
**U.S. DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT**

**PAPERWORK REDUCTION ACT SUBMISSION
SUPPORTING STATEMENT A**

**OIL SHALE MANAGEMENT (43 CFR PARTS 3900, 3910, 3920, AND 3930)
OMB CONTROL NUMBER 1004-0201**

Terms of Clearance: Not applicable. The Office of Management and Budget (OMB) provided no Terms of Clearance when it last approved the collections of information under this OMB control number in June 2021 (See OMB Notice of Action dated June 29, 2021).

Abstract: This control number applies to the exploration, development, and utilization of oil shale resources on the Bureau of Land Management (BLM)-managed public lands. Currently, the only oil shale leases issued by the BLM are research, development, and demonstration (RD&D) leases. However, the BLM regulations provide a framework for commercial oil shale leasing and additionally include provisions for conversion of RD&D leases to commercial leases. Section 369 of the Energy Policy Act (42 U.S.C. 15927) addresses oil shale development and authorizes the Secretary of the Interior to establish regulations for a commercial leasing program for oil shale. The Mineral Leasing Act of 1920 (30 U.S.C. 241(a)) provides the authority for the BLM to allow for the exploration, development, and utilization of oil shale resources on the BLM-managed public lands. Additional statutory authorities for the oil shale program are: (1) The Mineral Leasing Act for Acquired Lands of 1947 (30 U.S.C. 351-359); and (2) The Federal Land Policy and Management Act (FLPMA) of 1976 (43 U.S.C. 1701 et seq., including 43 U.S.C. 1732). The information collection requirements are contained in 43 CFR Part 3900, 3910, 3920, and 3930. OMB Control Number 1004-0201 is currently scheduled to expire on June 30, 2024. The BLM request that OMB renew this OMB control number for an additional three (3) years.

Justification

1. Explain the circumstances that make the collection of information necessary. Identify any legal or administrative requirements that necessitate the collection.

Several statutory provisions necessitate the collection. Section 369 of the Energy Policy Act of 2005 (Pub. L. No. 109-58, 119 Stat. 728 through 733) directs the Secretary to make public lands available for conducting oil shale research and development activities. Section 369 is codified at 42 U.S.C. 15927 and amendments to 30 U.S.C. 241.

The Mineral Leasing Act, at 30 U.S.C. 241(a), provides the authority for the BLM to allow for the exploration, development, and utilization of oil shale resources on the BLM-managed public lands. Additional statutory authorities for this information collection are the Mineral Leasing Act for Acquired Lands (30 U.S.C. 351-359) and the Federal Land Policy and Management Act (43 U.S.C. 1701-1785). This information collection is authorized by regulations implementing these statutory authorities. See 43 CFR parts 3900, 3910, 3920, and 3930.

On November 18, 2008, the BLM promulgated final oil shale regulations at 73 FR 69414. Those regulations were codified at 43 CFR Parts 3900, 3910, 3920, and 3930. Although the BLM has not yet issued any commercial oil shale leases, the regulations provide the framework for a commercial oil shale leasing program. The regulatory provisions relating to information collection will be necessary when BLM moves forward with the issuance of commercial oil shale leases. Currently, the only existing oil shale leases issued by the BLM are Research,

Development and Demonstration (R, D and D) leases.

The BLM's Oil Shale R, D and D program began in 2005, with a call for nominations published in the Federal Register (70 FR 33753, June 9, 2005). On January 1, 2007, five R, D and D leases were issued in Colorado and on July 1, 2007, one R, D and D lease was issued in Utah. The majority of these leases were in various phases of testing and research for the potential production of oil shale resources. On November 3, 2009, the BLM published a notice in the Federal Register calling for nominations for a second round of oil shale R, D and D leasing. The BLM received three nominations – two in Colorado and one in Utah. In December 2012, the BLM issued two R, D and D leases in Colorado. Of the eight total R, D and D leases that have been issued since 2007, six of them have expired leaving two leases: COC069169 in Colorado held by American Shale Oil LLC; and UTU084087 in Utah held by EAO Federal Lease LLC.

2. Indicate how, by whom, and for what purpose the information is to be used. Except for a new collection, indicate the actual use the agency has made of the information received from the current collection. Be specific. If this collection is a form or a questionnaire, every question needs to be justified.

