

process, including comments on the Draft and Final GMP/EIS, the selected action best accomplishes the legislated purpose of the park and battlefield. This includes facilitating the protection and interpretation of sites in Idaho, Oregon, Washington, and Montana that have exceptional value in commemorating a portion of the history of the United States and that balances the statutory mission of the National Park Service to provide long-term protection of the units' resources and significance while allowing for appropriate levels of visitor use and appropriate means of visitor enjoyment. The selected action also best accomplishes identified management goals and desired future conditions, with the fewest environmental impacts.

Environmentally Preferable Alternative

The alternative which causes the least damage to the cultural and biological environment, and that best protects, preserves, and enhances resources is Alternative 2.

Measures To Minimize Environmental Harm

All practicable measures to avoid or minimize environmental impacts that could result from implementation of the selected action have been identified and incorporated into the selected action. Implementation of the selected action would avoid any adverse impacts on wetlands and any endangered or threatened species or that would result in the destruction or adverse modification of critical habitat of such species. Protection of viewsheds and cultural resources not currently owned by the National Park Service would be done through cooperative agreements, memorandums of understanding, scenic easements, or purchase on a willing-seller basis.

Public Involvement

Public comment has been requested, considered, and incorporated throughout this planning process in numerous ways. The National Park Service held 21 public scoping meetings in Idaho, Washington, Oregon, and Montana in January and February 1995. A newsletter was mailed to approximately 1,600 addresses announcing these meetings and that presented the purpose, significance, and interpretive themes for the park. A second newsletter presenting the desired future for the park was distributed. A 50-page Alternatives Newsbook was distributed in April 1996. Informal meetings on the alternatives were also held. In July 1996, postcards indicating which alternative was selected for the proposed action

park-wide and for each individual site were distributed. Workshops were held in 16 communities near park sites, on the draft EIS. Consultation was also completed with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, the U.S. Forest Service, the Advisory Council on Historic Preservation, the Oregon, Montana, Idaho and Washington State Historic Preservation Offices, Native American tribes, state and local governments and organizations.

Dated: October 2, 1997.

Rory D. Westberg,

Superintendent, Columbia Cascades Support Office, Pacific West Region.

[FR Doc. 97-27408 Filed 10-15-97; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 4310-70-P

DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR

National Park Service

Acadia National Park, Bar Harbor, Maine; Acadia National Park Advisory Commission; Meeting

Notice is hereby given in accordance with the Federal Advisory Committee Act (Pub. L. 92-463, 86 Stat. 770, 5 U.S.C. App. 1, Sec. 10), that the Acadia National Park Advisory Commission will hold a meeting on Monday, October 27, 1997.

The Commission was established pursuant to Pub. L. 99-420, sec. 103. The purpose of the commission is to consult with the Secretary of the Interior, or his designee, on matters relating to the management and development of the park, including but not limited to the acquisition of lands and interests in lands (including conservation easements on islands) and termination of rights of use and occupancy.

The meeting will convene in the Chart Room, Youth Center Bldg., U.S. Navy Base, Winter Harbor, Maine, at 1 p.m. to consider the following agenda:

1. Review and approval of minutes from the meeting held July 28, 1997.
2. Tour of Schoodic Peninsula.
3. Land Conservation Committee report.
4. U.S. Naval Security Group Activity current mission and future projections.
5. Old business.
6. Superintendent's report.
7. Public comments.
8. Proposed agenda and date of next Commission meeting.

The meeting is open to the public. Interested persons may make oral/written presentations to the Commission or file written statements. Such requests should be made to the Superintendent at least seven days prior to the meeting.

Further information concerning this meeting may be obtained from the Superintendent, Acadia National Park, P.O. Box 177, Bar Harbor, Maine 04609, tel: (207) 288-3338.

Dated: October 3, 1997.

Paul F. Haertel,

Superintendent, Acadia National Park.

[FR Doc. 97-27406 Filed 10-15-97; 8:45 am]

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DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR

National Park Service

Manzanar National Historic Site Advisory Commission; Meeting

Notice is hereby given in accordance with the Federal Advisory Committee Act that a meeting of the Manzanar National Historic Site Advisory Commission will be held at 1 p.m. on Saturday, October 25, 1997, at the Inyo County Administrative Center, Board of Supervisors' Chambers, 224 N. Edwards Street (U.S. Highway 395), Independence, California, to hear presentations on issues related to the planning, development, and management of Manzanar National Historic Site.

The Advisory Commission was established by Pub. L. 102-248, to meet and consult with the Secretary of the Interior or his designee, with respect to the development, management, and interpretation of the site, including the preparation of a general management plan for the Manzanar National Historic Site. Members of the Commission are as follows:

Ms. Sue Kunitomi Embrey, Chairperson
Mr. William Michael, Vice Chairperson
Mr. Keith Bright
Ms. Martha Davis
Mr. Ronald Izumita
Mr. Gann Matsuda
Mr. Vernon Miller
Mr. Mas Okui
Mr. Glenn Singley
Mr. Richard Stewart

The main agenda items at this meeting of the Commission will include the following:

- (1) Status report on the development of Manzanar National Historic Site by Superintendent Ross R. Hopkins.
- (2) General discussion of miscellaneous matters pertaining to future Commission activities and Manzanar National Historic Site development issues.
- (3) Public comment period.

This meeting is open to the public. It will be recorded for documentation and transcribed for dissemination. Minutes of the meeting will be available to the

public after approval of the full Commission. A transcript will be available after November 30, 1997. For a copy of the minutes, contact the Superintendent, Manzanar National Historic Site, P.O. Box 426, Independence, California 93526.

