

The DEIS analyzes leasing each of the five tracts (described above) as a separate Proposed Action. As part of the coal leasing process, BLM has identified and is evaluating other tract configurations for these tracts which add or subtract Federal coal to avoid bypassing coal or to increase estimated fair market value of the unleased Federal coal in this area. The tract configurations that BLM has identified for each tract are described and analyzed as alternatives in the DEIS. The DEIS also analyzes the alternative of rejecting each application to lease Federal coal as the No Action Alternative for each tract.

The agency-preferred alternative will vary for each tract, depending on which tract configuration is determined to best advance the public interest in avoiding bypassing Federal coal and obtaining the fair market value of the Federal coal.

The Proposed Actions and Alternatives being considered in the DEIS are in conformance with the "Approved Resource Management Plan for Public Lands Administered by the Bureau of Land Management Buffalo Field Office" (April 2001), the USDA Forest Service "Final EIS for the Northern Great Plains Management Plans Revision" (May 2001) and the BLM "Platte River Resource Area Resource Management Plan" (1985)

The USDA Forest Service (Forest Service) is a cooperating agency in the preparation of the DEIS. The surface of some of the land included for consideration for leasing in three of the tracts (NARO North, Little Thunder, and West Roundup) is National Forest System land administered by the Forest Service as part of the Thunder Basin National Grasslands.

The Office of Surface Mining Reclamation and Enforcement (OSM) is a cooperating agency in the preparation of the DEIS. If the tracts are leased as maintenance tracts, each new lease must be incorporated into the existing mining and reclamation plan for the adjacent mine and the Secretary of the Interior must approve each revision to the MLA (Mineral Leasing Act) mining plan for each mine before the Federal coal in each tract can be mined. OSM is the Federal agency that would be responsible for recommending approval, approval with conditions, or disapproval of the revised MLA mining plans to the office of the Secretary of the Interior if any or all of these tracts are leased.

Dated: December 10, 2002.

**Alan L. Kesterke,**

*Acting State Director.*

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## DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR

### Bureau of Land Management

[CA-310-1820-AE]

#### Notice of Public Meeting: Northwest California Resource Advisory Council

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

**ACTION:** Notice of public meeting.

**SUMMARY:** In accordance with the Federal Land Policy and Management Act of 1976 (FLPMA), and the Federal Advisory Committee Act of 1972 (FACA), the U. S. Department of the Interior, Bureau of Land Management (BLM) Northwest California Resource Advisory Council will meet as indicated below.

**DATES:** The meeting will be held Wednesday and Thursday, April 2 and 3, 2003, at Granzella's Inn, 391 Sixth St., Williams, Calif. On April 2, the meeting convenes at 10 a.m. for a field trip to public lands managed by the BLM Ukiah Field Office. Members of the public are welcome. They must provide their own transportation and lunch. On April 3, the meeting begins at 8 a.m. in the Conference Room at Granzella's. Time for public comments has been set aside for 1 p.m. on April 3.

**FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:** Rich Burns, BLM Ukiah field manager, 2550 North State St., Ukiah, CA, (707) 468-4000; or BLM Public Affairs Officer Joseph J. Fontana, telephone (530) 252-5332.

**SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:** The 12-member council advises the Secretary of the Interior, through the BLM, on a variety of planning and management issues associated with public land management in Northwest California. At this meeting, agenda topics will include council comments on proposed changes to BLM's grazing regulations, proposals for wind energy development, and discussion about the voting protocol established in the RAC charter. The council will also hear status reports from the managers of the BLM's Arcata, Ukiah and Redding field offices.

All meetings are open to the public. Members of the public may present written comments to the council. Each formal council meeting will have time allocated for public comments. Depending on the number of persons

wishing to speak, and the time available, the time for individual comments may be limited. Individuals who plan to attend and need special assistance, such as sign language interpretation and other reasonable accommodations, should contact the BLM as provided above.

Dated: February 13, 2003.

**Joseph J. Fontana,**

*Public Affairs Officer.*

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## DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR

### Minerals Management Service

#### Outer Continental Shelf (OCS), Beaufort Sea Oil and Gas Lease Sale 186

**AGENCY:** Minerals Management Service, Interior.

**ACTION:** Availability of the Proposed Notice of Sale.

**SUMMARY:** Alaska OCS, Beaufort Sea; Notice of Availability of the proposed Notice of Sale for proposed Oil and Gas Lease Sale 186 in the Beaufort Sea. This Notice is published pursuant to 30 CFR 256.29(c) as a matter of information to the public.

With regard to oil and gas leasing on the OCS, the Secretary of the Interior, pursuant to section 19 of the OCS Lands Act, provides the affected States the opportunity to review the proposed Notice. The proposed Notice sets forth the proposed terms and conditions of the sale, including minimum bids, royalty rates, and rentals.

The proposed Notice of Sale for Sale 186 and a "Proposed Sale Notice Package" containing information essential to potential bidders may be obtained from the Alaska OCS Region, Information Resource Center, Minerals Management Service, 949 East 36th Avenue, Room 330, Anchorage, Alaska 99508-4302. Telephone: (907) 271-6070 or 1-800-764-2627. Certain documents may be viewed and downloaded from the MMS World Wide Web site at <http://www.mms.gov/alaska>.

The final Notice of Sale will be published in the **Federal Register** at least 30 days prior to the date of bid opening. Bid opening is currently scheduled for September 24, 2003.

Dated: February 11, 2003.

**Walter D. Cruickshank,**

*Acting Director, Minerals Management Service.*

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