



United States Department of the Interior

OFFICE OF SURFACE MINING
RECLAMATION AND ENFORCEMENT
Western Region Office
1999 Broadway, Suite 3320
Denver, CO 80202-3050



June 26, 2020

RE: Availability of an Environmental Assessment for a Proposed Federal Mining Plan Modification for Bull Mountains Mine No. 1

Dear Interested Party,

The U.S. Department of the Interior, Office of Surface Mining Reclamation and Enforcement (OSMRE), Western Region Office, has prepared an Environmental Assessment (EA) and unsigned Finding of No Significant Impact (FONSI) for Signal Peak Energy, LLC's Bull Mountains Mine No. 1, Amendment 3 mining plan modification for Federal coal lease MTM 97988. See Figure 1 for the location of the Mine and the Amendment 3 area.

OSMRE prepared an EA in 2018 to address the August 14, 2017, ruling by the Court and to satisfy OSMRE's responsibilities under National Environmental Policy Act of 1969 (NEPA). OSMRE signed a FONSI on May 21, 2018. OSMRE prepared a MPDD, and the ASLM approved the mining plan modification on August 3, 2018. On March 9, 2020, the Court identified a deficiency in OSMRE's 2018 NEPA analysis, vacated and set aside the 2018 EA, and remanded the matter back to OSMRE for further action (see *350 Montana v. Bernhardt* Case 9:19-cv-00012-DWM, 2020 WL 1139674 [D. Mont. Mar. 9, 2020]). This EA was prepared to address the 2020 Court ruling and satisfy OSMRE's responsibilities under NEPA.

The OSMRE is responsible for reviewing plans to conduct coal mining and reclamation operations on lands containing leased Federal coal. Pursuant to 30 CFR 746, the OSMRE must prepare and submit to the Secretary of the Interior a decision document recommending approval, disapproval, or approval with condition(s) of the proposed mining plan modification. OSMRE is announcing that the EA and an unsigned FONSI are available online and is requesting public comments on the documents.

The proposed mining plan modification would allow Signal Peak to continue underground coal mining, within the permit area, on approximately 1,835 acres of additional Federal coal lands. In connection with mining this Federal coal, Signal Peak would also mine adjacent private and State coal. Mining would continue for a total of 11.5 years and approximately 109.7 million saleable tons of coal would be recovered. In addition to the mining of adjacent private and State coal, other actions that would be conducted in association with the proposed mining plan modification (i.e., connected actions) include facilities associated with rock disposal; construction of roads, boreholes and powerlines; installation of ventilation facilities; and other surface disturbances.

Interested persons may view the EA and the unsigned FONSI on the OSMRE website at:

<https://www.osmre.gov/lrg/projects.shtm>

This notice initiates the public comment process on the 2020 EA and unsigned FONSI. To ensure consideration of your comments, we must receive your electronic or written comments by **July**



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27, 2020. Comments may be submitted in writing or by e-mail. At the top of your letter or in the subject line of your e-mail message, please indicate that the comments are “Bull Mountains Mine No. 1 EA Comments.”

- E-mail comments should be sent to: osm-nepa-mt@osmre.gov
- Comments delivered by U.S. Postal Service Express Mail or by courier service must be delivered by **July 27, 2020** and should be sent to:

