

**ADDRESSES:** Comments may be submitted to the Bureau of Land Management, Southeastern States Field Office, 411 Briarwood Drive, Suite 404, Jackson, MS 39206 or via email: [gtaylor@blm.gov](mailto:gtaylor@blm.gov) or via fax: 918-621-4130.

**FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:** Gary Taylor or Randall Mills, Southeastern States Field Office at 601-977-5400 or by email at [gtaylor@blm.gov](mailto:gtaylor@blm.gov) or [ramills@blm.gov](mailto:ramills@blm.gov). Persons who use a telecommunications device for the deaf (TDD) may call the Federal Information Relay Service (FIRS) at 1-800-877-8339 to contact the above individual during normal business hours. The FIRS is available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, to leave a message or question with the above individual. You will receive a reply during normal business hours.

**SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:** The coal lease application, filed by Best Coal, Inc., is located in Jefferson County, Alabama. The lease application area is approximately 5 miles north of Mt. Olive, Alabama, on Glovers Bend Road. The proposed lease area, totaling 160 acres, is described as follows: Township 15 South, Range 4 West, Huntsville Meridian Section 24, SW1/4NW1/4, N1/2SW1/4, SE1/2SW1/4.

The applicant proposes to mine the Federal coal in the lease application area by surface methods. The surface estate overlying the lease application area is privately owned. The BLM has the responsibility to address coal lease applications on Federal mineral estate under the Mineral Leasing Act of 1920, as amended. The Office of Surface Mining, in coordination with the State of Alabama, has responsibility to issue Mine Permits under the Surface Mining Control and Reclamation Act.

An interdisciplinary team will prepare the RMP Amendment and associated EA for the lease application. Preliminary issues, subject to change as a result of public input, are (1) Potential impacts of coal development on the surface and subsurface resources; and (2) Consideration of restrictions on lease rights to protect surface resources.

Preliminary planning criteria developed to guide the preparation of the planning analysis, subject to change as a result of public input, are as follows:

1. Land use planning and environmental analysis will be conducted in accordance with laws, regulations, executive orders and manuals. Planning will be conducted for the Federal coal mineral estate (Federal leasable mineral estates such as coal are under the administration of the BLM).

2. A mine plan scenario will be prepared for the Federal coal resource as an analytical tool to inform the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) analysis.

3. Resource data needed to evaluate the impacts of coal mining will be collected.

4. The planning team will work cooperatively with (a) Federal, State, county, and local governments and agencies; (b) Tribal governments; (c) Groups and organizations; and (d) Individuals. Comments relating to the preliminary issues and planning criteria should be submitted in writing to the address provided above.

An individual, business entity, or public body may participate in this process by providing information regarding coal or other resource information to assist in determining conflicts that may result from issuance of the coal lease. For other resource information, participants are asked to identify the particular resource value, to provide the reason that the resource would conflict with coal development and provide a map (minimal scale 1:24,000) showing the location of the resource.

The information available to the interdisciplinary team will be considered in addressing the specific resources and uses identified in the 20 Unsuitability Criteria listed at 43 CFR subpart 3461. Screening of the Federal coal lands in the application area through the Unsuitable Criteria will result in a determination as to which lands are (1) Acceptable for further leasing consideration with standard stipulations; (2) Acceptable for further leasing consideration with special stipulations; or (3) Unacceptable for further consideration for leasing.

Written comments should address one or more of the following: (1) Issues to be considered; (2) Whether the preliminary planning criteria are adequate for the issues; (3) Feasible and reasonable alternatives to examine; or (4) Relevant coal or other resource information.

The BLM will utilize and coordinate the NEPA commenting process to satisfy the public involvement process for Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act (16 U.S.C. 470f) as provided for in 36 CFR 800.2(d)(3). Native American tribal consultations were conducted in accordance with policy, and tribal concerns will be given due consideration, including impacts on Indian trust assets. Federal, State, and local agencies, along with other stakeholders that may be interested or affected by the BLM's decision on this project, are invited to participate in the scoping process and, if eligible, may

request or be requested by the BLM to participate as a cooperating agency.

Before including your address, phone number, email address, or other personal identifying information in your comment, you should be aware that your entire comment—including your personal identifying information—may be made publicly available at any time. While you can ask us in your comment to withhold your personal identifying information from public review, we cannot guarantee that we will be able to do so.

