

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: The present technology is a novel imaging device and methodology which integrates both light microscopy and spectroscopy. This invention allows for the cost-effective development of high-resolution spatial, chemical, and spectral images. It provides a rapid means for examining and collecting large format images from vibrational and visible spectra in a three-dimensional sample. It is superior to current equipment because it has no moving parts. This device may be used as a tool for the characterization of polymers, semiconductors, contamination studies, analysis of diffusion and failure mechanisms, and has potential as a diagnostic tool of clinical analysis of histologic materials.

The prospective exclusive license may be granted unless, within 60 days from the date of this published Notice, NIH receives written evidence and argument that establishes that the grant of the license would not be consistent with the requirements of 35 U.S.C. 209 and 37 CFR 404.7. Properly filed competing applications for a license filed in response to this notice will be treated as objections to the contemplated license.

Comments and objections submitted in response to this notice will not be made available for public inspection, and, to the extent permitted by law, will not be released under the Freedom of Information Act, 5 U.S.C. 552.

Dated: April 17, 1998.

Jack Spiegel,

Director, Division of Technology Development and Transfer, Office of Technology Transfer.

[FR Doc. 98-11111 Filed 4-24-98; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 4140-01-M

DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR

Bureau of Land Management

[CA-930-5410-00-B097; CACA 38636]

Conveyance of Mineral Interests in California

AGENCY: Bureau of Land Management, Interior.

ACTION: Notice of segregation.

SUMMARY: The private land described in this notice, aggregating 5.00 acres, is segregated and made unavailable for filings under the general mining laws and the mineral leasing laws to determine its suitability for conveyance of the reserved mineral interest pursuant to section 209 of the Federal Land Policy and Management Act of October 21, 1976. The mineral interests

will be conveyed in whole or in part upon favorable mineral examination. The purpose is to allow consolidation of surface and subsurface of minerals ownership where there are no known mineral values or in those instances where the reservation interferes with or precludes appropriate nonmineral development and such development is a more beneficial use of the land than the mineral development.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:

Kathy Gary, Bureau of Land Management, California State Office, 2135 Butano Drive, Sacramento, California 95825, (916) 978-4677.

Mount Diablo Meridian

T. 33 N., R. 9 W.,

Sec. 17, E $\frac{1}{2}$ SE $\frac{1}{4}$ NW $\frac{1}{4}$ NW $\frac{1}{4}$.

County—Trinity

As Reservation—All coal and other minerals.

Upon publication of this Notice of Segregation in the **Federal Register** as provided in 43 CFR 2720.1-1(b), the mineral interests owned by the United States in the private lands covered by the application shall be segregated to the extent that they will not be subject to appropriation under the mining and mineral leasing laws. The segregative effect of the application shall terminate by publication of an opening order in the **Federal Register** specifying the date and time of opening; upon issuance of a patent or other document of conveyance to such mineral interest; or two years from the date of publication of this notice, whichever occurs first.

Dated: April 17, 1998.

David McNay,

Chief, Branch of Lands.

[FR Doc. 98-11063 Filed 4-24-98; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 4310-40-P

DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR

Bureau of Land Management

[WY-985-0777-66; WY-142430]

Proposed Lease of Public Lands Under the Recreation and Public Purposes Act in Washakie County, Wyoming, Bighorn Basin Resource Area

ACTION: Notice of realty action.

SUMMARY: The following public lands near the community of Worland, Washakie County, Wyoming, have been examined and found suitable for classification for lease under the provisions of the Recreation and Public Purposes Act, as amended (43 United States Code 849 *et seq.*) The Washakie County Fair Board proposes to use the lands for an Olympic-style cross-

country horse track and associated jumping facilities.

Sixth Principal Meridian

T. 48 N., R. 93 W.,

Sec. 8, S $\frac{1}{2}$ SE $\frac{1}{4}$ SE $\frac{1}{4}$ NE $\frac{1}{4}$, NE $\frac{1}{4}$ SE $\frac{1}{4}$.

