



United States  
Department of  
Agriculture

Forest  
Service

Manti-La Sal  
National Forest

Ferron/Price Ranger District  
Ferron Work Center  
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Coal

File Code: 2820-4/1950  
Date: November, 9 2005

*Incoming  
11/15/2005  
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Dear Interested Party:

The Ferron/Price Ranger District, Manti-La Sal National Forest, is evaluating the possible environmental effects of a proposal from Energy West/ Pacificorp to conduct exploratory drilling on Utah State Coal Lease ML-48258 in Emery County, Utah (see map). Location of the proposed drilling is in Sections 7, 11, 12, 13, and 15, T16S, R6E, SLB&M (Upper Joes Valley, Crandall Canyon, and Mill Fork Canyon).

The drilling is proposed for the 2006 field season and would consist of drilling 11 bore holes. Helicopter-assisted drilling methods are proposed for all 11 holes; no road or well pad construction is proposed. The purpose of the drilling is to provide information necessary to characterize the geology of the area's coal reserves for mine plan development. The proposed drilling would take place on land where the United States Forest Service (USFS) administers the surface; the coal estate is owned by the Utah School and Institutional Trust Lands Administration (SITLA). SITLA has an outstanding right to occupy National Forest System lands for the purpose of exploring for and developing their coal estate. Therefore, authorization of surface occupancy is non-discretionary under Federal Regulations 36 CFR 251. The USFS District Ranger can, however, require mitigations to minimize the effects to other resources in the area.

The proposed project lies within the East Mountain Inventoried Roadless Area; however, no new roads are proposed. Surface disturbances are minimal (<100 sq ft) per site and would be reclaimed per USFS specifications upon completion of the project. Since the project, as proposed, would have minimal disturbances to land and resources, it is anticipated that it may be categorically excluded from further NEPA analysis (EA/ EIS) under category 31.2(8), FSH 1909.15.

You are invited to comment on our proposed action. Only those who submit timely and substantive comments will be accepted as appellants. Substantive comments are those within the scope of, are specific to, and have a direct relationship to the proposed action, and include supporting reasons that the Responsible Officials should consider in reaching a decision. Each individual or representative from an organization submitting substantive comments must either sign the comments or otherwise verify identity in order to attain appeal eligibility. 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. Comments should include the information required pursuant to 36 CFR 215.6(a)(3), as published in the Federal Register on June 4, 2003.

Please send written comments to: Mesia Nyman, Responsible Official/ District Ranger, PO Box 310, Ferron, Utah 84523; phone: 435-636-3501, fax: 435-637-4940; e-mail: [twlloyd@fs.fed.us](mailto:twlloyd@fs.fed.us). E-mailed comments must be submitted in MS Word (\*.doc) or rich text format (\*.rtf).



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