

Public Notice of Availability (NOA)
Bridger Coal Company Mining Plan Modification
Environmental Assessment

The U.S. Department of the Interior (DOI), Office of Surface Mining Reclamation and Enforcement (OSMRE), Western Region Office, has prepared an environmental assessment (EA) for the Jim Bridger Coal Mine complex (Bridger Mine Complex) mining plan modification for federal coal lease WYW-02727 (the Project). Since 1974, in accordance with the Mineral Leasing Act of 1920 (MLA) and the federal mining plan approved by the Assistant Secretary for Land and Minerals Management (ASLM), the operator of the Bridger Mine Complex (currently Bridger Coal Company (BCC)) has mined portions of federal coal lease WYW-02727, in accordance with the approved surface coal mining permit issued by the state regulatory authority, the Wyoming Department of Environmental Quality, Land Quality Division (WDEQ-LQD). On November 28, 2014, in accordance with its responsibilities under the Federal Surface Mining and Reclamation Control Act of 1977, the WDEQ-LQD approved the Amendment and Mine and Reclamation Plan Revision for surface coal mining Permit No. 338-T7, including the mining of additional portions of federal coal lease WYW-02727 not previously approved by the ASLM. In accordance with the MLA, the ASLM must approve the mining plan modification for federal coal lease WYW-02727 before mining of the federal coal can occur.

OSMRE has prepared this EA to evaluate the environmental impacts resulting from the Project, pursuant to the requirements of the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969 (NEPA). The Bridger Mine Complex is located approximately 35 miles northeast of Rock Springs, Wyoming. It produces upward of 6 million tons of coal per year, supported by 4.0–4.5 million tons of coal from the underground operation and 1.0–1.5 million tons from the surface operation. BCC proposes to add 560 federal surface acres and 4.5 million tons of federal coal to the approved federal mining plan. The proposed mining plan modification would result in an annual production increase of 3-5% after 2025, allowing the mine to maintain existing annual production levels until 2037, when combined with future mining on adjacent lands. After 2025, the average annual production of coal mined at the Bridger Mine Complex would increase from between approximately 3.5 and 6.3 million tons to between approximately 3.7 and 6.5 million tons of coal per year. This mining plan modification would allow approximately 215,000 tons of federal coal per year to be mined on average. The life of the mine would not be extended by the mining plan modification.

The EA discloses the potential for direct, indirect, and cumulative impacts to the environment from the Project. As a result of the EA process, OSMRE has determined there are no significant environmental impacts and has issued an unsigned Finding of No Significant Impact (FONSI). The ASLM will approve, disapprove, or conditionally approve the mining plan approval document within the mining plan decision document, as required under the MLA.

The EA and unsigned FONSI are available for review online at:

<http://www.wrcc.osmre.gov/initiatives/bridgerMineWY2727.shtm>

You are invited to direct your comments on the EA and unsigned OSMRE FONSI by mail and email to:

ATTN: Bridger Mine Complex EA
C/O: Logan Sholar
Western Region Office
Office of Surface Mining Reclamation and Enforcement
1999 Broadway, Suite 3320
Denver, CO 80202

Email: OSM-NEPA-WY@OSMRE.gov

Printed versions of the EA and unsigned FONSI are also available for review at the following locations:

- OSMRE, Western Region
1999 Broadway, Suite 3320
Denver, CO 80202
Between the hours of 8:00 AM to 4:00 PM Monday through Friday
- Sweetwater County Courthouse
80 W. Flaming Gorge Way # 150
Green River, WY 82935
Between the hours of 8:00 AM to 4:00 PM Monday through Friday

All comments must be received or postmarked by September 5, 2017 to be considered.

Before including your address, phone number, e-mail address, or other personal identifying information in your comment, you should be aware that your entire comment – including your personal identifying information – will be publicly available. While you can ask us in your comment to withhold your personal identifying information from public review, we cannot guarantee that we will be able to do so. All submissions from organizations or businesses and from individuals identifying themselves as representatives or officials of organizations or businesses will be available for public review to the extent consistent with applicable law.

Additional information regarding this Project may be obtained from Logan Sholar at (303) 293-5036 or lsholar@osmre.gov.