

following Internet address: <http://midwest.fws.gov/nepa>.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Mr. Peter Fasbender, Regional CCA Coordinator, Telephone: (612) 713-5343, or e-mail: peter_fasbender@fws.gov.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

Public Involvement

The draft EA is available for public review and comment for a period of 30 days. This notice is provided pursuant to National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) regulations (40 CFR 1506.6). Copies of the document can be obtained as indicated in the **ADDRESSES** section. In addition, documents will be available for public inspection during normal business hours (8-4:30), at the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, 1 Federal Drive, Fort Snelling, Minnesota.

All comments received from individuals become part of the official public record. Requests for such comments will be handled in accordance with the Freedom of Information Act and the Council on Environmental Quality's NEPA regulations (40 CFR 1506.6(f)). Our practice is to make comments, including names and home addresses of respondents, available for public review during regular business hours. Individual respondents may request that we withhold their home address from the record, which we will honor to the extent allowable by law. If a respondent wishes us to withhold his/her name and/or address, this must be stated prominently at the beginning of the comment.

Candidate Conservation Agreements

Candidate Conservation Agreements (CCAs) are formal agreements between the Service and one or more parties to address the conservation needs of proposed or candidate species, or species likely to become candidates, before they become listed as endangered or threatened. The participants voluntarily commit to implementing specific actions that will remove or reduce the threats to these species, thereby contributing to stabilizing or restoring the species. In some cases, this may provide enough protection that listing is no longer necessary. The Service has entered into many Candidate Conservation Agreements over the years, primarily with other Federal agencies, State and local agencies, and conservation organizations. Some of these have successfully removed threats and listing was avoided.

Candidate Conservation Agreements with Assurances (CCAAs) provide non-Federal property owners who voluntarily agree to manage their lands or waters to remove threats to candidate or proposed species assurances that their conservation efforts will not result in future regulatory obligations in excess of those they agree to at the time they enter into the Agreement. In return for the participant's proactive management, the Service provides take authorization through the section 10(a)(1)(A) process of the ESA, which authorizes issuance of permits that will enhance the survival of the species. The permit would allow participants to take individuals or modify habitat to return population levels and habitat conditions to those agreed upon and specified in the Agreement.

Background on Candidate Conservation Agreements for Massasauga

The range of the eastern massasauga extends from western New York and southern Ontario to Iowa and southward to Missouri. The massasauga's decline is primarily attributed to habitat loss and persecution. The Service elevated the massasauga to the Federal candidate status in 1999. In 2001, the Service funded a region-wide massasauga conservation initiative. Region 3 States were given funds for the investigation and development of CCAs and CCAAs for pertinent Region 3 States, local land-management agencies, and private land owners. Illinois, Iowa, Michigan, Missouri, Ohio, and Wisconsin are the Region 3 States in various stages of CCA development. The CCA form will vary by State and site.

Background on Environmental Assessment

The draft EA considers two action alternatives and the "No Action" alternative. Alternative A implements CCA's or CCAA's for the massasauga on protected lands (*i.e.*, state property) throughout Region 3. Alternative C relies on the use of current regulatory tools to recover the massasauga if it becomes listed under the Act. The NEPA process will be completed after the comment period, at which time the Service will consider and respond to any submitted comments in Chapter 7 of the final EA. The Regional Director will decide whether to select one of the three alternatives and issue a Finding of No Significant Impact (FONSI), or to proceed in developing an Environmental Impact Statement if she determines there would be significant impacts.

The areas included in Candidate Conservation Agreements (listed in Sub-

Section 1.4 of the EA) may contain facilities eligible to be listed on the National Register of Historic Places and other historical or archeological resources. The National Historic Preservation Act and other laws require these properties and resources be identified and considered in project planning. The public is requested to inform the Service of concerns about archeological sites, buildings and structures, historic events, sacred and traditional areas, and other historic preservation concerns.

Authority: 16 U.S.C. 1531, *et seq.*; 42 U.S.C. 4321-4347.

Dated: September 23, 2003.

Lynn M. Lewis,

Acting Assistant Regional Director, Ecological Services, Region 3, Fort Snelling, Minnesota.

[FR Doc. 03-26977 Filed 10-24-03; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 4310-55-P

DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR

Bureau of Land Management

[AK-963-1410-HY-P; F-85448, DYA-15]

Alaska Native Claims Selection

AGENCY: Bureau of Land Management, DOI.

ACTION: Notice of decision approving lands for conveyance.

SUMMARY: As required by 43 CFR 2650.7(d), notice is hereby given that an appealable decision approving the reserved mineral estate for conveyance pursuant to the Alaska Native Claims Settlement Act, as amended, will be issued to Doyon, Limited. The minerals were reserved to the United States pursuant to the Act of March 8, 1922, as amended and supplemented, in the Native allotment certificate issued for U.S. Survey No. 4453B, Alaska. The lands to be conveyed contain 39.90 acres, and are located in T. 2 S., R. 8 W., Fairbanks Meridian, in the vicinity of Nenana, Alaska. Notice of the decision will also be published four times in the Fairbanks Daily News-Miner.

DATES: The time limits for filing an appeal are:

1. Any party claiming a property interest which is adversely affected by the decision shall have until November 26, 2003 to file an appeal.

2. Parties receiving service of the decision by certified mail shall have 30 days from the date of receipt to file an appeal.

Parties who do not file an appeal in accordance with the requirements of 43 CFR Part 4, Subpart E, shall be deemed to have waived their rights.

