

Act of 1966, as amended (16 U.S.C. 668dd *et seq.*), to achieve the following:

- (1) Advise other agencies and the public of our intentions, and
- (2) Obtain additional suggestions and information on the scope of alternatives and impacts to be considered.

Open house style meetings and focus group meetings will also be held throughout the scoping phase of the CCP development process. In addition, the Service is inviting comments on archaeological, historic, and traditional cultural sites in accordance with the National Historic Preservation Act.

Special mailings, newspaper articles, and other media announcements will inform people of the opportunities for written input throughout the CCP planning process. Information on the CCP planning process will be posted on the Internet at <http://www.midwest.fws.gov/planning/agassiz.htm>

**ADDRESSES:** Address comments to Refuge Manager, Agassiz National Wildlife Refuge, 22996 290th Street NE., Middle River, MN 56737. Comments may also be submitted electronically at [r3planning@fws.gov](mailto:r3planning@fws.gov).

**FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:** Refuge Manager, Agassiz National Wildlife Refuge, Phone: (218)-449-4115.

**SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:** By Federal Law, all lands within the National Wildlife Refuge System are to be managed in accordance with an approved CCP. The CCP guides management decisions and identifies refuge goals, long-range objectives, and strategies for achieving refuge purposes.

The CCP planning process will consider many elements, including wildlife and habitat management, habitat protection and acquisition, wilderness preservation, public recreational activities, industrial use, and cultural resource preservation. Public input into this planning process is essential.

The CCP will provide other agencies and the public with a clear understanding of the desired conditions for the Refuge and how the Service will implement management strategies.

The Service will prepare in Environmental Assessment (EA) in accordance with procedures for implementing NEPA found in the Departmental Manual 516 DM 6, Appendix 1.

The Service will contract for a cultural resources overview study in support of the comprehensive conservation plan. The professional study will identify known sites on the refuge. We are also asking the public to

identify any cultural sites that are important to them.

Review of this project will be conducted in accordance with the requirements of the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969, as amended (42 U.S.C. 4321 *et seq.*), NEPA Regulations (40 CFR parts 1500-1508), other appropriate Federal laws and regulations, and Service policies and procedures for compliance with those regulations.

We estimate that the draft environmental documents will be available in late 2003.

Dated: November 8, 2002.

**William F. Hartwig,**  
*Regional Director.*

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## DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR

### Bureau of Land Management

**[WY-060-1320-EL, WYW150210, WYW150318, WYW151134, WYW151643, WYW154001]**

### Notice of Availability of South Powder River Basin Coal Draft Environmental Impact Statement and Federal Coal Notice of Hearing, WY

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

**ACTION:** Notice of Availability (NOA) of a Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS) on four maintenance lease applications received for five Federal coal tracts in the decertified Powder River Federal Coal Production Region, Wyoming, and Notice of public hearing.

**SUMMARY:** Under the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) and the implementing regulations, the Bureau of Land Management (BLM) announces the availability of the South Powder River Basin Coal DEIS and announces a public hearing pursuant to 43 Code of Federal Regulations (CFR) 3425.4.

The DEIS analyzes and discloses to the public direct, indirect, and cumulative environmental impacts of issuing five Federal coal leases in the Wyoming portion of the Powder River Basin. The tracts are being considered for sale as a result of the following coal lease applications received from existing mines in the Wyoming Powder River Basin:

- On March 10, 2000, Powder River Coal Company applied for a maintenance coal lease for approximately 4,500 acres (approximately 564 million recoverable tons of 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;

- 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.

- 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;

- 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; and,

- 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.

The purpose of the public hearing is to solicit comments on the DEIS from the public on the proposed competitive sales of the Federal coal included in the NARO North, NARO South, Little Thunder, West Roundup, and West Antelope LBA tracts, and on the fair market value and maximum economic recovery of the Federal coal included in the five tracts.

**DATES:** Written comments on the DEIS will be accepted for 60 days following the date that EPA publishes their NOA of the DEIS in the **Federal Register**. Requests to be included on the mailing list and to receive copies of the DEIS and notification of the comment period