

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR  
OFFICE OF SURFACE MINING RECLAMATION AND ENFORCEMENT

FINDING OF NO SIGNIFICANT IMPACT

McCurtain Underground Mine  
Federal Lease OKNM 108097  
Permit 4285F  
Mining Plan Decision Document

A. Introduction

In May 2010 Farrell-Cooper Mining Company (FCMC) applied to the Oklahoma Department of Mines (ODM) for the McCurtain Underground Mine permit (ODM Permit 4285F). The permit application is for 462 acres of surface support facilities to allow coal recovery from the 2,380-acre Federal Coal Lease OKNM 108097. The Bureau of Land Management (BLM) issued Federal Coal Lease OKNM 108097 on September 1, 2006. The mining operation will recover federally owned coal from lease OKNM 108097 by underground mining methods. Annual coal production from McCurtain Underground Mine will range from 0.6 to 1.2 million tons. The mine will also recover privately owned coal during the 40 to 80 year proposed life of the operations.

The 462-acre permit for surface disturbance associated with underground coal recovery was approved by ODM on March 30, 2012. Surface facilities in the disturbance area include an office, maintenance and parking facilities, coal cleaning and load-out, permanent coal waste disposal, sediment and surface water control, and haulroads.

The January 2013 environmental assessment (EA) associated with this finding of no significant impact analyzes possible effects of surface disturbance from mining operations authorized by ODM Permit 4285F, as well as cumulative effects of probable future mining operations in the area including the adjacent proposed McCurtain No. 2 underground mining lease (1,300 acres).

The proposed surface disturbance in support of the underground mining operation is located in Sections 13, 14, and 15, Township 8 N, Range 22 E, Indian Meridian, Haskell County, Oklahoma. Federal Coal Lease OKNM 108097 includes parts of Sections 8, 9, 10 11, 14, 15, 16, and 17, also in Township 8 N, Range 22 E. The lease further identifies the S1/2 NW1/4 Section 14 as the portal (underground access area) for the mine. These surface support facilities, including the portal, will be approximately one mile north of the town of McCurtain, Oklahoma.

Under the Mineral Leasing Act of 1920, as amended, the Assistant Secretary, Land and Minerals Management must approve, approve with conditions, or disapprove the mining plan for Federal lease OKNM 108097. Pursuant to 30 CFR Part 746, the Office of Surface Mining Reclamation and Enforcement (OSM) recommends approval of this mining plan.

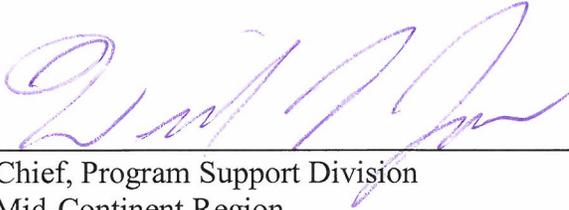
B. Statement of Environmental Significance of the Proposed Action

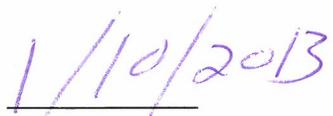
The deciding official has determined that the proposed action (Alternative 2: Recommend Approval--Preferred Alternative) would not have a significant impact on the quality of the human environment under Section 102(2)(C) of the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969, 42 U.S.C. §§ 4332(2)(C). Therefore, an environmental impact statement is not required.

This finding of no significant impact is based on the attached OSM January 2013 EA for ODM Permit 4285F, the McCurtain Underground Mine, and the EA prepared by the Bureau of Land Management (BLM) for Federal Coal Lease OKNM 108097:

BLM, June 2004, Environmental Assessment for Three Competitive Coal Lease Sales in Haskell, Latimer, and Leflore Counties, Oklahoma.

OSM independently evaluated the attached EA, as of the date specified below, and has determined that it adequately and accurately assesses the environmental impacts of the proposed action and provides sufficient evidence and analysis for this finding of no significant impact. OSM takes full responsibility for the accuracy, scope, and content of the January 2013 EA prepared in cooperation with ODM.

  
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Chief, Program Support Division  
Mid-Continent Region

  
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Date

Attachment