The BLM is authorized to collect information from applicants for oil shale leases, oil shale lessees, and operators in order to:

- (1) Learn the extent and qualities of the public oil shale resource;
- (2) Evaluate the environmental impacts of oil shale leasing and development;
- (3) Determine the qualifications of prospective lessees to acquire and hold Federal oil shale leases;
- (4) Administer statutes applicable to oil shale mining, production, resource recovery and protection, operations under oil shale leases, and exploration under leases and licenses;
- (5) Ensure lessee compliance with applicable statutes, regulations, and lease terms and conditions; and
- (6) Ensure that accurate records are kept of all Federal oil shale produced.

It is impossible to describe the actual use we have made of the information because the oil shale industry is still in the research and development stage, and the BLM has not begun to collect the information in conjunction with a commercial oil shale leasing program.

The information collection requirements contained in 43 CFR Part 3900 are summarized below.

43 CFR PART 3900 — OIL SHALE MANAGEMENT — GENERAL

Subpart 3902 — Qualification Requirements

Citizens of the United States, associations, and corporations may propose to acquire leases, or interests in leases, through competitive bidding and by assignment. Citizens of a foreign country may hold interests in leases only through stock ownership, stock holding, or stock control in domestic corporations.

Applicants for leases must submit qualification information to the proper BLM office, in accordance with 43 CFR 3902.22. The BLM uses the information to determine whether or not the prospective lessee is qualified to hold Federal oil shale leases under the Mineral Leasing Act.

This information may be filed separately from a lease application under 43 CFR Subpart 3922 but must be filed in the same office as the application. In this information collection request, the burdens of demonstrating qualifications are included in the burdens for submitting a lease application.

Any prospective lessee must submit: (1) a statement and evidence that the qualification requirements of 43 CFR Subpart 3902 are met; and (2) a statement regarding acreage holdings in Federal oil shale leases, so that the BLM can determine whether or not the prospective lessee would be in compliance with the following acreage limitations set forth at 43 CFR 3901.20, which provides that no entity may hold more than 50,000 acres of Federal oil shale

leases on public lands and 50,000 acres on acquired lands in any one state.

If there is more than one party in interest in an application for a lease, the respondent must include with the application the names of all other parties who hold or will hold any interest in the application or in the lease. All interested parties who wish to hold an interest in a lease must provide to the BLM the information required by 43 CFR Subpart 3902 to qualify to hold a lease interest. 43 CFR 3902.21, 3902.23(b), 3902.24(a)(3), 3902.25(d), and 3902.29.

Attorneys-in-fact must provide to the proper BLM office evidence of the authority to act on behalf of the applicant and a statement of the applicant's qualifications and acreage holding if it is also empowered to make this statement. Otherwise the applicant must provide the BLM this information separately. 43 CFR 3902.28.

Additional information requirements that apply to each category of prospective lessee are listed below.

Qualification requirements individuals (43 CFR Subpart 3902)

In accordance with 43 CFR 3902.23, individuals must provide to the BLM a signed statement with evidence showing:

- (1) The applicant is a U.S. citizen; and
- (2) The applicant's acreage holdings do not exceed the limits in 43 CFR 3901.20. This includes holdings through a corporation, association, or partnership in which the individual is the beneficial owner of more than 10 percent of the stock or other instruments of control.

In accordance with 43 CFR 3902.26, guardians or trustees for a trust, holding on behalf of a beneficiary, who are applicants must provide to the BLM:

- (1) A signed statement that discloses the beneficiary's citizenship; the guardian's or trustee's citizenship; the grantor's citizenship; and certifies the acreage holdings of the beneficiary, guardian, trustee, or grantor, if the trust is revocable, do not exceed the aggregate acreage limitations set forth at 43 CFR 3901.20; and
- (2) A copy of the court order or other document authorizing or creating the trust or guardianship.

If an applicant or successful bidder for a lease dies before the lease is issued, the BLM will issue the lease to the heirs or devisees, or their guardian, if probate of the estate has been completed or is not required. 43 CFR 3902.27(a). Before the BLM will recognize the heirs or devisees or their guardian as the record title holders of the lease, they must provide to the proper BLM office:

- (1) A certified copy of the will or decree of distribution, or if no will or decree exists, a statement signed by the heirs that they are the only heirs and citing the provisions of the law of the deceased's domicile showing that no probate is required; and
- (2) A statement signed by each of the heirs or devisees with reference to citizenship and holdings as required by 43 CFR 3902.23. If the heir or devisee is a minor, the guardian or trustee must sign the statement.

