that the JO Ranch Lands are surrounded by BLM lands, those acquired lands would assume the management prescriptions and decision made for the surrounding BLM lands.
- The Buffalo RMP would be maintained to add the Welch Ranch Lands to the identified public lands base. In that the Welch Ranch Lands parcel is isolated from other public lands and surrounded by private lands, the Buffalo Field Office proposes to analyze alternatives for management in a separate plan amendment process once the exchange is completed.

The BLM will accept public comments on this FEIS, for 30 days commencing on the date the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) publishes its Notice of Availability in the Federal Register. Comments received after the end of the 30-day comment period will be considered in preparation of the FEIS as time permits.

If you wish to comment on the FEIS, your comments should relate directly to the document. We request that you make your comments as specific as possible and that you cite the location, or locations, in the document on which you are commenting. Substantive comments should: (1) give any new information which could alter conclusions; (2) show why or how analysis or assumptions in the FEIS are flawed; (3) show errors in data, sources, or methods; or (4) request clarifications that bear on conclusions. Comments that contain only opinions or preferences will not receive a formal response. However, they will be considered and included as part of the BLM decision-making process.

To address possible environmental and socioeconomic impacts that could result from completing this proposed exchange this FEIS was prepared pursuant to the National Environmental Policy Act and other applicable regulations, and statutes. This FEIS is not a decision document. Its purpose is to inform the public of the impacts of a proposed exchange of Federal coal and to evaluate alternatives to exchanging the coal.

Prior to making a decision on whether to approve or disapprove this exchange, the BLM Wyoming State Director will make a determination that the exchange will, or will not be, in the public interest after considering the factors listed under 43 CFR 2200.0-6 (b), the analysis in this FEIS, and the appraisals that are current at that time.

After completion of the FEIS and prior to making a public interest determination and issuing a notice of decision, the BLM will hold a public hearing to receive public comments on the public interest factors on the proposed exchange, as required under 43 CFR 2203.3. A public interest determination hearing will be held at Sheridan College, 3059 Coffeen Ave., Whitney Building, Room W-136, Sheridan, Wyoming 82801, on August 27, 2003, from 7 to 9 p.m.

Public comments, including the names and street addresses of respondents, will be available for public review at the address listed below during regular business hours (7:45 a.m.- 4:30 p.m.), Monday through Friday, except holidays. Public comments will be published as part of the Record of Decision issued for the FEIS. 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 or businesses, and from individuals identifying themselves as representatives or officials of organizations or businesses, will be made available for public inspection in their entirety.

Please retain this copy of the FEIS for future reference. Send written comments to BLM Casper Field Office, Attn: Nancy Doelger, 2987 Prospector Drive, Casper, WY 82604. Written comments may also be mailed electronically to the attention of Nancy Doelger at casper_wymail@blm.gov. Electronic mail comments must include the name and mailing address of the commenter to receive consideration. Written comments may also be faxed to 307-261-7587, and must include the name and mailing address of the commenter to receive consideration.

If you have any questions or would like to obtain additional copies of this FEIS, please contact Nancy Doelger at 307-261-7627, or at the above address.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Robert A. Bennett". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large initial "R" and "B".

Robert A. Bennett
State Director

PROTEST PROCEDURES

The BLM Planning Regulations, 43 CFR 1610.5-2, state that any person who participated in the planning process, and has an interest that may be adversely affected, may protest. A protest may only raise those issues that were submitted for the record during the planning process. The protest must be filed within 30 days of the date the Environmental Protection Agency publishes the notice of receipt of the Final Environmental Impact Statement (FEIS), in the Federal Register.

E-mail protests will not be accepted. Faxed protests will be considered as potential valid protests provided (1) the signed faxed letter is received by the BLM Washington Office protest coordinator by the closing date of the protest period, and (2) the protesting party also provides the original letter by either regular or overnight mail postmarked by the close of the protest period.

All protests must be sent in writing to:

Regular Mail

Director, Bureau of Land Management
Attn: Ms. Brenda Williams, Protest Coordinator
P.O. Box 66538
Washington D.C. 20035

Fax Mail

Director, Bureau of Land Management
Attn: Ms. Brenda Williams, Protest
Coordinator
Fax Number: 202-452-5112

Overnight Mail

Director, Bureau of Land Management
Attn: Ms. Brenda Williams, Protest Coordinator
1620 L Street, N.W., Room 1075
Washington D.C. 20036
Telephone: 202-452-5045

Protests filed or postmarked after the closing date, or filed with the State Director or Field Manager, shall be rejected. There is no provision for any extension of time for the 30-day protest period provided in the planning regulations.

The resolution of protests is the responsibility of the Director of the BLM whose decision is the final decision of the Department of the Interior. The decision will be in writing and set forth the reasons for the decision. The decision will be sent to the protesting party by certified mail, return receipt requested.

A protest must contain:

1. The name, mailing address, telephone number, and interest of the person filing the protest.
2. A statement of the issue or issues being protested.
3. A statement of the part or parts of the plan being protested.
4. A copy of all documents addressing the issue, or issues, which were submitted during the planning process by protesting party or an indication of the date the issue or issues were discussed for the record.
5. A concise statement explaining why the State Director's decision is believed to be wrong.

Written protests that are filed with the BLM Director may be subject to disclosure under the Freedom of Information Act. Individuals may request confidentiality. If you wish to withhold your name or street address from public review or disclosure you must state this prominently at the beginning of your written protest. Such requests will be honored to the extent allowed by law. All submissions from organizations or businesses, and from individuals identifying themselves as representatives of officials or organizations or businesses, will be made available for public inspection in their entirety.