

companies operating mines in the Wyoming Powder River Basin.

**DATES:** Written comments on the FEIS will be accepted for 30 days following the date that the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) publishes their NOA of the FEIS in the **Federal Register**. The BLM will notify all parties on this project's mailing list of the dates when comments will be accepted.

**ADDRESSES:** Please address questions, comments, or concerns to the Casper Field Office, Bureau of Land Management, Attn: Nancy Doelger, 2987 Prospector Drive, Casper, Wyoming 82604, fax them to (307) 261-7587, or send e-mail comments to the attention of Nancy Doelger at [wymail@blm.gov](mailto:wymail@blm.gov). Copies of the FEIS are available for public inspection at the following BLM office locations: Bureau of Land Management, Wyoming State Office, 5353 Yellowstone Road, Cheyenne, Wyoming 82009; Bureau of Land Management, Casper Field Office, 2987 Prospector Lane, Casper, Wyoming 82604.

**FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:** Nancy Doelger or Mike Karbs at the above address, or telephone: (307) 261-7600.

**SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:** The five Federal coal tracts being considered for leasing are adjacent to four mines located south and east of Wright, Wyoming. The operators of these mines applied to lease the tracts as maintenance tracts to extend the life of their existing mining operations under the provisions of the Leasing on Application regulations at 43 CFR 3425. The following paragraphs provide descriptions of the tracts as they were applied for.

On March 10, 2000, Powder River Coal Company applied for a maintenance coal lease for approximately 4,500 acres (approximately 564 million tons of recoverable coal) in two tracts adjacent to the North Antelope/Rochelle Mine Complex in Campbell County, Wyoming. The tracts, which are referred to as the NARO North Lease by Application (LBA) Tract and the NARO South LBA Tract, were assigned case numbers WYW150210 and WYW154001, respectively:

#### **NARO North—WYW150210**

T. 42 N., R. 70 W., 6th PM, Wyoming,  
Sec. 28: Lots 5 thru 16;  
Sec. 29: Lots 5 thru 16;  
Sec. 30: Lots 9 thru 20;  
T. 42 N., R. 71 W., 6th PM, Wyoming,  
Sec. 25: Lots 5 thru 15;  
Sec. 26: Lots 7 thru 10;  
Sec. 35: Lots 1, 2, 7 thru 10, 15, 16.

Containing 2,369.38 acres, more or less.

#### **NARO South—WYW 154001**

T. 41 N., R. 70 W., 6th PM, Wyoming,  
Sec. 19: Lots 6 thru 11, 12 (S½), 13 thru 20;  
Sec. 20: Lots 5 (S½), 6 (S½), 7 (S½), 6 (S½), 8 (S½), 9 thru 16;  
Sec. 21: Lots 5 (S½), 12, 13;  
Sec. 28: Lots 3 thru 6, 11, NE¼SW¼;  
Sec. 29: Lots 1 thru 12;  
Sec. 30: Lots 5 thru 12;

Containing 2,133.635 acres, more or less.

On March 23, 2000, Ark Land Company applied for a maintenance coal lease for approximately 2,799.5 acres (approximately 383.6 million in-place tons of coal) adjacent to the Black Thunder Mine in Campbell County, Wyoming. The tract, which is referred to as the Little Thunder LBA Tract, was assigned case number WYW150318. According to the application, the coal is needed to maintain existing mining operations at the Black Thunder Mine and would be used for electric power generation. On June 14, 2001, Ark Land Company filed an application to modify the Little Thunder LBA Tract. As currently filed, the tract includes approximately 3449.3 acres and 440 million tons of recoverable coal reserves.

#### **Little Thunder—WYW150318**

T. 43 N., R. 71 W., 6th PM, Wyoming,  
Sec. 2: Lots 5, 6, 11 thru 14, 19, 20;  
Sec. 11: Lots 1, 2, 7 thru 10, 15, 16;  
Sec. 12: Lots 2 (W½ & SE¼), 3 thru 16;  
Sec. 13: Lots 1 thru 16;  
Sec. 14: Lots 1, 2, 6 thru 9, 14, 15;  
Sec. 24: Lots 1 thru 16;  
Sec. 25: Lots 1, 2, 7 thru 10, 15, 16.  
T. 44 N., R. 71 W., 6th PM, Wyoming,  
Sec. 35: Lots 1, 2, 7 thru 10, 15, 16.  
Containing 3,449.317 acres, more or less.

