

Notices

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This section of the FEDERAL REGISTER contains documents other than rules or proposed rules that are applicable to the public. Notices of hearings and investigations, committee meetings, agency decisions and rulings, delegations of authority, filing of petitions and applications and agency statements of organization and functions are examples of documents appearing in this section.

DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

Agricultural Research Service

Notice of Federal Invention Available for Licensing and Intent To Grant Exclusive License

AGENCY: Agricultural Research Service, USDA.

ACTION: Notice of availability and intent.

SUMMARY: Notice is hereby given that the Federally owned invention disclosed in U.S. Patent No. 6245294 "Method and Apparatus for Surface Treatment of Materials", issued June 12, 2001, is available for licensing and that the U.S. Department of Agriculture, Agricultural Research Service, intends to grant to Alkar-RapidPak, Inc. of Lodi, Wisconsin, an exclusive license to this invention.

DATES: Comments must be received within 90 calendar days of the date of publication of this notice in the **Federal Register**.

ADDRESSES: Send comments to: USDA, ARS, Office of Technology Transfer, 5601 Sunnyside Avenue, Room 4-1174, Beltsville, Maryland 20705-5131.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: June Blalock of the Office of Technology Transfer at the Beltsville address given above; telephone: 301-504-5989.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: The Federal Government's patent rights to this invention are assigned to the United States of America, as represented by the Secretary of Agriculture. It is in the public interest to so license this invention as Alkar-RapidPak, Inc. of Lodi, Wisconsin has submitted a complete and sufficient application for a license. The prospective exclusive license will be royalty-bearing and will comply with the terms and conditions of 35 U.S.C. 209 and 37 CFR 404.7. The prospective exclusive license may be granted unless, within 90 days from the date of this published notice, the Agricultural Research Service receives

written evidence and argument which establishes that the grant of the license would not be consistent with the requirements of 35 U.S.C. 209 and 37 CFR 404.7.

Michael D. Ruff,

Assistant Administrator.

[FR Doc. 02-32506 Filed 12-24-02; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 3410-03-P

DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

Forest Service

Newspapers Used for Publication of Legal Notices by the Intermountain Region; Utah, Idaho, Nevada, and Wyoming

AGENCY: Forest Service, USDA.

ACTION: Notice.

SUMMARY: This notice lists the newspapers that will be used by the ranger districts, forests and regional office of the Intermountain Region to publish legal notices required under 36 CFR 215 and 217. The intended effect of this action is to inform interested members of the public which newspapers the Forest Service will use to publish notices of proposed actions and notices of decisions. This will provide the public with constructive notice of Forest Service proposals and decisions, provide information on the procedures to comment or appeal, and establish the date that the Forest Service will use to determine if comments or appeals were timely.

DATES: Publication of legal notices in the listed newspapers will begin on or after January 1, 2003. The list of newspapers will remain in effect until June 1, 2003, when another notice will be published in the **Federal Register**.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Priscilla McLain, Regional Appeals Manager, Intermountain Region, 324 25th Street, Ogden, UT 84401, and Phone (801) 625-5146.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: The administrative procedures at 36 CFR parts 215 and 217 require the Forest Service to publish notices in a newspaper of general circulation. In addition, the Forest Service will provide direct notice to those who have requested notice in writing and those known to be affected by a specific decision. The content of the notices is

specified in 26 CFR parts 215 and 217. In general, the notices will identify: the decision or project, by title or subject matter; the name and title of the official making the decision; how to obtain additional information; and where and how to file comments or appeals. The date the notice is published will be used to establish the official date for the beginning of the comment or appeal period.

The newspapers to be used are as follows:

Regional; Forester, Intermountain Region

For decisions made by the Regional Forester affecting National Forests in Idaho: *The Idaho Statesman*, Boise Idaho

For decisions made by the Regional Forester affecting National Forests in Nevada: *The Reno Gazette-Journal*, Reno, Nevada

For decisions made by the Regional Forester affecting National Forests in Wyoming: *Casper Star-Tribune*, Casper, Wyoming

For decisions made by the Regional Forester affecting National Forests in Utah: *Salt Lake Tribune*. Salt Lake City, Utah

If the decision made by the Regional Forester affects all National Forests in the Intermountain Region, it will appear in: *Salt Lake Tribune*: Salt Lake City, Utah.

Ashley National Forest

Ashley Forest Supervisors decisions: *Vernal Express*, Vernal, Utah

Vernal District Ranger decisions: *Vernal Express*, Vernal, Utah

Flaming Gorge District Ranger for decisions affecting Wyoming: *Casper Star Tribune*, Casper, Wyoming

Flaming Gorge District Ranger for decisions affecting Utah: *Vernal Express*, Vernal, Utah

Roosevelt and Duchesne District Ranger decisions: *Unitah Basin Standard*, Roosevelt, Utah

Boise National Forest

Boise Forest Supervisor decisions: *The Idaho Statesman*, Boise, Idaho

Mountain Home District Ranger decisions: *The Idaho Statesman*, Boise, Idaho

Idaho City District Ranger decisions: *The Idaho Statesman*, Boise, Idaho

Cascade District Ranger decisions: *The Long Valley Advocate*, Cascade, Idaho

Ogden District Ranger decisions: *Ogden Standard Examiner*, Ogden, Utah
Logan District Ranger decisions: *Logan Herald Journal*, Logan, Utah

Dated: December 18, 2002.

Jack G. Troyer,

Regional Forester.

[FR Doc. 02-32512 Filed 12-24-02; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 3410-11-M

DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

Forest Service

Equity 23-21 and 32-4 Oil and Gas Wells, Dakota Prairie Grassland, Billings County, North Dakota

AGENCY: Forest Service, USDA.

