

PUBLIC NOTICE
Bull Mountains Mine No.1
Federal Mining Plan Modification
Environmental Assessment

The U.S. Department of the Interior (DOI), Office of Surface Mining Reclamation and Enforcement (OSMRE), Western Region Office, will prepare an environmental assessment (EA) for Signal Peak Energy, LLC's (SPE) Bull Mountains Mine No. 1, Amendment 3 mining plan modification for Federal coal lease MTM 97988. The DOI Assistant Secretary for Land and Minerals (ASLM), in accordance with the Mineral Leasing Act of 1920, originally approved Bull Mountains Mine No. 1, Amendment 3 mining plan modification for Federal coal lease MTM 97988 on February 24, 2015.

Because of a recent court decision, OSMRE is preparing this EA to evaluate the environmental impacts resulting from the originally proposed mining plan modification for Federal coal lease MTM 97988, pursuant to the requirements of the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969 (NEPA). *See Montana Environmental Information Center v. U.S. Office of Surface Mining et al., Case 9:15-cv-00106-DVM (D. Mont. 2017).*

Signal Peak Energy, LLC (SPE) owns and operates the Bull Mountains Mine No. 1. The mine is located in Musselshell and Yellowstone counties between the Musselshell and Yellowstone rivers, approximately 30 miles north of Billings and 20 miles southeast of Roundup, Montana. The Federal Coal Tract contains the following lands:

Township 6 North, Range 27 East, PMM, Musselshell County, Montana:
Sec. 4, lot 1, S1/2NE1/4, SE1/4NW1/4 and S1/2; 479.76 acres
Sec. 8, NE1/4, NE1/4NW1/4, S1/2NW1/4 and S1/2; 600.00 acres
Sec. 10, W1/2NE1/4, SE1/4NE1/4, NW1/4 and S1/2; 600.00 acres
Sec. 14, SW1/4NE1/4, NW1/4 and S1/2; 520.00 acres
Sec. 22, W1/2 and SE1/4. 480.00 acres
Total 2,679.76 acres

The OSMRE is responsible for reviewing plans to conduct coal mining and reclamation operations on lands containing leased Federal coal. Pursuant to 30 CFR 746, the OSMRE must prepare and submit to the Assistant Secretary of Lands and Minerals Management a mining plan decision document recommending approval, disapproval or approval with condition(s) of the proposed Federal Mining Plan Modification.

The proposed Mining Plan Modification would allow Signal Peak to continue underground coal mining, within the permit area, on approximately 1,213 acres of additional Federal coal lands. In connection with mining this Federal coal, Signal Peak would also mine adjacent private and State coal. Mining would continue approximately 11.5 years and 90.1 million saleable tons of coal would be recovered. In addition to the mining of adjacent private and State coal, other actions that would be conducted in association with the proposed Mining Plan Modification (i.e., connected actions) include facilities associated with rock disposal; construction of roads, boreholes and powerlines; installation of ventilation facilities; and other surface disturbances.

If no action is taken, Signal Peak would continue to mine approximately 2.5 years to recover the 9.4 million saleable tons of non-Federal coal remaining within the permit area.

OSMRE is soliciting public comments on the proposed Project, scope of the EA, alternatives to be considered and the issues that should be analyzed in the EA. Interested persons may view information about the proposed Project on the OSMRE website at:
<https://www.wrcc.osmre.gov/initiatives/bullMountainsMine.shtm>.

This notice initiates the public scoping process. Comments may be submitted in writing or by e-mail. At the top of your letter or in the subject line of your e-mail message, please indicate that the comments are "Bull Mountains Mine No. 1 EA Scoping Comments."

- E-mail comments should be sent to: osm-nepa-mt@osmre.gov
- Comments delivered by U.S. Postal Service Express Mail or by courier service must be delivered by **November 20, 2017** and should be sent to:

OSMRE-Western Region
ATTN: Gretchen Pinkham, Bull Mountains Mine No. 1
1999 Broadway, Suite 3320
Denver, CO 80202-3050

Comments received, including names and addresses of those who comment, will be considered part of the public record for this project and will be available for public inspection. By including your address, phone number, email address, or other personally identifying information in your comment, you should be aware that your entire comment, including your personally identifying information, may be made publically available at any time. 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.

For further information about the Project, NEPA Process, or to have your name added to the mailing list, contact: Gretchen Pinkham, OSMRE Project Manager, at 303-293-5088 or gpinkham@osmre.gov.