

approved testing periods. The GOMR does, however, retain the authority to set MPRs for individual well completions, and to set MERs for individual reservoirs, if necessary to ensure natural resources conservation and to maximize ultimate recovery.

The MMS Alaska and Pacific OCS Regions agree with the determination that MMS no longer needs to collect the information reported in data elements 110 through 114 on both forms. They will still require lessees and operators in those regions to complete data element 91 (Requested MPR) on form MMS-126 and data elements 119 and 120 (Present and Requested MER) on form MMS-127. We are revising the forms to reflect these decisions. When we next revise the 30 CFR 250, subpart K, regulations, we anticipate proposing to officially incorporate these changes in regulation.

MMS District and Regional Supervisors use the information on form MMS-126 for various environmental, reservoir, reserves, and conservation analyses, including the determination of MPRs when necessary for certain oil and gas completions. The form contains information concerning the conditions and results of a well potential test. This requirement implements the conservation provisions of the OCS Lands Act and 30 CFR 250. The information obtained from the well potential test is essential to determine if an MPR is necessary for a well and to establish the appropriate rate. It is not possible to specify an MPR in the absence of information about the production rate capability (potential) of the well.

MMS District and Regional Supervisors use the information submitted on form MMS-127 to determine whether a rate-sensitive reservoir is being prudently developed. This represents an essential control mechanism that MMS uses to regulate production rates from each sensitive reservoir being actively produced. Occasionally, the information available on a reservoir early in its producing life may indicate it to be non-sensitive, while later and more complete information would establish the reservoir as being sensitive. Production from a well completed in the gas cap of a sensitive reservoir requires approval from the Regional Supervisor. The information submitted on form MMS-127 provides reservoir parameters that are revised at least annually or sooner if reservoir development results in a change in reservoir interpretation. The engineers and geologists use the information for rate control and reservoir studies.

Responses are mandatory. No questions of a "sensitive" nature are asked. MMS will protect proprietary information according to the Freedom of Information Act (5 U.S.C. 552) and its implementing regulations (43 CFR 2), 30 CFR 250.196 (Data and information to be made available to the public), and 30 CFR part 252 (OCS Oil and Gas Information Program). Proprietary information concerning geological and geophysical data will be protected according to 43 U.S.C. 1352.

Frequency: The frequency is "on occasion," but not less than annual.

Estimated Number and Description of Respondents: Approximately 130 Federal OCS oil and gas or sulphur lessees.

Estimated Annual Reporting and Recordkeeping "Hour" Burden: The currently approved "hour" burden for both forms is 1 hour.

Estimated Annual Reporting and Recordkeeping "Non-Hour Cost" Burden: We have identified no "non-hour cost" burden associated with either form MMS-126 or MMS-127.

Comments: The PRA (44 U.S.C. 3501, *et seq.*) provides that an agency may not conduct or sponsor, and a person is not required to respond to, a collection of information unless it displays a currently valid OMB control number. Before submitting an ICR to OMB, PRA section 3506(c)(2)(A) requires each agency " * * * to provide notice * * * and otherwise consult with members of the public and affected agencies concerning each proposed collection of information * * *". Agencies must specifically solicit comments to: (a) Evaluate whether the proposed collection of information is necessary for the agency to perform its duties, including whether the information is useful; (b) evaluate the accuracy of the agency's estimate of the burden of the proposed collection of information; (c) enhance the quality, usefulness, and clarity of the information to be collected; and (d) minimize the burden on the respondents, including the use of automated collection techniques or other forms of information technology. We will summarize written responses to this notice and address them in our submission for OMB approval, including any appropriate adjustments to the estimated burden.

Agencies must estimate both the "hour" and "non-hour cost" burdens to respondents or recordkeepers resulting from the collection of information. We have not identified any non-hour cost burdens for the information collection aspects of forms MMS-126 or MMS-127. Therefore, if you have costs to generate, maintain, and disclose this

information, you should comment and provide your total capital and startup cost components or annual operation, maintenance, and purchase of service components. You should describe the methods you use to estimate major cost factors, including system and technology acquisition, expected useful life of capital equipment, discount rate(s), and the period over which you incur costs. Capital and startup costs include, among other items, computers and software you purchase to prepare for collecting information, monitoring, and record storage facilities. Generally, your estimates should not include equipment or services purchased: (i) Before October 1, 1995; (ii) to comply with requirements not associated with the information collection; (iii) for reasons other than to provide information or keep records for the Government; or (iv) as part of customary and usual business or private practices.