**Authority:** 43 CFR 1610.2(c).

**John Lyon,**

*State Director.*

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## DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR

### Bureau of Land Management

[LLNM004410.L1610000.DO0000.LXSSG0690000]

#### Notice of Intent To Prepare a Resource Management Plan for the Oklahoma, Kansas, and Texas Planning Area and an Associated Environmental Impact Statement

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

**ACTION:** Notice of Intent.

**SUMMARY:** In compliance with the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969, as amended (NEPA), and the Federal Land Policy and Management Act of 1976, as amended (FLPMA), the Bureau of Land Management (BLM) Oklahoma Field Office, Tulsa, Oklahoma, intends to prepare a Resource Management Plan (RMP) with an associated Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) for the Oklahoma, Kansas, and Texas planning area. This notice announces the beginning of the scoping process to solicit public comments and identify issues. The RMP will replace the existing Oklahoma RMP (1994), the Kansas RMP (1991), and the Texas RMP (1996), and the associated EIS for the RMP will also analyze Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA) management decisions for lands and minerals managed by the BIA in the three states.

**DATES:** This notice initiates the public scoping process for the RMP with an associated EIS. Comments on issues may be submitted in writing until August 26, 2013]. The dates and locations of any scoping meetings will be announced at least 15 days in advance through local media,

newspapers, and the BLM Web site at <http://www.blm.gov/nm/oktrmp>. In order to be included in the Draft EIS, all comments must be received prior to the close of the 30-day scoping period or 15 days after the last public meeting, whichever is later. The BLM will provide additional opportunities for public participation upon publication of the Draft EIS.

**ADDRESSES:** You may submit comments on issues and planning criteria related to the Oklahoma/Kansas/Texas RMP by any of the following methods:

- *Web site:* <http://www.blm.gov/nm/oktrmp>.

- *Email:*

*BLM\_NM\_OKTRMP@blm.gov.*

- *Fax:* 918-621-4130; Attention:

Laurence Levesque.

- *Mail:* Oklahoma Field Office, BLM, 7906 East 33rd Street, Suite 101, Tulsa, OK 74145; Attention: RMP Comments. Documents pertinent to this proposal may be examined at the Oklahoma Field Office.

**FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:**

Laurence Levesque, Planning and Environmental Specialist; telephone 918-621-4136; address 7906 East 33rd Street, Suite 101, Tulsa, OK 74145; email [BLM\\_NM\\_OKTRMP@blm.gov](mailto:BLM_NM_OKTRMP@blm.gov). Contact Mr. Levesque to have your name added to our mailing list. Persons who use a telecommunications device for the deaf (TDD) may call the Federal Information Relay Service (FIRS) at 1-800-877-8339 to contact the above individual during normal business hours. The FIRS is available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, to leave a message or question with the above individual. You will receive a reply during normal business hours.

**SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:** This document provides notice that the BLM Oklahoma Field Office, Tulsa, Oklahoma, intends to prepare an RMP with an associated EIS for the Oklahoma, Kansas, and Texas planning area RMP; announces the beginning of the scoping process; and seeks public input on issues and planning criteria. The EIS for the RMP will also analyze decisions for Indian mineral interests administered by the BIA Eastern Oklahoma and Southern Plains Regional Offices. The BLM will be the lead agency in the RMP development effort, and the BIA will participate as a cooperating agency and sign a separate Record of Decision for management decisions for Indian mineral interests administered by the BIA Eastern Oklahoma and Southern Plains Regional Offices.

The planning area encompasses about 100,000 acres of public land; 5,863,000

acres of Federal mineral interests; and 670,000 acres of Indian mineral interests. The BLM and the BIA will work collaboratively with interested parties to identify the management decisions that are best suited to local, regional, and national needs and concerns. The purpose of the public scoping process is to determine relevant issues that will influence the scope of the environmental analysis, including alternatives, and guide the planning process.

Preliminary issues for the planning area have been identified by the BLM and BIA personnel; Federal, State, and local agencies; and other stakeholders. The issues include:

1. How should the BLM and the BIA facilitate energy development, both renewable and non-renewable, while allowing for multiple uses and appropriate protection of public lands and resources?