ADDRESSES: A copy of the decision may be obtained from: Bureau of Land Management, Alaska State Office, 222 West Seventh Avenue, #13, Anchorage, Alaska 99513-7599.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Christy Favorite, by phone at 907-271-5656, or by e-mail at cfavorit@ak.blm.gov.

Christy Favorite,

Land Law Examiner, Branch of Adjudication I.

[FR Doc. 03-27002 Filed 10-24-03; 8:45 am]

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DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR

Bureau of Land Management

[CO-921-03-1320-EL; COC 67231]

Notice of Invitation for Coal Exploration License Application, Ark Land Co., COC 67231; Colorado

AGENCY: Bureau of Land Management, Interior.

ACTION: Notice of invitation for coal exploration license application, Ark Land Company.

SUMMARY: Pursuant to the Mineral Leasing Act of February 25, 1920, as amended, and to title 43, Code of Federal Regulations, subpart 3410, members of the public are hereby invited to participate with Ark Land Company, in a program for the exploration of unleased coal deposits owned by the United States of America containing approximately 1,358.75 acres in Gunnison County, Colorado.

DATES: Written notice of intent to participate should be addressed to the attention of the following persons and must be received by November 26, 2003.

ADDRESSES: Karen Purvis, CO-921, Solid Minerals Staff, Division of Energy, Lands and Minerals, Colorado State Office, Bureau of Land Management, 2850 Youngfield Street, Lakewood, Colorado 80215; and, Wendall A. Koontz, Ark Land Company, P.O. Box 591, Somerset, Colorado 81434.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: The application for coal exploration license is available for public inspection during normal business hours under serial number COC 67231 at the Bureau of Land Management, Colorado State Office, 2850 Youngfield Street, Lakewood, Colorado 80215, and at the Uncompahgre Field Office, 2505 South Townsend Avenue, Montrose, Colorado 81401. Any party electing to participate in this program must share all costs on a pro rata basis with Ark Land Company

and with any other party or parties who elect to participate.

Dated: September 23, 2003.

Karen Purvis,

Solid Minerals Staff, Division of Energy, Lands and Minerals.

[FR Doc. 03-26995 Filed 10-24-03; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 4310-JB-P

DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR

Bureau of Land Management

[MT-921-03-1320-EL-P; MTM 92869]

Notice of Invitation—Federal Coal Exploration License Application MTM 92869

AGENCY: Bureau of Land Management, Interior.

ACTION: Notice of invitation.

SUMMARY: Members of the public are hereby invited to participate with Spring Creek Coal Company in a program for the exploration of coal deposits owned by the United States of America in Big Horn County, Montana.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: The following-described lands located in Big Horn County, Montana, encompassing 80.00 acres:

T. 8 S., R. 39 E., P. M. M.

Sec. 5: Lot 17

Sec. 9: NW¼SW¼

Any party electing to participate in this exploration program shall notify, in writing, both the State Director, Bureau of Land Management, P.O. Box 36800, Billings, Montana 59107-6800; and Spring Creek Coal Company, P.O. Box 67, Decker, Montana 59025. Such written notice must refer to serial number MTM 92869 and be received no later than November 26, 2003 or 10 calendar days after the last publication of this Notice in the *Sheridan Press* newspaper, whichever is later. This Notice will be published once a week for two (2) consecutive weeks in the *Sheridan Press*, Sheridan, Wyoming.

The proposed exploration program is fully described, and will be conducted pursuant to an exploration plan to be approved by the Bureau of Land Management. The exploration plan, as submitted by Spring Creek Coal Company, is available for public inspection at the Bureau of Land Management, 5001 Southgate Drive, Billings, Montana, during regular business hours (9 a.m. to 4 p.m.), Monday through Friday.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Robert Giovanini, Mining Engineer, or Connie Schaff, Land Law Examiner,

Branch of Solid Minerals (MT-921), Bureau of Land Management, Montana State Office, P.O. Box 36800, Billings, Montana 59107-6800, telephone (406) 896-5084 or (406) 896-5060, respectively.

Dated: September 17, 2003.

Randy D. Heuscher,

Chief, Branch of Solid Minerals.

[FR Doc. 03-26999 Filed 10-24-03; 8:45 am]

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DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR

Bureau of Land Management

[OR-010-1020-PK; HAG 04-0014]

Notice of Meeting

AGENCY: Bureau of Land Management (BLM), Lakeview District.

ACTION: Meeting Notice for the Southeast Oregon Resource Advisory Council.

SUMMARY: The Southeast Oregon Resource Advisory Council (SEORAC) will hold a conference call for all members on Monday, November 10, 2003 at 2 p.m. Pacific standard time. The conference call is open to the public. Members of the public in the Lakeview area may attend the meeting in person in the Abert Rim Conference Room, Lakeview Interagency Office, 1301 South G Street, Lakeview, Oregon 97630. The meeting topics that may be discussed by the Council include a discussion of issues within Southeast Oregon related to: Birch Creek recommendation, Sustainable Working Landscapes, Sage Grouse, state and national BLM budget items and other issues that may come before the Board.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Additional information concerning the SEORAC conference call may be obtained from Pam Talbott, Contact Representative, Lakeview Interagency Office, 1301 South G Street, Lakeview, OR 97630 (541) 947-6107, or ptalbott@or.blm.gov and/or from the following Web site <<http://www.or.blm.gov/SEOR-RAC>>.

Dated: October 20, 2003.

Steven A. Ellis,

District Manager.

[FR Doc. 03-26979 Filed 10-24-03; 8:45 am]

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