MMS Information Collection Clearance Officer: Jo Ann Lauterbach, (202) 208-7744.

Dated: March 27, 2001.

John V. Mirabella,

Acting Chief, Engineering and Operations Division.

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BILLING CODE 4310-MR-U

DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR

Minerals Management Service

Agency Information Collection Activities: Proposed Collection, Comment Request

AGENCY: Minerals Management Service (MMS), Interior.

ACTION: Notice of an extension of information collection (OMB Control Number 1010-0075).

SUMMARY: To comply with the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995, we are soliciting comments on an information collection titled, Gas Processing and Transportation Allowance. We will submit an information collection request (ICR) to the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) for review and approval after this comment period closes.

DATES: Submit written comments on or before June 5, 2001.

ADDRESSES: Submit written comments to Dennis C. Jones, Regulations and FOIA Team, Minerals Management Service, Minerals Revenue Management, PO Box 25165, MS 3021, Denver, Colorado 80225. If you use an overnight courier service, our courier address is

Building 85, Room A-613, Denver Federal Center, Denver, Colorado 80225.

PUBLIC COMMENT PROCEDURE: Submit your comments to the addresses listed in the **ADDRESSES** section, or email your comments to us at mrm.comments@mms.gov. Include the title of the information collection and the OMB Control Number in the "Attention" line of your comment; also, include your name and return address. Submit electronic comments as an ASCII file avoiding the use of special characters and any form of encryption. If you do not receive a confirmation that we have received your email, contact Mr. Jones at (303) 231-3046. We will post all comments at http://www.mrm.mms.gov/Laws_R_D/FRNotices/FRInfColl.htm for public review.

We make copies of the comments available for public review, including names and addresses of respondents, during regular business hours at our offices in Lakewood, Colorado. Individual respondents may request that we withhold their home address from the public record, which we will honor to the extent allowable by law. There also may be circumstances in which we would withhold from the rulemaking record a respondent's identity, as allowable by law. If you request that we withhold your name and/or address, state this prominently at the beginning of your comment. However, we will not consider anonymous comments. We will make all submissions from organizations or businesses, and from individuals identifying themselves as representatives or officials of organizations or businesses, available for public inspection in their entirety.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Dennis C. Jones, phone (303) 231-3046, FAX (303) 231-3385, email Dennis.C.Jones@mms.gov. A copy of the information collection request (ICR) will be available to you without charge upon request. The ICR will also be posted to our web site at http://www.mrm.mms.gov/Laws_R_D/FRNotices/FRInfColl.htm when we submit the ICR to OMB for review and approval.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

Title: Gas Processing and Transportation Allowance.

OMB Control Number: 1010-0075.

Bureau Form Number: MMS-4109, MMS-4295.

Abstract: The Department of the Interior (DOI) is responsible for matters relevant to mineral resource development on Federal and Indian Lands and the Outer Continental Shelf (OCS). The Secretary of the Interior

(Secretary) is responsible for managing the production of minerals from Federal and Indian Lands and the OCS; for collecting royalties from lessees who produce minerals; and for distributing the funds collected in accordance with applicable laws. The Secretary also has an Indian trust responsibility to manage Indian lands and seek advice and information from Indian beneficiaries. We perform the royalty management functions and assist the Secretary in carrying out DOI's Indian trust responsibility.

The product valuation and allowance determination process is essential to assure that the Indians receive payment on the proper value of the minerals being removed. To determine whether the amount of royalty tendered represents the proper royalty due, it is necessary to establish the proper value of the gas and gas plant products being sold, or otherwise disposed of in some other manner. Of equal importance is the proper determination of costs associated with the allowable deductions from the value of gas and gas plant products.