2. What management actions, best management practices, and mitigation measures are necessary to protect or enhance resources, such as, visual, air quality, groundwater, watersheds and riparian areas, recreational areas, vegetation, soils, cultural sites, special designations, wildlife and special status species habitat, and rangeland health?

3. Where are helium resources located and how can these reserves, as well as the Federal Helium Plant, be best managed for the public?

4. How should the BLM address long-term grassland pasture facilities for wild horses and burros transferred from western rangelands?

5. Which public lands should be identified for retention, proposed for withdrawal, disposal, or acquisition to facilitate more efficient land management?

6. Which public lands should be identified as open, limited, or closed to motorized vehicle travel to meet resource and recreational demands?

*Preliminary planning criteria include:*

1. The RMP will be in compliance with FLPMA, NEPA, and all other applicable laws and regulations.

2. Land use decisions in the RMP will apply to the surface and subsurface estate managed by the BLM and the BIA. The BLM will not make any recommendations or decisions that affect Federal mineral estate beyond its explicit authority under applicable laws and regulations.

3. Public participation and collaboration will be an integral part of the planning process.

4. The BLM and the BIA will work cooperatively and collaboratively with cooperating agencies and all other

interested groups, agencies, and individuals.

5. The RMP will incorporate, where applicable, management decisions brought forward from existing planning documents.

6. Identification of any lands for further consideration for coal leasing will be limited to any areas with development potential.

7. Final title analysis has not yet been conducted for all Federal mineral ownership. Although the BLM will plan for these tracts, it will not lease, transfer or otherwise authorize any action(s) prior to verification of title for the properties.

You may submit comments on issues and planning criteria in writing to the BLM at any public scoping meeting, or by using one of the methods listed in the "ADDRESSES" section above. To be most helpful, you should submit comments by the close of the 30-day scoping period or within 15 days after the last public meeting, whichever is later. Before including your address, phone number, email address, or other personal identifying information in your comment, you should be aware that your entire comment—including your personal identifying information—may be made publicly available at any time. While you can ask us in your comment to withhold your personal identifying information from public review, we cannot guarantee that we will be able to do so. The BLM will evaluate identified issues and will place them into 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 Draft RMP/EIS as to why an issue was placed in category two or three. The public is also encouraged to help identify any management questions and concerns that should be addressed in the plan. 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 BLM will use NEPA public participation requirements to assist the agency in satisfying the public involvement requirements under Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act (NHPA) (16 U.S.C. 470(f)) pursuant to 36 CFR 800.2(d)(3). The information about historic and cultural resources within the area potentially affected by the proposed action will assist the BLM in identifying and evaluating impacts to such

resources in the context of both NEPA and Section 106 of the NHPA.

The BLM will consult with Indian tribes on a government-to-government basis in accordance with Executive Order 13175 and other policies. Tribal concerns, including impacts on Indian trust assets and potential impacts to cultural resources, will be given due consideration. Federal, State, and local agencies, along with tribes and other stakeholders that may be interested in or affected by the proposed action that the BLM is evaluating, are invited to participate in the scoping process and, if eligible, may request or be requested by the BLM to participate in the development of the environmental analysis as a cooperating agency.

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: minerals and geology, archaeology, wildlife and fisheries, lands and realty, hydrology, soils, livestock grazing, recreation, sociology, and economics.

**Authority:** 40 CFR 1501.7; 43 CFR 1610.2

**Jesse J. Juen,**  
State Director.

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## DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR

### Bureau of Land Management

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#### Notice of Availability of the San Diego Gas & Electric Ocotillo Sol Solar Project Final Environmental Impact Statement and Proposed California Desert Conservation Area Plan Amendment, CA

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

**ACTION:** Notice of Availability.

**SUMMARY:** In accordance with the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969, as amended, and the Federal Land Policy and Management Act of 1976, as amended, the Bureau of Land Management (BLM) has prepared a Proposed California Desert Conservation Area (CDCA) Plan Amendment and Final Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) for the San Diego Gas & Electric (SDG&E) Ocotillo Sol Solar Project in Imperial County, California, and by this notice is announcing its availability.

