



U.S. Department of the Interior
Bureau of Land Management

News Release

High Plains District Office

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

June 3, 2019

Contact: Courtney Whiteman, cwhiteman@gmail.com, 307-775-6184

BLM finalizes environmental assessment on Wright Area coal leasing decisions

CASPER, Wyo. – The Bureau of Land Management Wyoming’s High Plains District Office today released a final environmental assessment for coal leasing in the Wright Area of Campbell County, Wyo., in the Powder River Basin.

The BLM prepared this EA in response to a 2017 District Court order, which directed the BLM to revise and clarify its original analysis of coal leasing in the Wright Area. The BLM initially prepared an environmental impact statement and authorized leasing on four Wright Area tracts in 2012. Three of those tracts have since been leased and are currently being mined.

The District Court determined that the BLM’s previous analysis did not properly demonstrate how leasing could affect energy markets and greenhouse gas emissions. This EA resolves those court-identified deficiencies and augments the BLM’s previous decision by expanding its discussion of emissions from coal production and combustion and analyzing how leasing the tracts could affect coal prices and coal’s share in the energy market.

Wyoming’s Powder River Basin supplies about 40 percent of all U.S. coal, supporting energy infrastructure and providing revenue and employment for local communities. As part of its mission to support responsible domestic energy development in balance with other important uses of public lands, the BLM ensures that all federal coal lease applications are analyzed in accordance with federal regulations.

The final Wright Area EA and supporting documents are available online at <https://go.usa.gov/xntFJ>.

-BLM-

The BLM manages more than 245 million acres of public land located primarily in 12 Western states, including Alaska. The BLM also administers 700 million acres of sub-surface mineral estate throughout the nation. Diverse activities authorized on these lands generated \$75 billion in sales of goods and services throughout the American economy in fiscal year 2016—more than any other agency in the Department of the Interior. These activities supported more than 372,000 jobs.