If probate is required, but is not completed, the BLM will issue the lease to the executor or administrator of the estate. 43 CFR 3902.27(b). In this case, the BLM considers the executor or administrator to be the record title holder of the lease. Before the BLM will issue the lease to the executor or administrator, the executor or administrator must provide to the proper BLM office:

- (1) Evidence that the person who, as executor or administrator, submits lease and bond forms has authority to act in that capacity and to sign those forms;
- (2) A certified list of the heirs or devisees of the deceased; and

- (3) A statement signed by each heir or devisee concerning citizenship and holdings, as required by 43 CFR 3902.23.

Qualification requirements associations, including partnerships (43 CFR Subpart 3902)

In accordance with 43 CFR 3902.24, associations that are applicants must provide to the BLM a copy of the articles of association or the partnership agreement, and a signed statement that:

- (1) Lists the names, addresses, and citizenship of all members of the association who own or control 10 percent or more of the association or partnership, and certifies that the statement is true;
- (2) Lists the names of the members authorized to act on behalf of the association; and
- (3) Certifies that the association or partnership's acreage holdings and those of any member do not exceed the acreage limits in 43 CFR 3901.20.

Qualification requirements corporations (43 CFR Subpart 3902)

In accordance with 43 CFR 3902.25, corporate officers, or authorized attorneys-in-fact who represent applicants, must provide to the BLM a signed statement that:

- (1) Names the state or territory of incorporation;
- (2) Lists the name and citizenship of, and percentage of stock owned, held, or controlled by, any stockholder owning, holding, or controlling more than 10 percent of the stock of the corporation, and certifies that the statement is true;
- (3) Lists the names of the officers authorized to act on behalf of the corporation; and
- (4) Certifies that the corporation's acreage holdings, and those of any stockholder owning, holding, or controlling more than 10 percent of the stock of the corporation, do not exceed the acreage limits in 43 CFR 3901.20.

Subpart 3903 — Fees, Rentals, and Royalties

In accordance with 43 CFR 3903.54(b), applications for waivers, suspension or reduction of rentals or payment in lieu of production, reduction in royalty, or waiver of royalty for the first 5 years of the lease must contain the serial number of the lease, the name of the record title holder, the operator or sub-lessee, a description of the lands by legal subdivision, and the following information:

- (1) The location of each oil shale mine or operation;
- (2) A map showing the extent of the mining or development operations;
- (3) A tabulated statement of the minerals mined and subject to royalty for each month covering a period of not less than 12 months immediately preceding the date of filing of the application;
- (4) The average production per day mined for each month, and complete information as to why the minimum production was not attained;
- (5) A detailed statement of expenses and costs of operating the entire lease;
- (6) The income from the sale of any leased products;
- (7) All facts showing whether the mines can be successfully operated under the royalty or rental fixed in the lease; and
- (8) Where the application is for a reduction in royalty, information as to whether royalties or payments out of production are paid to anyone other than the United States, the amounts so paid, and efforts made to reduce those payments.

Subpart 3904 — Bonding Requirements

A lessee or licensee must furnish a bond to the BLM before a lease or exploration license may be issued or

transferred or a plan of development approved. The BLM will review the bond and, if adequate as to amount and execution, will accept it in order to indemnify the United States against default on payments due or other performance obligations. The BLM may also adjust the bond amount to reflect changed conditions.

A prospective lessee or licensee must file one copy of the bond form with original signatures in the proper BLM state office in accordance with 43 CFR 3904.12. The obligor of a personal bond must sign the form. Surety bonds must have the lessee's and the acceptable surety's signature. In accordance with 43 CFR 3904.12, bonds must be filed on an approved BLM form, but the BLM has not yet developed the form because the oil shale industry is still in the research and development stage.

Prior to the issuance of a lease or exploration license, or approval of a plan of development, in those instances where a state bond will be used to cover all of the BLM's reclamation requirements, evidence verifying that the existing state bond will satisfy all the BLM reclamation bonding requirements must be filed in the proper BLM office. The BLM uses no specific form to collect this information.

43 CFR PART 3910 — OIL SHALE EXPLORATION LICENSES

Subpart 3910 — Exploration Licenses

For those lands where no exploration data is available, the lease applicant may apply for an exploration license to conduct exploration on unleased public lands to determine the extent and specific characteristics of the Federal oil shale resource. The BLM uses the information in the application to:

- (1) Locate the proposed exploration site;
- (2) Determine if the lands are subject to entry for exploration;
- (3) Prepare a notice of invitation to other parties to participate in the exploration; and
- (4) Ensure the exploration plan is adequate to safeguard resource values, and public and worker health and safety.