Dated: September 25, 1997.

Ross R. Hopkins,

Superintendent, Manzanar National Historic Site.

[FR Doc. 97-27409 Filed 10-15-97; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 4310-70-P

DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR

National Park Service

Mississippi River Coordinating Commission Meeting

AGENCY: National Park Service, Interior.

ACTION: Notice of Meeting.

SUMMARY: This notice announces an upcoming meeting of the Mississippi River Coordinating Commission. Notice of this meeting is required under the Federal Advisory Committee Act (Pub. L. 92-463).

MEETING DATE, TIME, AND ADDRESS: Wednesday, November 5, 1997; 6:30 p.m. to 9:00 p.m.; Council Chambers, Metropolitan Council, 230 East Fifth Street, St. Paul, Minnesota.

An agenda for the meeting will be available by October 17, 1997. Contact the Superintendent of the Mississippi National River and Recreation Area (MNRRA) at the address listed below. Public statements about matters related to the MNRRA will be accepted at this time.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Superintendent JoAnn Kyril, Mississippi National River and Recreation Area, 175 East Fifth Street, Suite 418, St. Paul, Minnesota 55101 (612-290-4160).

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: The Mississippi River Coordinating Commission was established by Public Law 100-696, dated November 18, 1988.

Dated: October 2, 1997.

Alan M. Hutchings,

Acting Regional Director, Midwest Region.

[FR Doc. 97-27410 Filed 10-15-97; 8:45 am]

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DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR

Office of Surface Mining Reclamation and Enforcement

Request for Determination of Valid Existing Rights Within the Monongahela National Forest

AGENCY: Office of Surface Mining Reclamation and Enforcement, Interior.

ACTION: Notice of request for determination of valid existing rights and invitation for interested persons to participate.

SUMMARY: The Office of Surface Mining Reclamation and Enforcement (OSM) has been ordered by the United States District Court for the Northern District of West Virginia to determine whether Walter D. Helmick has valid existing rights (VER) to surface mine coal on Federal lands within the Monongahela National Forest in Pocahontas County, West Virginia. Mr. Helmick is successor in interest to Ernest J. Van Gilder, who previously submitted a VER request in connection with the same property. By this notice, OSM is inviting interested persons to participate in the proceeding and to submit relevant factual material on the matter. OSM intends to develop a complete administrative record and will render a final agency decision on whether Mr. Helmick has VER.

DATES: OSM will accept written materials on this request for a VER determination until 5 p.m. local time on October 31, 1997.

ADDRESSES: Hand deliver or mail written materials to: Peter R. Michael, Office of Surface Mining Reclamation and Enforcement, Appalachian Regional Coordinating Center, room 218, Three Parkway Center, Pittsburgh, PA 15200.

Documents contained in the Administrative Record are available for public review at the locations listed below during normal business hours, Monday through Friday, excluding holidays.

Office of Surface Mining Reclamation and Enforcement Appalachian Regional Coordinating Center, Room 218, Three Parkway Center, Pittsburgh, PA 15200, Telephone: (412) 937-2867.

Office of Surface Mining Reclamation and Enforcement Charleston Field Office, 1027 Virginia Street E, Charleston, WV 25301, Telephone: (304) 347-7158.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Peter R. Michael, Office of Surface Mining Reclamation and Enforcement, Appalachian Regional Coordinating Center, Room 218, Three Parkway

Center, Pittsburgh, PA 15200, Telephone: (412) 937-2867.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: Section 522(e) of the Surface Mining Control and Reclamation Act of 1977 prohibits surface coal mining operations on certain lands unless a person has VER to conduct such operations or unless the operation was in existence on August 3, 1977. Section 522(e)(2) applies the prohibition to Federal lands within the boundaries of any national forest unless the Secretary of the Interior finds that there are no significant recreational, timber, economic, or other values that may be incompatible with surface coal mining operations and the surface operations and impacts are incident to an underground coal mine.

Under section 523 of the Act and 30 CFR 740.11, the approved State program (including the State definition of VER) applies to all Federal lands within States with approved regulatory programs. However, under 30 CFR 745.13, the Secretary has exclusive authority to determine VER for surface coal mining and reclamation operations on Federal lands within the boundaries of the areas specified in paragraphs (e)(1) and (e)(2) of section 522 of the Act. OSM reaffirmed these basic principles in the preamble to the suspension notice concerning VER published on November 20, 1986 (51 FR 41954).

The term VER is defined in Subsection 2.130 of the West Virginia Surface Mining Reclamation Regulations. Subsection 2.130 provides that VER exists, except for haul roads, in each case in which a person demonstrates that the limitation provided for in Section 22-3-22(d) of the West Virginia Surface Coal Mining and Reclamation Act would result in the unconstitutional taking of that person's rights.

In 1994, Walter D. Helmick re-acquired from Ernest J. Van Gilder certain mineral rights beneath Federal lands within the Monongahela National Forest in the Little Levels District of Pocahontas County, West Virginia. Mr. Van Gilder had purchased the mineral rights from Mr. Helmick in 1990 and later requested a VER determination from OSM for his planned surface mining operation on the property in question. Mr. Helmick's current VER request incorporates as part of the administrative record all supporting documents and public comments received by OSM in response to the request of Mr. Van Gilder and previous interested parties.

Mr. Helmick alleges that he owns mineral rights on two adjacent tracts of