



United States Department of the Interior

BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT
Tres Rios Field Office
29211 Highway 184
Dolores, CO 81323



OFFICE OF SURFACE MINING RECLAMATION AND ENFORCEMENT
WESTERN REGION
1999 Broadway, Suite 3320
Denver, CO 80202

In Reply Refer To: 3432
COC-62920 (COS01000)

**OPPORTUNITY TO COMMENT
OPTIONAL REPLY BY JULY 10, 2017
PRELIMINARY ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT
DOI-BLM-CO-S010-2011-0074-EA
GCC King II Coal Mine**

Dear Interested Party,

The U.S. Department of the Interior, Bureau of Land Management (BLM) and the Office of Surface Mining Reclamation and Enforcement (OSMRE), Western Region Office, have prepared a joint environmental assessment (EA) and separate unsigned Finding of No Significant Impacts (FONSI) to analyze the environmental impacts of related proposals submitted by GCC Energy, LLC (GCC) for the continued mining of federal coal at the King II Coal Mine in La Plata County, Colorado. The EA discloses the potential for direct, indirect, and cumulative impacts in accordance with the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969 (NEPA), Council on Environmental Quality (CEQ) regulations for implementing NEPA, Departmental Manual Part 516, and additional DOI, BLM, and OSMRE policies and guidance. Resources analyzed in the EA include topography and geology, air quality and climate, social and economic, health and safety, transportation, paleontology, vegetation, wildlife, special status species, noise, visual, land use, surface and groundwater, cultural and soils. Separate decision documents will be issued by each agency.

The King II Mine is located in La Plata County, approximately 5 miles southwest of Hesperus, Colorado. In 2014, the King II Mine was authorized to produce up to 1.3 million tons of coal annually through federal, State of Colorado, and private mineral leases, with the majority of production under Federal Coal Lease COC62920. At the present mining rate, it is estimated that the coal in the current lease area would be exhausted in less than 3 years. The four additional tracts would extend the life of the current mine by an estimated 5 to 7 years. Legal description of the proposed lease modification are as follows:

New Mexico Principle Meridian, La Plata County, Colorado
Tract A - containing 220.00 acres more or less
T. 35 N., R. 11 W., N.M.P.M., Sec. 19, NE, S2SE, and Sec. 20, NWNW
Tract B - containing 360.55 acres more or less
T. 35 N., R. 11 W., N.M.P.M., Sec. 30, lots 1-4, E2NW, and NWNE;
T. 35 N., R. 12 W., N.M.P.M., Sec. 25, lots 3-8
Tract D - containing 10.00 acres more or less
T. 35 N., R. 12 W., N.M.P.M., Sec. 26, SENENE
Tract E - containing 360.00 acres more or less
T. 35 N., R. 12 W., N.M.P.M., Sec. 35, NENW, S2NW, SW, and S2SE
Containing 950.55 acres, more or less.

As Joint Lead Agencies, the BLM and OSMRE analyzed potential impacts to the human environment resulting from, and will make separate decisions regarding, the following proposed federal actions:

1. The BLM must decide whether to: (1) approve, (2) approve with modifications, or (3) deny a modification of existing Federal Coal Lease COC62920 for the King II Coal Mine. If approved, the lease modification would result in the modification of Federal Coal Lease COC62920 by approximately 950 acres on four tracts adjacent to the current operation. Most of the lease area consists of split estate, in which the federal government manages the subsurface mineral estate, but not the surface lands.
2. OSMRE must decide whether or not to approve a Permit Revision Application Package consisting of a water monitoring program, Probable Hydrologic Consequences analysis, Right of Entry information, Subsidence Control Plan, and an Operations and Reclamation Plan.
3. OSMRE must decide whether or not to approve an application to renew Federal Mine Permit CO-106A. The permit would reauthorize operations associated with the mining of federal coal from the areas within Federal Coal Lease COC62920 where the surface of the land is under the ownership of the Ute Mountain Ute Tribe, but outside of the Ute Mountain Ute Indian Reservation.
4. The DOI Assistant Secretary for Land and Minerals Management must decide whether to: (1) approve, (2) approve with conditions, or (3) deny a mining plan modification to incorporate the lease expansion into Surface Mining Control and Reclamation Act Permit C-1981-035.

The BLM and OSMRE are seeking public comments on the EA and separate unsigned FONSI. The EA and unsigned FONSI are available for review as of June 9, 2017. Comments must be postmarked by July 10, 2017 to be considered. The EA, maps, and related materials are available on BLM's ePlanning website at: <http://go.usa.gov/x92jw>. Your name and address must be included for your submission to be considered. All submissions received will be forwarded to OSMRE.

Email: coalcommenttresrios@blm.gov
Postal Service: BLM
Attn: Jennifer Maiolo - King II Coal Mine EA
455 Emerson St., Craig, CO 81625

Before including your address, phone number, email 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.

The BLM and OSMRE will host an open house to provide an opportunity for the public to learn more about the project and how to provide comments on the EA and unsigned FONSI. Representatives from both agencies will be available to answer questions. The open house will be held from 4:00 to 7:00 p.m. on Tuesday, June 20, 2017 at the Breen Community Building, 15300 Highway 140 in Hesperus, Colorado.

If you have questions about the BLM coal program or analysis, please contact Jennifer Maiolo at (970) 826-5077 or email jmaiolo@blm.gov. For questions regarding the OSMRE regulatory process, please contact Paul Clark at (303) 293-5065 or email pclark@osmre.gov.