Sec. 9, E $\frac{1}{2}$ W $\frac{1}{2}$ SW $\frac{1}{4}$ NW $\frac{1}{4}$,

E $\frac{1}{2}$ SW $\frac{1}{4}$ NW $\frac{1}{4}$, NW $\frac{1}{4}$ SW $\frac{1}{4}$,

NW $\frac{1}{4}$ SW $\frac{1}{4}$ SW $\frac{1}{4}$ NW $\frac{1}{4}$,

W $\frac{1}{2}$ NW $\frac{1}{4}$ NW $\frac{1}{4}$ SE $\frac{1}{4}$,

E $\frac{1}{2}$ NE $\frac{1}{4}$ NE $\frac{1}{4}$ SW $\frac{1}{4}$.

Containing 127.5 acres more or less.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:

Bureau of Land Management, Worland District Office, Steven R. Till, Realty Specialist, P.O. Box 119, Worland Wyoming 82401-0119, or telephone (307) 347-5100.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: The lands are not needed for federal purposes. Lease of the lands would be consistent with current BLM land use planning and would be in the public interest.

The lease would be subject to the following terms and conditions:

1. Provisions of the Recreation and Public Purposes Act and to all applicable regulations of the Secretary of the Interior.

2. All valid existing rights (for example, rights-of-way, permits and leases). Detailed information concerning this action is available for review at the office of the Bureau of Land Management, Worland District, 101 S. 23rd Street, Worland, Wyoming.

Upon publication of this notice in the **Federal Register**, the lands will be segregated from all other forms of appropriation under the public land laws, including the general mining laws, except for lease under the Recreation and Public Purposes Act and leasing under the mineral leasing laws. For a period of 45 days from the date of publication of this notice in the **Federal Register**, interested persons may submit comments regarding the proposed classification of the lands to the District Manager, Worland District Office, P.O. Box 119, Worland WY 82401-0119.

Classification Comments: Interested parties may submit comments involving the suitability of the land for a cross-country horse track and associated jumping facilities. Comments on the classification are restricted to whether the land is physically suited for the proposal, whether the use will maximize the future use or uses of the land, whether the use is consistent with local planning and zoning, or if the use is consistent with state and federal programs.

Application Comments: Interested parties may submit comments regarding the specific use proposed in the application and plan of development, whether the BLM followed proper

administrative procedures in reaching the decision, or any other factor not directly related to the suitability of the land for a cross-country horse track and associated jumping facilities

Any adverse comments will be reviewed by the State Director. In the absence of any adverse comments, the classification will become effective 60 days from the date of publication of this notice in the **Federal Register**.

Comments, including names and street addresses of respondents will be available for public review at the Worland District Office, 101 South 23rd Street, Worland, Wyoming during regular business hours (7:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.) Monday through Friday, except holidays. Individual respondents may request confidentiality. If you wish to withhold your name or address from public review or from disclosure under the Freedom of Information Act, you must state this prominently at the beginning of your comments. Such requests will be honored to the extent by law. All submissions from organizations or businesses, and from individuals identifying themselves as representatives or officials of organizations or businesses, will be made available for public inspection in their entirety.

Dated: April 20, 1998.

David Atkins,

Bighorn Basin Assistant Area Manager.

[FR Doc. 98-11067 Filed 4-24-98; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 4310-22-M

DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR

Minerals Management Service

Discretionary Authority for Royalty Relief on Nonproducing Leases on the Outer Continental Shelf

AGENCY: Minerals Management Service (MMS), Interior.

ACTION: Notice.