**DATES:** BLM planning regulations state that any person who meets the conditions as described in the regulations may protest the Proposed CDCA Plan Amendment. A person who meets the conditions and files a protest must file the protest within 30 days of the date that the Environmental Protection Agency publishes its notice of availability for the EIS in the **Federal Register**.

**ADDRESSES:** Copies of the Ocotillo Sol Solar Project Final EIS/Proposed CDCA Plan Amendment have been sent to affected Federal, State, and local government agencies and to other stakeholders, including tribal governments. Copies are also available in the BLM California Desert District Office at 22835 Calle San Juan de los Lagos, Moreno Valley, CA 92553 and at the El Centro Field Office, 1661 S. 4th Street, El Centro, CA 92243.

Interested persons may also review the Final EIS/Proposed CDCA Plan Amendment on the Internet at <http://www.blm.gov/ca/st/en/fo/elcentro/nepa/ocotillosol.html>. All protests must be in writing and mailed to one of the following addresses:

Regular Mail: BLM Director (210), Attention: Brenda Williams, P.O. Box 71383, Washington, DC 20024-1383.

Overnight Mail: BLM Director (210), Attention: Brenda Williams, 20 M Street SE., Room 2134LM, Washington, DC 20003.

**FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:** Noel Ludwig, Project Manager, telephone 951-697-5368; address 22835 Calle San Juan de Los Lagos, Moreno Valley, CA 92553; or email [CA\\_BLM\\_Ocotillo\\_Sol\\_Comments@blm.gov](mailto:CA_BLM_Ocotillo_Sol_Comments@blm.gov). Persons who use a telecommunications device for the deaf (TDD) may call the Federal Information Relay Service (FIRS) at 1-800-877-8339 to contact the above individual during normal business hours. The FIRS is available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, to leave a message or question with the above individual. You will receive a reply during normal business hours.

**SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:** The BLM has received a right-of-way (ROW) application from SDG&E to construct, operate, maintain, and decommission the Ocotillo Sol Solar Project, a solar photovoltaic (PV) power plant facility, on approximately 115 acres of BLM-administered public lands in Imperial County, California. The site for the solar facility would be adjacent to the existing Imperial Valley Substation (IVS), 4 miles south of Interstate 8, approximately 5 miles north of the United States-Mexico border, 5 miles south of Seeley, 9 miles southwest of El Centro, and 82 miles east of San Diego.

The proposed project site is located within the BLM's CDCA, the BLM's Yuha Basin Area of Critical Environmental Concern, and the Yuha Desert Management Area for flat-tailed horned lizard. A portion of the north-south running Juan Bautista de Anza National Historic Trail lies approximately 5 miles southwest of the project site at its closest point. The Jacumba Mountains Wilderness lies 11.7 miles to the west of the project site.

All proposed project components, including a temporary 15-acre construction laydown area, would be located on BLM-administered lands. The proposed Ocotillo Sol project components would include the PV modules and mounting structures, a maintenance building with an associated parking area, internal roads, inverters, transformers, and the combining switchgear. An existing road to the IVS would provide access to the proposed project site. New minor internal roads would be constructed between the module rows. The interconnection to the IVS would be via underground trench. Once approved and operational, the proposed Ocotillo Sol project is expected to have an average generating capacity of 15 to 18 megawatts (MW), depending on the specific technology chosen, with a peak output of up to 20 MW.

In connection with its decision on the proposed Ocotillo Sol project, the BLM will also include potential amendments to the CDCA Plan, as analyzed in the Final EIS. The CDCA Plan, while recognizing the potential compatibility of solar energy facilities on public lands, requires that all sites associated with power generation or transmission not identified in the Plan be considered through the land use plan amendment process. The BLM is deciding whether to amend the CDCA Plan to identify the Ocotillo Sol project site as suitable or unsuitable for solar energy development.

The Final EIS describes the following three alternatives: (1) A No Action/No CDCA Plan Amendment; (2) The Applicant's Proposed Project to construct, operate, maintain, and decommission a 100-acre solar PV facility on BLM-managed lands under an authorized ROW, plus utilization of a 15-acre temporary ROW for construction laydown; and (3) A Reduced Footprint Alternative which would retain the 100-acre facility but reduce the laydown area from 15 acres to 2 acres. All of the alternatives except the No Action/No CDCA Plan Amendment would include an amendment to the CDCA Plan.