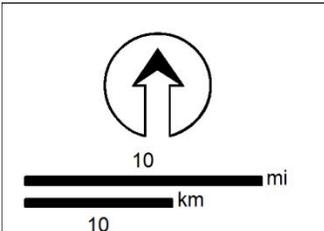
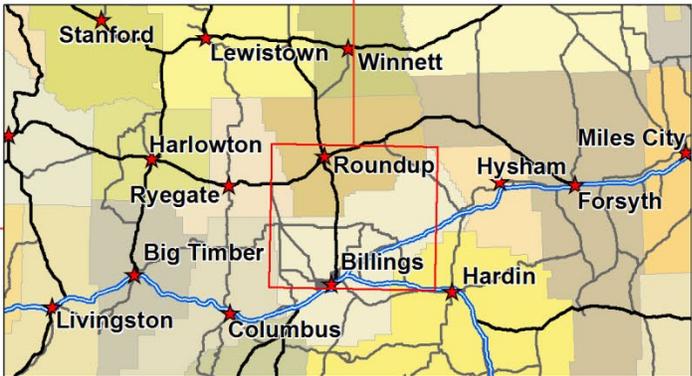
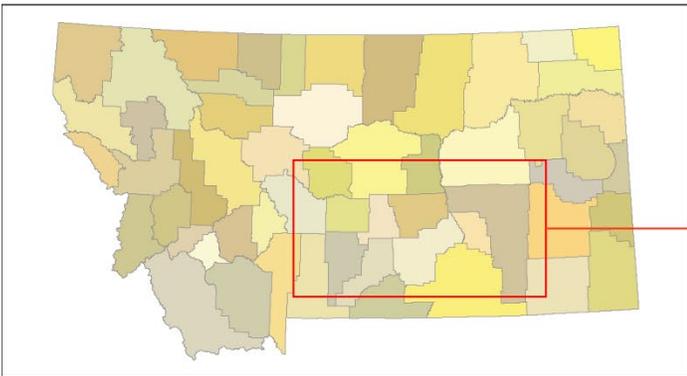
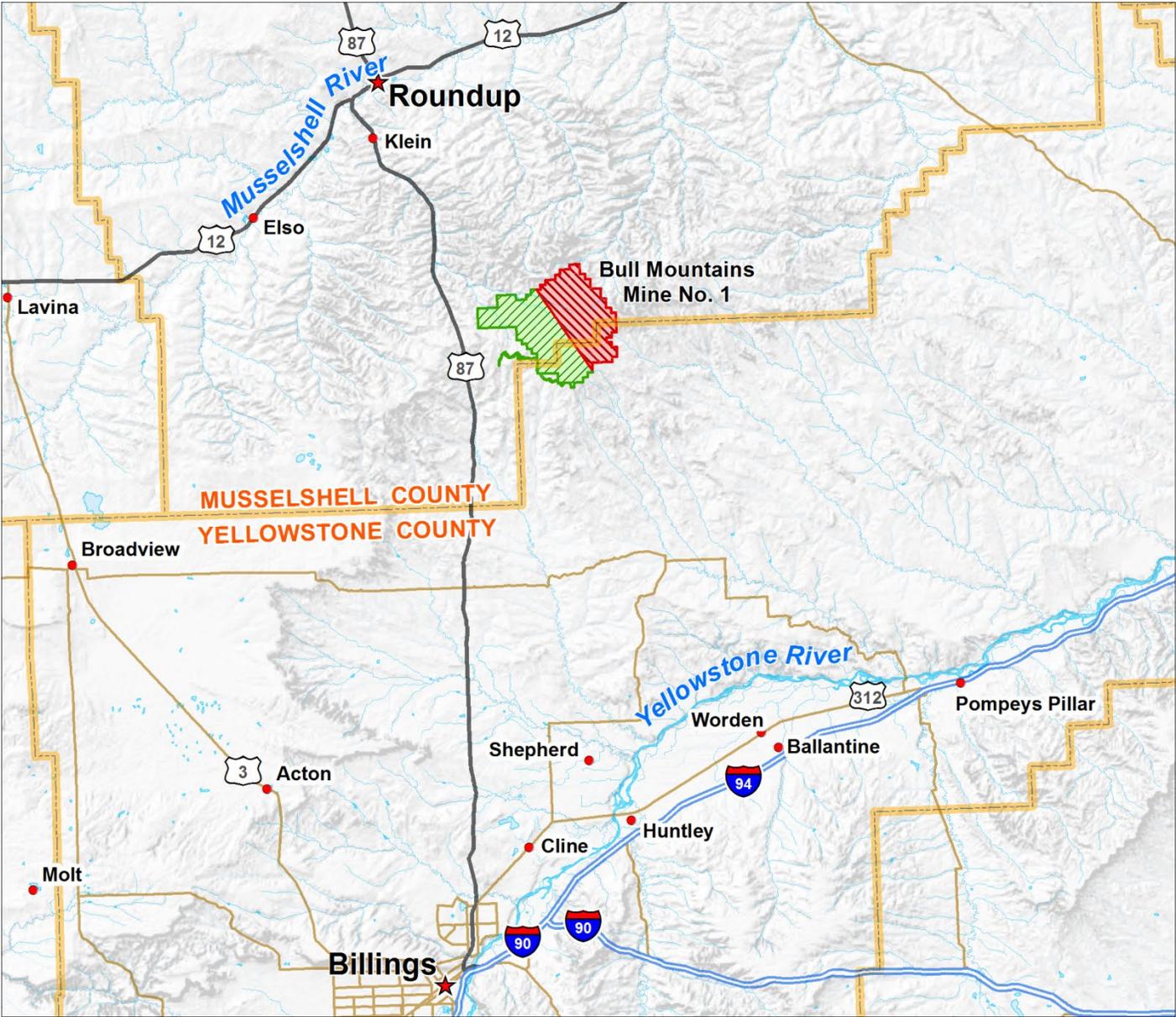
OSMRE-Western Region
ATTN: Gretchen Pinkham, Bull Mountains Mine No. 1
PO Box 25065
Lakewood, CO 80225-0065

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. By including your address, phone number, email address, or other personally identifying information in your comment, you should be aware that your entire comment, including your personally identifying information, may be made publicly available at any time. 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.

For further information about the Project, NEPA Process, or to have your name added to the mailing list, contact: Gretchen Pinkham, OSMRE Project Manager, at gpinkham@osmre.gov.

Elizabeth Shaeffer, Manager
Field Operations Branch

Enclosure



- ★ County Seats (Administrative Center)
- Other Cities & Towns
- Bull Mountains Mine No. 1**
-  Amendment 2 Permit and Access
-  Amendment 3 Mining Area

**Bull Mountains Mine No. 1
Federal Mining Plan
Modification EA**

Last Updated: 14 OCT 2017

**Figure I
Project Location**