Under certain circumstances, lessees are authorized to deduct from royalty payments, the reasonable actual costs of transporting the royalty portion of produced minerals from the lease to a processing or sales point not in the immediate lease area. Transportation allowances are a part of the product valuation process that the Minerals Management Service (MMS) uses to determine if the lessee is reporting and paying the proper royalty amount.

Also, when gas is processed for the recovery of gas plant products, lessees may claim a processing allowance. MMS normally will accept the cost as stated in the lessee's arm's-length processing contract as being representative of the cost of the processing allowance. In those instances where gas is being processed through a lessee-owned plant, the processing costs shall be based upon the actual plant operating and maintenance expenses, depreciation, and a reasonable return on investment. The allowance is expressed as a cost per unit of individual gas plant products. Processing allowances may be taken as a deduction from royalty payments.

Responses to this information collection are voluntary and are required for respondents to claim a gas processing and transportation allowance. Proprietary information is requested and protected, and there are no questions of sensitive nature involved in this collection of information.

Frequency: On occasion.

Estimated Number and Description of Respondents: 65 Indian lessees.

Estimated Annual Reporting and Recordkeeping "Hour" Burden: 750 hours.

Estimated Annual Reporting and Recordkeeping "Non-hour Cost" Burden: n/a.

Comments: Section 3506(c)(2)(A) of the Paperwork Reduction Act requires each agency "to provide notice * * * and otherwise consult with members of the public and affected agencies concerning each proposed collection of information * * *." Agencies must specifically solicit comments to: (a) Evaluate whether the proposed collection of information is necessary for the agency to perform its duties, including whether the information is useful; (b) evaluate the accuracy of the agency's estimate of the burden of the proposed collection of information; (c) enhance the quality, usefulness, and clarity of the information to be collected; and (d) minimize the burden on the respondents, including the use of automated collection techniques or other forms of information technology.

The PRA also requires agencies to estimate the total annual reporting "non-hour cost" burden to respondents or recordkeepers resulting from the collection of information. We have not identified non-hour cost burdens and need to know if there are costs associated with the collection of this information for either total capital and startup cost components or annual operation, maintenance, and purchase of service components. Your estimates should consider the costs to generate, maintain, and disclose or provide the information. You should describe the methods you use to estimate major cost factors, including system and technology acquisition, expected useful life of capital equipment, discount rate(s), and the period over which you incur costs. Capital and startup costs include, among other items, computers and software you purchase to prepare for collecting information; monitoring, sampling, drilling, and testing equipment; and record storage facilities.

Your estimates should not include equipment or services purchased: (i) Before October 1, 1995; (ii) to comply with requirements not associated with the information collection; (iii) for reasons other than to provide information or keep records for the Government; or (iv) as part of customary and usual business or private practices.

The Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995 provides that an agency shall not conduct or sponsor, and a person is not required to respond to, a collection of

information unless it displays a currently valid OMB Control Number.

Dated: March 23, 2001.

Lucy Querques Denett,

Associate Director for Minerals Revenue Management.

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DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR

Minerals Management Service

Agency Information Collection

Activities: Proposed Collection, Comment Request

AGENCY: Minerals Management Service (MMS), Interior.

ACTION: Notice of an extension of an information collection (OMB Control Number 1010-0090).

SUMMARY: To comply with the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995, we are soliciting comments on an information collection titled, Stripper Royalty Rate Reduction Notification. We will submit an information collection request (ICR) to the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) for review and approval after this comment period closes.

DATES: Submit written comments on or before June 5, 2001.

ADDRESSES: Submit written comments to Dennis C. Jones, Regulations and FOIA Team, Minerals Revenue Management, Minerals Management Service, P.O. Box 25165, MS 320B2, Denver, Colorado 80225. If you use an overnight courier service, our courier address is Building 85, Room A-613, Denver Federal Center, Denver, Colorado 80225.

Public Comment Procedure

Submit your comments to the addresses listed in the **ADDRESSES** section, or email your comments to us at mrm.comments@mms.gov. Include the title of the information collection and the OMB Control Number in the "Attention" line of your comment; also, include your name and return address. Submit electronic comments as an ASCII file avoiding the use of special characters and any form of encryption. If you do not receive a confirmation that we have received your email, contact Mr. Jones at (303) 231-3046. We will post all comments at http://www.mrm.mms.gov/Laws_R_D/FRNotices/FRInfColl.htm for public review.