Section 3910.31(a) through (e)

Applications for exploration licenses must be submitted to the proper BLM office. The BLM uses no specific form to collect the information. The applicant must submit the following information:

- (1) Name and address of applicant(s);
- (2) A general description of the area to be drilled described by legal land description; and
- (3) An acceptable electronic format or 3 copies of an exploration plan that includes the exact location of the affected lands, the name, address, and telephone number of the party conducting the exploration activities, a description of the proposed methods and extent of exploration, and reclamation.

A nonrefundable filing fee of \$400 is also required. 43 CFR 3000.12 (as updated for Fiscal Year 2023 at 88 FR 66695 (Sept. 28, 2023) and 3910.31(b)(2)). Using the information supplied by the applicant, the BLM will prepare a notice of invitation and post the notice in the proper BLM office for 30 calendar days. The applicant will publish the BLM-approved notice once a week for 2 consecutive weeks in at least one newspaper of general circulation in the area where the land covered by the exploration license application are situated. The notice must invite the public to participate in the exploration under the license and contain the name and location of the BLM office in which the application is available for inspection.

Section 3910.31(f)

If any person wants to participate in the exploration program, the applicant and the BLM must receive written notice from that person with 30 calendar days after the end of the 30-day posting period. A person who wants to participate in the exploration program must:

- State a willingness to share in the cost of the exploration on a pro-rata share basis; and
- Describe any modifications to the exploration program that the BLM should consider.

Section 3910.44

Upon the BLM's request, the licensee must provide copies of all data obtained under an exploration license in the format requested by the BLM. The BLM will consider the data confidential and proprietary until the BLM determines that public access to the data will not damage the competitive position of the licensee or the lands involved have been leased, whichever comes first.

Subpart 3921 — Pre-Sale Activities

Section 3921.30

Corporations, associations, and individuals may submit expressions of leasing interest for specific areas to assist the applicable BLM State Director in determining whether or not to lease oil shale. The information provided will be used in the consultation with the governor of the affected state and in setting a geographic area for which a call for applications will be requested.

The BLM will request this information through the publication of a notice in the Federal Register and uses no specific form to collect the information. The expression of leasing interest will contain specific information consisting of the name and address and area of interest described by legal land description.

Subpart 3922 — Application Processing

Sections 3922.10, 3922.20, and 3922.30

Entities interested in leasing the Federal oil shale resource must file an application in a geographic area for which the BLM has issued a "Call for Applications." There is a processing fee, the amount of which the BLM will determine on a case-by-case basis in accordance with 43 CFR 3000.11 and 3922.10. The information provided by the applicant will be used to evaluate the impacts of issuing a proposed lease on the human environment. Failure to provide the requested additional information may result in suspension or termination of processing of the application or in a decision to deny the application.

Lease applications must be filed in the proper BLM state office. No specific form of application is required, but the application must include information necessary to evaluate the impacts of issuing the proposed lease on the human environment, including, but not limited to, the following:

- (1) Name, address, telephone number of applicant, and a qualification statement, as required by Subpart 3902;
- (2) A delineation of the proposed lease area or areas, the surface ownership (if other than the United States) of those areas, a description of the quality, thickness, and depth of the oil shale and of any other resources the applicant proposes to extract, and environmental data necessary to assess impacts from the proposed development;
- (3) A description of the proposed extraction method, including personnel requirements, production levels, and transportation methods including:
 - (a) A description of the mining, retorting, or in situ mining or processing technology that the operator would use and whether the proposed development technology is substantially identical to a technology or method currently in use to produce marketable commodities from oil shale deposits;
 - (b) An estimate of the maximum surface area of the lease area that will be disturbed or undergoing reclamation at any one time;
 - (c) A description of the source and quantities of water to be used and of the water treatment and disposal methods necessary to meet applicable water quality standards;
 - (d) A description of the regulated air emissions;