ACTION: Notice of intent to prepare an environment impact statement.

SUMMARY: The Forest Service will prepare an environmental impact statement to document the analysis and disclose the environmental impacts of the construction of the well pads, access roads, production facilities, utilities, and pipelines proposed under the Surface Use Plan of Operations (SUPO's) for the Equity 23-21 and 32-4 oil and gas wells located in the Bell Lake Inventoried Roadless Area (IRA).

The purpose and need of these oil and gas well projects is to honor valid existing lease rights which grant the exclusive right to drill for, mine, extract, remove and dispose of all oil and gas (except helium) in the lands described within the lease, together with the right to build and maintain necessary improvements thereupon.

This proposal is consistent with the provisions of the Dakota Prairie Grasslands (DPG) Land and Resource Management Plan (LRMP), specifically Goal 2c, Objective 1, which focuses on providing opportunities for oil and gas exploration consistent with the DPG LRMP. This proposal is consistent with key energy legislation including the Energy Security Act of 1980, the Federal Oil and Gas Royalty Management Act of 1982, the Federal Onshore Oil and Gas Leasing Reform Act of 1987, Executive Order 13212, and the Forest Services's Energy Implementation Plan.

Decisions to be made under this proposal include: whether to approve, deny, or modify the Surface Use Plan of Operations as submitted and whether to allow the use of herbicides for control of vegetation and noxious weeds on the well pads and access roads.

Preliminary issues include the fact that the proposed projects are located within the Bell Lake Inventoried Roadless Area (IRA). Honoring the oil

and gas lease will mean that access roads and well pads will be constructed in the Bell Lake IRA.

ADDRESSES: The responsible official is David M. Pieper, Dakota Prairie Grasslands Supervisor. Please send written comments to Ronald W. Jablonski, Jr., District Ranger, Medora Ranger District, 161 21st Street West, Dickinson ND 58601. Comments may also be electronically submitted to rjablonski@fs.fed.us.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Jeff Adams, ID Team Leader, Medora Ranger District, 161 21st Street West, Dickinson ND 58601 or by e-mail to jcadams@fs.fed.us.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: The Forest Service proposes to approve the SUPO's for the Equity 23-21 and 32-4 oil and gas well sites located in the NESW of Section 21, T143N, R103W, and the SWNE of Section 4, T143N, R103W, Billings County, North Dakota. This proposal would occur on National Forest System lands. The SUPO includes construction, maintenance, and reclamation proposals for the well pads, access roads, and needed oil production facilities, pipelines, and electric lines.

The Equity 23-21 and 32-4 proposals would include constructing approximately 4,475 and 2,501 feet of new access road, respectively. Each well pad would disturb an area, approximately 2.5 acres in size. Pipelines and electric utilities would be buried along the access roads. Production facilities (*i.e.*, tanks, heater treater, and well pump) would be located on each well pad.

The entire 11,270 acre Bell Lake IRA is leased for oil and gas exploration and development. There are 320 acres of private mineral rights within the IRA. Under the recently signed DPG LRMP, the area within the IRA is to be managed as Management Area (MA) 6.1 "Rangeland with Broad Resource Emphasis". This MA directs that valid leases will be honored.

Public participation is important to this analysis. Part of the goal of public involvement is to identify additional issues and to refine general issues. Scoping notices will be mailed to the public on or before January 10, 2003.

People may visit with Forest Service officials at any time during the analysis and prior to the decision. Two periods are specifically designated for comments on the analysis: (1) During the scoping process, and (2) during the draft EIS period.

During the scoping process, the Forest Service seeks additional information and comments from individuals,

organizations, and federal, state, and local agencies that may be interested in or affected by the proposed action. The Forest Service invites written comments and suggestions on this action, particularly in terms of issues and alternative development.

The draft EIS is anticipated to be available for review in May of 2003. The final EIS is planned for completion in August of 2003.

The comment period on the draft environmental impact statement will be 45 days from the date the Environmental Protection Agency publishes the Notice of Availability in the **Federal Register**. The Forest Service will also publish a legal notice of its availability in the Bismarck Tribune Newspaper, Bismarck, North Dakota. The 45-day comment period will begin the day after the legal notice is published.

The Forest Service believes, at this early stage, it is important to give reviewers notice of several court rulings related to public participation in the environmental review process. First, reviewers of draft environmental impact statements must structure their participation in the environmental review of the proposal so that it is meaningful and alerts an agency to the reviewer's position and contentions. *Vermont Yankee Nuclear Power Corp. v. NRDC*, 435 U.S. 519,553 (1978). Also, environmental objections that could be raised at the draft environmental impact statement stage but that are not raised until after completion of the final environmental impact statement may be waived or dismissed by the courts. *City of Angoon v. Hodel*, 803 F.2d 1016, 1022 (9th Cir. 1986) and *Wisconsin Heritages, Inc. v. Harris*, 490 F. Supp. 1334, 1338 (E.D. Wis. 1980). Because of these court rulings, it is very important that those interested in this proposed action participate by the close of the 45-day comment period so that substantive comments and objections are made available to the Forest Service at a time when it can meaningfully consider them and respond to them in the final environment impact statement.

To assist the Forest Service in identifying and considering issues and concerns on the proposed action, comments on the draft environmental impact statement should be as specific as possible. It is also helpful if comments refer to specific pages or chapters of the draft statement. Comments may also address the adequacy of the draft environmental impact statement or the merits of the alternatives formulated and discussed in the statement. Reviewers may wish to refer to the Council on Environmental