

or a hardrock mine may cover a period of 10 or more years.

Estimate of Burden Per Respondent: Public reporting burden for this collection of information is estimated to average 176 hours per response.

Estimated total Annual Burden: 2992 hours. This number breaks down to 704 total hours to comply with the information requirements of the 9A regulations governing mining claim operations in parks, and 2288 total hours to comply with the information requirements of the 9B regulations governing non-Federal oil and gas operations in parks.

Methodology and Assumptions Underlying the Hour Estimate: Under the Service's 9A regulations and the 9B regulations, a complete plan may consist of 10 pages of text plus 2–10 pages of illustrations inclusive of location maps, site plans and cross-sections, and up to 100 pages of text plus several volumes of supporting material depending on the complexity of the proposed operations. The latter type of plan for hardrock mining is a rarity in the NPS. The time to prepare a plan could range from 24 hours to 6 months for a very complicated plan. Because the content of each plan is specific to the operation and site, and each operation and site present a unique set of circumstances, it is difficult to identify an "average" plan on which to base an estimate of preparation time. The NPS thus chose to use 160 hours (4 weeks) plus 10% for purposes of this analysis. In the case of the 9A regulations where an average of 4 complete proposed plans are expected per year, the estimated total amount of time involved to prepare plans of operations is 704 hours (*i.e.*, 176 hours \times 4 complete proposed plans). In the case of the 9B regulations where an average of 13 complete proposed plans are expected per year, the estimated total amount of time involved to prepare plans of operations is 2288 hours (*i.e.*, 176 hours \times 13 complete proposed plans).

Estimated Cost Per Respondent to Comply with the Paperwork Requirements: The NPS estimates that the annualized cost to all respondents to comply with the 9A regulations ranges from \$7,040 to \$70,400. The NPS estimated the cost per plan at \$1,760 to \$17,600. In the case of the 9B regulations, the NPS estimates the annualized cost to all respondents ranges from \$65,000 to \$260,000 based

on a likely individual compliance cost range of \$5,000 to \$20,000.

Methodology and Assumptions Underlying the Cost Estimate: For the 9A regulations, the annualized estimated cost to all the respondents was determined as follows:

(1) Nationwide, 4 plans of operations and associated information (*e.g.*, bond, commercial vehicle registration) are expected annually from different operators;

(2) Using an estimate of 160 hours to prepare a plan complete with attachments at a costs of \$10 to \$100 per hour (assuming the use of consultants for some or all parts of the plan requirements), the costs to prepare a plan could range from \$1600 to \$16,000.

(3) The NPS added ten percent (*i.e.*, \$160 to \$1,600) of the cost to prepare a plan of operations to account for administrative costs associated with changes in claim ownership, *etc.*

An operator with experience in preparing plans of operations likely can prepare an acceptable plan for a moderately complex operation in a few weeks, since most of the components of the plan are compiled during the course of normal business activities. Many of the information requirements of the regulations should be compiled by a responsible operator as part of normal business activities, to minimize liabilities, maintain business records for tax and other purposes, obtain financial backing, and ensure a safe, efficient, and well-planned operation. Under the regulations, information may be submitted in the manner in which it is customarily maintained in the industry. The reclamation plan and environmental report requirements, 36 CFR 9.9(b)(6) and (9), respectively, comprise the bulk of the information collection burden associated with these regulations. There is no standard form for submitting information. The NPS makes pertinent environmental information in park files available to prospective operators to aid in the preparation of proposed plans of operations.

For the 9B regulations, the NPS used a likely individual compliance cost range of \$5,000 to \$20,000. The range reflects the differences in types and numbers of operations that may be included in a single plan, the wide variations in the environmental settings in which non-Federal oil and gas development occurs in parks whether an applicant prepares the documents in house or uses a consultant, and the availability of pre-existing

environmental data from parks. Much of the information required by 36 CFR 9.36 should be compiled by a responsible operator as part of his/her normal business activities to minimize liabilities, maintain business records for tax and other purposes, obtain financial backing, and ensure a safe, efficient, and well-planned operation. The information may be submitted in the manner in which it is customarily maintained in the industry. The NPS does not require conformance with a standardized format. The reclamation plan and environmental report requirements, 36 CFR 9.36(a)(12) and (16), respectively, comprise the bulk of the information collection burden associated with these regulations. The NPS makes pertinent environmental information in park files available to prospective operators to aid in the preparation of proposed plans of operations.

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DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR

National Park Service

AGENCY: National Park Service, Interior.

ACTION: Public Notice.

SUMMARY: Pursuant to 36 CFR 51.23, public notice is hereby given that the National Park Service proposes to extend the following expiring concession contracts for a period of up to one year, or until such time as a new contract is extended, whichever occurs sooner.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: All of the listed concession authorizations will expire by their terms on or before December 31, 2002. The National Park Service has determined that the proposed short-term extensions are necessary in order to avoid interruption of visitor services and has taken all reasonable and appropriate steps to consider alternatives to avoid such interruption. These extensions will allow the National Park Service to complete and issue prospectuses leading to the competitive selection of concessioners for new long-term concession contracts covering these operations.