SUMMARY: The Deep Water Royalty Relief Act of 1995 (Act) granted the Secretary of the Interior (Secretary) the authority to reduce or eliminate royalties on producing or nonproducing leases in the Central and Western Gulf of Mexico. On January 24, 1997, MMS published a Notice (62 FR 3714) seeking public input on whether and how MMS should implement that authority for nonproducing leases. This Notice summarizes comments received and presents the MMS decision not to implement the authority at this time.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:

Larry Maloney, Department of the Interior, Minerals Management Service; Mail Stop 4230; 1849 C Street NW; Washington, DC 20240; telephone number, (202) 208-5461; E-mail address, larry.maloney@mms.gov.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

Background

The Act (Pub. L. 104-58) authorized the Secretary to modify the royalty terms of certain existing leases and to offer new leases subject to royalty suspension volumes in water depths of 200 meters or more in parts of the Gulf of Mexico. Most of the Act addresses mandatory royalty relief programs for leases in water depths of 200 meters or more. We implemented these provisions in rules covering new leases (63 FR 2626, January 16, 1998) and existing leases (63 FR 2605, January 16, 1998). The latter rule also established a royalty relief program for producing leases in all water depths and in all OCS areas.

The Act also provides for a discretionary royalty relief program. In part, section 302 of the Act amends section 8(a) of the OCS Lands Act by adding subparagraph (3)(B), which applies to all leases in the Gulf of Mexico west of 87 degrees, 30 minutes West longitude (i.e., the Central and Western Gulf of Mexico Planning Areas and the portion of the Eastern Gulf of Mexico Planning Area lying offshore Alabama). In this area, the Secretary may reduce or eliminate any royalty or net profit share in order to promote development, increase production, or encourage production of marginal resources on producing or nonproducing leases. This provision applies to active leases, not to the terms under which new leases are offered.

On January 24, 1997, MMS published a Notice seeking public input on whether and how MMS should implement that authority for nonproducing leases. We requested specific proposals, including information on the types of situations warranting royalty relief that cannot be addressed through existing programs; what criteria should be used in evaluating proposals; and, for any relief program recommended, specific information on its expected effects, including levels and costs of exploration, development, and production, and the volume of additional resources that may be recovered.

Comments Received

The following briefly summarizes the main points in comments submitted by the nine respondents to the January 24, 1997 **Federal Register** Notice.

- Five respondents (one oil and gas firm, one offshore service firm and three trade associations) strongly supported a program of royalty relief for nonproducing leases in the Central and Western Gulf, but did not offer comments on how MMS should implement such a program.

- One oil and gas firm supported the concept of royalty relief for OCS nonproducing leases. They believed that application of royalty relief should be based upon such factors as drill depth, pressure, and subsalt. The firm also stated that certainty of royalty relief early in the life of a project, before investment decisions are made, decreases the risk associated with evaluating business alternatives and increases the likelihood that the intent of the Deep Water Royalty Relief Act will be carried out.

- One trade association supported royalty relief for nonproducing leases. The association recommended that tracts not leased after initially being placed on the indicated hydrocarbon list be offered with a reduced royalty rate (i.e., from one-sixth to one-eighth the next time MMS offered the tracts for leasing).

- One oil and gas firm indicated that any royalty relief program established under this authority should grant relief only on a case-by-case basis using the same basic methodology established under the earlier program of royalty relief for existing deep water leases.

- Another trade association said that it might be wiser if MMS developed its thinking as to how such a program should be structured but defer implementation until market conditions signal a need for stimulative incentives. The association noted that conditions in the Gulf of Mexico are very robust and healthy and that the level of activity is so high that the infrastructure of tools, equipment, and trained personnel cannot meet all the demands placed on it.

Decision

After carefully considering public input and other information, we have decided not to implement, at this time, the statutory authority to reduce royalty rates on nonproducing leases in the Central and Western Gulf of Mexico. Our decision is based primarily on the fact that, in spite of lower oil prices, the oil and gas industry in the Gulf of Mexico is healthy and in little need of financial incentives at the present time.

Industry interest in acquiring relinquished leases is high. More than 50 percent of relinquished leases in the Gulf are re-leased within 3 years. In total, more than 80 percent of leases