



U.S. Department of the Interior

# Office of Natural Resources Revenue

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## News Release

### Office of Public Affairs

For Immediate Release

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### News Media Contact:

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## DOI Establishes Negotiated Rulemaking Committee

*Focus on valuation of oil produced from American Indian leases*

**DENVER** — The Department of the Interior’s Office of Natural Resources Revenue (ONRR) today published a Federal Register Notice establishing an Indian Oil Valuation Negotiated Rulemaking Committee charged with bringing clarity and consistency to oil valuation regulations governing production on American Indian lands.

“This initiative will enable the regulatory process to keep pace with a changing marketplace, ensuring that American Indian Tribes and individual Indian mineral owners continue to receive a fair return for energy production on their lands,” said Greg Gould, Acting Deputy Assistant Secretary for Natural Resources Revenue in the DOI’s Office of Policy, Management and Budget.

The negotiated rulemaking committee, authorized and established under the Federal Advisory Committee Act, will make recommendations to replace existing regulations governing the valuation of oil production from American Indian leases, which has been in place since March 1, 1988. Many changes have occurred in the oil market since the 1988 rule was codified.

The Federal Register Notice can be accessed via the web at: [www.regulations.gov](http://www.regulations.gov), or directly at: <http://www.regulations.gov/#!documentDetail;D=ONRR-2011-0007-0003>.

The committee includes representatives from Native American Indian Tribes, Individual Indian Mineral Owner Associations, the oil and gas industry, and the Department of Interior. The committee is expected to hold its first meeting in late February 2012.

The Office of Natural Resources Revenues, under the Assistant Secretary for Policy, Management and Budget, is responsible for collecting and disbursing revenues from energy production that occurs onshore on Federal and American Indian lands and offshore on the Outer Continental Shelf. ONRR makes disbursements on a monthly basis from royalties, rents and bonuses it collects from mineral companies.

1. On page 69192, column 1, footnote 10, the language “Section 401(k)(4)(B)(ii) provide that a cash or deferred arrangement shall not be treated as a qualified cash or deferred arrangement if it is part of a plan maintained by a State or local government of political subdivision thereof, or any or agency or instrumentality thereof.” is removed and is replaced with the new language “Section 401(k)(4)(B)(ii) provides that a cash or deferred arrangement shall not be treated as a qualified cash or deferred arrangement if it is part of a plan maintained by a State or local government of political subdivision thereof, or any agency or instrumentality thereof.”.

2. On page 69193, column 1, under the paragraph heading “*Judicial Determinations*”, second paragraph of the column, second line, the language “*Bingo & Casino*, held that the operating” is removed and is replaced with the new language “*Bingo & Casino*, held that operating”.

**LaNita Van Dyke,**

*Chief, Publications and Regulations Branch, Legal Processing Division, Associate Chief Counsel, Procedure and Administration.*

[FR Doc. 2011–31463 Filed 12–7–11; 8:45 am]

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## DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR

### Office of Natural Resources Revenue

#### 30 CFR Chapter XII

[Docket No. ONRR–2011–0007]

#### Establishment of the Indian Oil Valuation Negotiated Rulemaking Committee

**AGENCY:** Office of Natural Resources Revenue, Interior.

**ACTION:** Notice.

**SUMMARY:** On January 31, 2011, the Department published a notice of intent to establish an Indian Oil Valuation Negotiated Rulemaking Committee. In that notice, we requested interested parties to nominate representatives for membership on the Committee and addressed many of the requirements of Section 564 of the Negotiated Rulemaking Act. On August 22, 2011, the Department published a second notice of intent to establish an Indian Oil Valuation Negotiated Rulemaking Committee to address the remaining requirements of Section 564 of the Negotiated Rulemaking Act and to inquire if all interests were represented

by the proposed members. This notice establishes the Committee.

**FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:** Mr. Karl Wunderlich, Office of Natural Resources Revenue (ONRR), *Telephone:* (303) 231–3663; *Fax:* (303) 231–3194, or *Email:* karl.wunderlich@onrr.gov.

**SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:** In response to our second notice, we received three responses recommending three additional members to the Committee. In response, we have added the following three recommended members to the Committee: Patrick Flynn, employee of Resolute Energy Corporation, representative of Industry; Grinnell Day Chief, representative of the Blackfeet Nation; Alan Taradash, representative of the Jicarilla Apache Nation.

One additional comment was received in response to the second notice of intent offering broad objections to the composition of the Committee. In particular, the commenter felt the Committee did not represent all significant interests, did not represent global energy producer interests, included members from the oil industry with conflicts of interest, and should not have had inclusion from the Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA).

While ONRR appreciates and encourages interest in the Indian Oil Valuation Negotiated Rulemaking Committee, at this time we find it unnecessary to reconstitute or make significant changes to the committee. On January 31, 2011, ONRR solicited nominees for membership to the Committee. On August 22, 2011, ONRR solicited additional nominees. This provided the commenter two opportunities to nominate a member that would represent the significant interests he felt were omitted. ONRR believes it has adequately met the intent of the Federal Advisory Committee Act (FACA) in soliciting membership and finding members with an appropriate balance of viewpoints. ONRR also notes that the Committee is being formed to address valuation of oil production from domestic Indian oil leases. Global energy interests are most likely unconcerned with the subject of this Committee and no nominations were offered to represent these interests. Likewise, the proposed representatives from industry were nominated by their constituents and have an undeniable stake in the rulemaking process. Any perceived conflict of interest on the part of industry’s nominations was not adequately described by the commenter. While the commenter noted that the oil industry members have conflicts of interest, this is expected of

“representative” members of a FACA committee. These members serve as representatives of outside entities or groups and their exclusive function is to represent the points of view of a particular industry or group (e.g. labor, agriculture, energy, environmental, tribal, or some other recognizable group of persons). In representing the interests of a specifically identifiable interest group, the opinions, information, and advice these members offer will reflect the biases of the particular group that the member represents on the Committee. ONRR firmly believes that the interests significantly affected by the rulemaking are represented by the members.

Finally, the Committee was formed within the terms of the FACA which provides for government oversight over FACA committees. In the case of this Committee, ONRR believes that BIA belongs on the Committee, because BIA issues leases and is the office of record maintaining surface and mineral ownership records on Indian Trust lands.

The Committee will meet at least quarterly with the first meeting planned for February 2012.

**Certification Statement:** I hereby certify that the Indian Oil Valuation Negotiated Rulemaking Committee is necessary, is in the public interest, and is established under the authority of the Secretary of the Interior.

Dated: December 1, 2011.

**Ken Salazar,**

*Secretary of the Interior.*

[FR Doc. 2011–31559 Filed 12–7–11; 8:45 am]

**BILLING CODE 4310–T2–P**

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## DEPARTMENT OF HOMELAND SECURITY

### Coast Guard

#### 33 CFR Part 117

[Docket No. USCG–2011–0943]

RIN 1625–AA09

#### Drawbridge Operation Regulation; Blackwater River, South Quay, VA

**AGENCY:** Coast Guard, DHS.

**ACTION:** Notice of proposed rulemaking.

**SUMMARY:** The Coast Guard proposes to change the regulations that govern the operation of the S189 Bridge over Blackwater River, mile 9.2, at South Quay, VA. The proposed rule would change the current regulation requiring a 24-hour advance notice and allow the bridge to remain in the closed position