
File Code: 1950; 2820
Date: September 5, 2017

Dear Interested Party:

As Forest Supervisor of the Grand Mesa, Uncompahgre and Gunnison National Forests (GMUG), I am proposing to issue a decision to consent to lease modifications in a Draft Record of Decision (ROD) for two federal coal lease modifications based on the analysis contained within the GMUG's and Bureau of Land Management's (BLM) Supplemental Final Environmental Impact Statement (SFEIS) for *Federal Coal Lease Modifications COC-1362 and COC-67232*.

I have selected the proposed action alternative in the SFEIS which is to consent to BLM modifying existing federal coal leases COC-1362 and COC-67232 by adding 800 and 920 additional acres (respectively) and add stipulations to protect non-mineral forest resources. The coal lease modification areas lie in portions of sections 10, 11, 14, 15, 22 and 23 of T.14S, R. 90W, 6th PM in Gunnison County, Colorado. The modification areas include only National Forest System surface lands. The coal estate is administered by the BLM. These federal agency actions are needed to respond to applications submitted by Arkland Company, LLC and Mountain Coal Company.

Once my consent decision has been issued, the BLM may then consider and issue the lease modifications with stipulations and may further consider authorizing on-lease exploration (also analyzed in the SFEIS) to delineate coal reserves prior to State regulatory agency mining approval. My consent to lease and BLM's subsequent leasing portions of this action do not authorize mining activities or related surface uses. Post-leasing activities (including on-lease exploration) would be approved through separate authorizations and permitting processes at a later time by the appropriate state and federal agencies after the leases are modified.

For detailed information on my decision and decision rationale and the analysis upon which it is based, copies of the SFEIS and my Draft ROD may be downloaded from the internet at: <https://www.fs.usda.gov/project/?project=32459> Please be advised, due to the size of these documents it may take several minutes to download them.

Administrative Review Process

My decision is subject to a pre-decisional objection process in accordance with the provisions of 36 CFR § 218 subparts A and B. Objections must be filed with the reviewing officer in writing. All objections are available for public inspection during and after the objection process. Issues raised in objections must be based on previously submitted and timely, specific written comments regarding the proposed project or activity and attributed to the objector, unless the issue is based on new information that arose after the opportunities for comment. Please note, this is not a comment period.

At a minimum, an objection must include the following: (1) Objector's name and address as defined in 36 CFR § 218.2, with telephone number, if available; (2) Signature or other verification of authorship upon request (a scanned signature for electronic mail may be filed with the objection); (3) When multiple names are listed on an objection, identification of the lead objector as defined in 36 CFR § 218.2. Verification of the identity of the lead objector must be provided upon request or the reviewing officer will designate a lead objector as provided in 36 CFR § 218.5(d); (4) The name of the proposed project, the name and title of the responsible official, and the name(s) of the national



forest(s) and/or ranger district(s) on which the proposed project will be implemented; (5) A description of those aspects of the proposed project addressed by the objection, including specific issues related to the project; if applicable, how the objector believes the environmental analysis or draft decision specifically violates law, regulation, or policy; suggested remedies that would resolve the objection; supporting reasons for the reviewing officer to consider; and (6) A statement that demonstrates the connection between prior specific written comments on the particular proposed project or activity and the content of the objection, unless the objection concerns an issue that arose after the last designated opportunity for comment (i.e., since July 24, 2017). Incorporation of documents by reference is permitted only as provided for at 36 CFR § 218.8(b).

Objections, including attachments, must be filed (regular mail, fax, email, hand-delivery, express delivery, or messenger service) with the reviewing officer (see 36 CFR § 218.3 and § 218.8) within 45 days of the publication of the legal notice in the *Grand Junction Daily Sentinel* (Grand Junction, CO). The publication date of the legal notices in the *Grand Junction Daily Sentinel* is the exclusive means for calculating the time to file an objection. Those wishing to object should not rely upon dates or time frame information provided by any other source. Evidence of timely filing is described in 36 CFR § 218.9. Please submit objections to the Reviewing Officer at:

Mail or hand delivery:

Jacqueline Buchanan, Reviewing Officer
U.S.D.A Forest Service
Rocky Mountain Region
1617 Cole Blvd. Building 17
Golden, CO 80401

Fax: 303-275-5134 to the attention of Objections

Email: r02admin-review@fs.fed.us

The office business hours for those submitting hand-delivered objection are 8:00 AM to 4:30 PM Monday through Friday, excluding federal holidays.

Electronic objections must be submitted in a format such as an e-mail message, plain text (.txt), rich text format (.rtf), or MS Word (.doc). In cases where no identifiable name is attached to an electronic message, a verification of identity will be required. A scanned signature is one way to provide verification.

Contact

Please contact Niccole Mortenson at nmortenson@fs.fed.us or 406-329-3163 or Levi Broyles at lbroyles@fs.fed.us or 970-527-4131 if you are unable to access web documents or require them in another format. Media inquiries should be directed to Lawrence Lujan at lmLujan@fs.fed.us or 303-275-5356.

Sincerely,

/s/Scott G. Armentrout
SCOTT G. ARMENTROUT
Forest Supervisor