We make copies of the comments available for public review, including names and addresses of respondents,

during regular business hours at our offices in Lakewood, Colorado. Individual respondents may request that we withhold their home address from the public record, which we will honor to the extent allowable by law. There also may be circumstances in which we would withhold from the rulemaking record a respondent's identity, as allowable by law. If you request that we withhold your name and/or address, state this prominently at the beginning of your comment. However, we will not consider anonymous comments. We will make all submissions from organizations or businesses, and from individuals identifying themselves as representatives or officials of organizations or businesses, available for public inspection in their entirety.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Dennis C. Jones, Regulations and FOIA Team, phone (303) 231-3046, FAX (303) 231-3385, email Dennis.C.Jones@mms.gov. A copy of the information collection request (ICR) will be available to you without charge upon request. The ICR will also be posted to our web site at http://www.mrm.mms.gov/Laws_R_D/FRNotices/FRInfColl.htm when we submit the ICR to OMB for review and approval.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

Title: Stripper Royalty Rate Reduction Notification.

OMB Control Number: 1010-0090.

Bureau Form Number: n/a.

Abstract: The Department of the Interior (DOI) is responsible for matters relevant to mineral resource development on Federal and Indian Lands and the Outer Continental Shelf (OCS). The Secretary of the Interior (Secretary) is responsible for managing the production of minerals from Federal and Indian Lands and the OCS, collecting royalties from lessees who produce minerals, and distributing the funds collected in accordance with applicable laws. The Secretary also has an Indian trust responsibility to manage Indian lands and seek advice and information from Indian beneficiaries. We perform the royalty management functions and assist the Secretary in carrying out DOI's Indian trust responsibility.

The Bureau of Land Management (BLM) amended 43 CFR 3103.4-1 to allow royalty rate reductions to operators of low-producing, stripper oil properties. This amendment action encourages continued oil production, provides an incentive for enhanced oil recovery projects, discourages abandonment of oil properties producing less than 15 barrels of oil per

well-day, and reduces operators' expenses. Operators are required to notify MMS of the reduced royalty rate using Form MMS-4377, Stripper Royalty Rate Reduction Notification. The form requires identification of the operator, name of the contact person, lease and agreement numbers, calculated royalty rate, current royalty rate and period covered.

We estimate that an operator may require 30 minutes per property to research production for one 12-month period, determine average annual well production, and calculate and report a new royalty rate. This is an annual burden of 2,250 hours (½ hour × 4,500 properties). We estimate that an operator may require 15 minutes annually to perform the necessary recordkeeping responsibilities associated with this information collection, or an annual burden of 225 hours (¼ hour × 900 operators).

Responses to this information collection are voluntary and are required for respondents to claim a reduced royalty rate. Proprietary information is requested and protected, and there are no questions of sensitive nature involved in this collection of information.

Frequency: On occasion.

Estimated Number and Description of Respondents: 900 operators of low-producing, stripper oil properties.

Estimated Annual Reporting and Recordkeeping "Hour" Burden: 2,475 hours.

Estimated Annual Reporting and Recordkeeping "Non-hour Cost" Burden: n/a.

Comments: Section 3506(c)(2)(A) of the Paperwork Reduction Act requires each agency "to provide notice * * * and otherwise consult with members of the public and affected agencies concerning each proposed collection of information * * *." Agencies must specifically solicit comments to: (a) Evaluate whether the proposed collection of information is necessary for the agency to perform its duties, including whether the information is useful; (b) evaluate the accuracy of the agency's estimate of the burden of the proposed collection of information; (c) enhance the quality, usefulness, and clarity of the information to be collected; and (d) minimize the burden on the respondents, including the use of automated collection techniques or other forms of information technology.

The PRA also requires agencies to estimate the total annual reporting "non-hour cost" burden to respondents or recordkeepers resulting from the collection of information. We have not identified non-hour cost burdens and