- (e) A description of the anticipated noise levels from the proposed development;
 - (f) A description of how the proposed lease development would comply with all applicable statutes and regulations governing management of chemicals and disposal of solid waste. If the proposed lease development would include disposal of wastes on the lease site, include a description of measures to be used to prevent the contamination of soil and of surface and ground water;
 - (g) A description of how the proposed lease development would avoid, or, to the extent practicable, mitigate impacts to species or habitats protected by applicable state or Federal law or regulations, and impacts to wildlife habitat management;
 - (h) A description of reasonably foreseeable social, economic, and infrastructure impacts to the surrounding communities, and to state and local governments from the proposed development;
 - (i) A description of the known historical, cultural, or archeological resources within the lease area;
 - (j) A description of infrastructure that would likely be required for the proposed development and alternative locations of those facilities, if applicable;
 - (k) A discussion of proposed measures or plans to mitigate any adverse socioeconomic or environmental impacts on local communities, services, and infrastructure;
 - (l) A brief description of the reclamation methods that will be used;
 - (m) Any other information that shows that the application meets the requirements of Subpart 3922 or that the applicant believes would assist the BLM in analyzing the impacts of the proposed development; and
 - (n) A map, or maps, showing:
 - (i) The topography, physical features, and natural drainage patterns;
 - (ii) Existing roads, vehicular trails, and utility systems;
 - (iii) The location of any proposed exploration operations, including seismic lines and drill holes;
 - (iv) To the extent known, the location of any proposed mining operations and facilities, trenches, access roads, or trails, and supporting facilities including the approximate location and extent of the areas to be used for pits, overburden, and tailings; and
 - (v) The location of water sources or other resources that may be used in the proposed operations and facilities.
- At any time during processing of the application, or the environmental or similar assessments of the application, the BLM may request additional information from the applicant.

Subpart 3924 — Lease Sale Procedures

Section 3924.10

Prospective lessees will be required to submit a bid at a competitive sale in order to be issued a lease. The BLM will require:

- (1) A certified check, cashier's check, bank draft, money order, personal check, or cash for one-fifth of the amount of the bonus; and
- (2) A qualifications statement signed by the bidder as described in Subpart 3902.

Subpart 3926 — Conversion of Preference Right for Research, Development, and Demonstration (R, D and D) Leases

Section 3926.10(c)

The lessee of an R, D and D lease may apply for conversion of the R, D and D lease to a commercial lease. A lessee of an R, D and D lease identified in Subpart 3926 must apply for the conversion of the R, D and D lease to a commercial lease no later than 90 days after the commencement of production in commercial quantities. No specific form of application is required. The application for conversion must be filed in the BLM state office that issued the R, D and D lease. The conversion application must include:

- (1) Documentation that there have been commercial quantities of oil shale produced from the lease, including the narrative required by section 23 of R, D and D leases;
- (2) Documentation that the lessee consulted with state and local officials to develop a plan for mitigating the socioeconomic impacts of commercial development on communities and infrastructure;
- (3) A bonus payment equal to the FMV of the lease; and
- (4) Bonding to cover all costs associated with reclamation.

Subpart 3930 — Management of Oil Shale Exploration and Leases

Section 3930.11(b)

The records, logs, and samples provide information necessary to determine the nature and extent of oil shale resources on Federal lands and to monitor and adjust the extent of the oil shale reserve. The operator/lessee must retain for 1 year all drill and geophysical logs. The operator must also make such logs available for inspection or analysis by the BLM. The BLM may require the operator/lessee to retain representative samples of drill cores for 1 year.

The BLM uses no specific form to collect the information.

Section 3930.20(b)

The operator must record any new geologic information obtained during mining or in situ development operations regarding any mineral deposits on the lease. The operator must report this new information in a BLM-approved format to the proper BLM office within 90 days of obtaining the information.

Subpart 3931 — Plans of Development and Exploration Plans

Section 3931.11

The plan of development must provide for reasonable protection and reclamation of the environment and the protection and diligent development of the oil shale resources in the lease.

The plan of development must contain, at a minimum, the following:

- (a) Names, addresses, and telephone numbers of those responsible for operations to be conducted under the approved plan and to whom notices and orders are to be delivered, names and addresses of Federal oil shale lessees and corresponding Federal lease serial numbers, and names and addresses of surface and mineral owners of record, if other than the United States;
- (b) A general description of geologic conditions and mineral resources within the area where mining is to be conducted, including appropriate maps;
- (c) A copy of a suitable map or aerial photograph showing the topography, the area covered by the lease(s), the name and location of major topographic and cultural features;
- (d) A statement of proposed methods of operation and development, including the following items as appropriate:
 - A description detailing the extraction technology to be used;
 - The equipment to be used in development and extraction;
 - The proposed access roads;