On July 28, 2000, Triton Coal Company applied for a maintenance coal lease for approximately 1870.6 acres (approximately 173.2 million in-place tons of coal) adjacent to the North Rochelle Mine in Campbell County, Wyoming. The tract, which is referred to as the West Roundup LBA Tract, was assigned case number WYW151134.

#### **West Roundup—WYW151134**

T. 42 N., R. 70 W., 6th PM, Wyoming,  
Sec. 6: Lots 8-19, 20 (N½), 21 (N½), 22 (N½), 23 (N½);  
Sec. 7: Lots 5 (S½), 6 (S½), 7 (S½), 8 (S½), 9 thru 14;  
Sec. 8: Lots 1 (SW¼), 2 (S½), 3 (S½), 4 (S½), 5 thru 12;  
Sec. 9: Lots 5 (SW¼), 11, 12, 14;  
T. 43 N., R. 70 W., 6th PM, Wyoming,  
Sec. 31: Lots 13 thru 20.  
T. 42 N., R. 71 W., 6th PM, Wyoming,  
Sec. 1: Lots 5, 6, 11 thru 13.  
Containing 1,870.638 acres more or less.

On September 12, 2000, Antelope Coal Company applied for a

maintenance coal lease for approximately 3,500 acres (approximately 292.5 million in-place tons of coal) adjacent to the Antelope Mine in Campbell and Converse Counties, Wyoming. The tract, which is referred to as the West Antelope LBA Tract, was assigned case number WYW151643. On June 27, 2001, Antelope Coal Company filed an application to modify the West Antelope LBA Tract. As currently filed, the tract includes approximately 3,542 acres and 293.9 million tons of in place coal reserves. According to the application, mining this coal would extend the life of the existing mine and the coal would be mined for sale to electrical power generating plants.

#### **West Antelope—WYW151643**

T. 40 N., R. 71 W., 6th PM, Wyoming,  
Sec. 3: Lots 15 thru 18;  
Sec. 4: Lots 5 thru 20;  
Sec. 5: Lots 5 thru 7, 10 thru 15, 19, 20;  
Sec. 9: Lot 1;  
Sec. 10: Lots 3, 4;  
T. 41 N., R. 71 W., 6th PM, Wyoming,  
Sec. 28: Lots 1 thru 16;  
Sec. 29: Lots 1 thru 16;  
Sec. 32: Lots 1 thru 3, 6 thru 11, 14 thru 16;  
Sec. 33: Lots 1 thru 16.  
Containing 3,542.19 acres more or less.

Each of the mines adjacent to the LBA tracts described above (the North Antelope/Rochelle, Black Thunder, North Rochelle, and Antelope mines, respectively) has an approved mining and reclamation plan from the Land Quality Division of the Wyoming Department of Environmental Quality and an approved air quality permit from the Air Quality Division of the Wyoming Department of Environmental Quality. Each of these mines has previously acquired one or more maintenance coal leases using the LBA process.

The Powder River Regional Coal Team (RCT) reviewed these competitive applications at public meetings held on October 25, 2000, in Cheyenne, Wyoming, and May 30, 2002, in Casper, Wyoming. At the most recent meeting, the RCT recommended that BLM continue to process these LBAs.

The Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS) was mailed to the public in February 2003. The EPA and the BLM each published a Notice of Availability in the **Federal Register** on February 7 and February 20, 2003, respectively. A formal public hearing on these applications was held, pursuant to 43 CFR 3425.4 at 7:00 P.M. MDT on March 4, 2003, at the Best Western Tower West Lodge, 109 N. U.S. Highway 14-16, Gillette, Wyoming. The