- The size, location, and schematics of all structures, facilities, and lined or unlined pits to be built;
- The stripping ratios, development sequence, and schedule;
- The number of acres in the Federal lease(s) or license(s) to be affected;
- Comprehensive well design and procedure for drilling, casing, cementing, testing, stimulation, clean-up, completion, and production, for all drilled well types, including those used for heating, freezing, and disposal;
- A description of the methods and means to protect and monitor all aquifers;
- Surveyed well location plats or project-wide well location plats;
- A description of the measurement and handling of produced fluids, including the anticipated production rates and estimated recovery factors;
- A description/discussion of the controls that the operator uses to protect the public, including identification of:
 - (i) Essential operations, personnel, and health and safety precautions
 - (ii) Programs and plans for noxious gas control (hydrogen sulfide, ammonia, etc.);
 - (iii) Well control procedures;
 - (iv) Temporary abandonment procedures; and
 - (v) Plans to address spills, leaks, venting, and flaring;
- (e) An estimate of the quantity and quality of the oil shale resources;
- (f) An explanation of how the maximum economic recovery of the resource will be achieved for the Federal lease(s);
- (g) Appropriate maps and cross sections showing:
 - (1) Federal lease boundaries and serial numbers;
 - (2) Surface ownership and boundaries;
 - (3) Locations of any existing and abandoned mines and existing oil and gas well (including well bore trajectories) and water well locations, including well bore trajectories;
 - (4) Typical geological structure cross sections;
 - (5) Location of shafts or mining entries, strip pits, waste dumps, retort facilities, and surface facilities; and
 - (6) Typical mining or in situ development sequence, with appropriate timeframes;
 - (h) A narrative which addresses the environmental aspects associated with the proposed mine or in situ operation, which includes, at a minimum, the following:
 - (1) An estimate of the quantity of water to be used and pollutants that may enter any receiving waters;
 - (2) A design for the necessary impoundment, treatment, control, or injection of all produced water, runoff water, and drainage from workings;
 - (3) A description of measures to be taken to prevent or control fire, soil erosion, subsidence, pollution of surface and ground water, pollution of air, damage to fish or wildlife or other natural resources, and hazards to public health and safety;
 - (i) A reclamation plan and schedule for all Federal lease(s) or exploration license(s) that details all reclamation activities necessary to fulfill the requirements of section 3931.20;
 - (j) The method of abandonment of operations on Federal lease(s) and exploration license(s) proposed to protect the un-mined recoverable reserves and other resources, including:
 - (1) The method proposed to fill in, fence, or close all surface openings that are hazardous to people or animals;
 - (2) For in situ operations, a description of the method and materials to be used to plug all abandoned development or production wells. Abandonment of operations is also subject to Subpart 3935; and
 - (k) Any additional information that the BLM determines is necessary for analysis or approval of the plan of development.

Section 3931.30

An application by a lessee for suspension of operations and production must be filed in duplicate in the proper BLM office and must set forth why it is in the interest of conservation to suspend operations and production. The BLM uses no specific form to collect this information.

- a. Except for casual use, before conducting any exploration operations on federally-leased or federally-licensed lands, the lessee must submit an exploration plan to the BLM for approval.

Section 3931.41

The BLM uses no specific form to collect this information. Exploration plans must contain the following information:

- (1) The name, address, and telephone number of the applicant, and, if applicable, that of the operator or lessee of record;
- (2) The name, address, and telephone number of the representative of the applicant who will be present during, and responsible for, conducting exploration;
- (3) A description of the proposed exploration area, cross-referenced to the map required under section 3931.41, including:
 - (a) Applicable Federal lease and exploration license serial numbers;
 - (b) Surface topography;
 - (c) Geologic, surface water, and other physical features;
 - (d) Vegetative cover;
 - (e) Endangered or threatened species listed under the Endangered Species Act of 1973 (16 U.S.C. 1531 *et seq.*) that may be affected by exploration operations;
 - (f) Districts, sites, buildings, structures, or objects listed on, or eligible for listing on, the National Register of Historic Places that may be present in the lease area; and
 - (g) Known cultural or archeological resources located within the proposed exploration area;
- (4) A description of the methods to be used to conduct oil shale exploration, reclamation, and abandonment of operations, including, but not limited to:
 - (a) The types, sizes, numbers, capacity, and uses of equipment for drilling and blasting and road or other access route construction;
 - (b) Excavated earth-disposal or debris-disposal activities;
 - (c) The proposed method for plugging drill holes; and
 - (d) The estimated size and depth of drill holes, trenches, and test pits;
- (5) An estimated timetable for conducting and completing each phase of the exploration, drilling, and reclamation;
- (6) The estimated amounts of oil shale or oil shale products to be removed during exploration, a description of the method to be used to determine those amounts, and the proposed use of the oil shale removed;
- (7) A description of the measures to be used during exploration for Federal oil shale to comply with the performance standards for exploration (43 CFR 3930.10) and applicable requirements of an approved state program;
- (8) A map at a scale of 1:24,000 or larger showing the areas of land to be affected by the proposed exploration and reclamation. The map must show:
 - (a) Existing roads, occupied dwellings, and pipelines;
 - (b) The proposed location of trenches, roads, and other access routes and structures to be constructed;
 - (c) Applicable Federal lease and exploration license boundaries;
 - (d) The location of land excavations to be conducted;
 - (e) Oil shale exploratory holes to be drilled or altered;
 - (f) Earth-disposal or debris-disposal areas;
 - (g) Existing bodies of surface water; and
 - (h) Topographic and drainage features; and
- (9) The name and address of the owner of record of the surface land, if other than the United States. If the surface is owned by a person other than the applicant or if the Federal oil shale is leased to a person other than the applicant, a description of the basis upon which the applicant claims the right to enter that land for the purpose of conducting exploration and reclamation.

Section 3931.50

Approved exploration, mining and in situ development plans may be modified by the operator or lessee to adjust to

changed conditions, new information, improved methods, and new or improved technology, or to correct an oversight.

The BLM uses no specific form to collect this information. The operator or lessee may apply in writing to the BLM for modification of the approved exploration plan or plan of development to adjust to changed conditions, new information, improved methods, and new or improved technology, or to correct an oversight. To obtain approval of an exploration plan or plan of development modification, the operator or lessee must submit to the proper BLM office a written statement of the proposed modification and the justification for such modification.

Section 3931.70

Production of all oil shale products or byproducts must be reported to the BLM on a monthly basis.

- (1) Report production of all oil shale products or by-products to the BLM on a monthly basis.
- (2) Report all production and royalty information to the Minerals Management Service under 30 CFR parts 210 and 216.
- (3) Submit production maps to the proper BLM office at the end of each royalty reporting period or on a schedule determined by the BLM. Show all excavations in each separate bed or deposit on the maps so that the production of minerals for any period can be accurately ascertained. Production maps must also show surface boundaries, lease boundaries, topography, and subsidence resulting from mining activities.
- (4) For in situ development operations, the lessee or operator must submit a map showing all surface installations including pipelines, meter locations, or other points of measurement necessary for production verification as part of the plan of development. All maps must be modified as necessary to adequately represent existing operations.
- (5) Within 30 days after well completion, the lessee or operator must submit to the proper BLM office 2 copies of a completed Form 3160-4, Well Completion or Recompletion Report and Log, limited to information that is applicable to oil shale operations. Well logs may be submitted electronically using a BLM approved format. Describe surface and bottom-hole locations in latitude and longitude.

Within 30 days of drilling completion the operator or lessee must submit to the BLM a signed copy of records of all core or test holes made on the lands covered by the lease or exploration license.

Section 3931.80

Within 30 days of drilling completion, the operator or lessee must submit to the proper BLM office a signed copy of records of all core or test holes made on the lands covered by the lease or exploration license. The records must show the position and direction of the holes on a map. The records must include a log of all strata penetrated and conditions encountered, such as water, gas, or unusual conditions, and copies of analysis of all samples. Provide this information to the proper BLM office in either paper copy or in a BLM-approved electronic format. Within 30 days of creation, the operator or lessee must also submit to the proper the BLM office a detailed lithologic log of each test hole and all other in-hole surveys or other logs produced. Upon the BLM's request, the operator or lessee must provide to the BLM splits of core samples and drill cuttings.

Subpart 3932 — Lease Modifications and Readjustments

Sections 3932.10, 3932.20, and 3932.30

A lessee may apply for a modification of a lease to include additional Federal lands adjoining those in the lease. The BLM uses no specific form to collect this information. An application for modification of the lease size must:

- (1) Be filed with the proper BLM office;
- (2) Contain a legal description of the additional lands involved;
- (3) Contain a justification for the modification;
- (4) Explain why the modification would be in the best interest of the United States;

- (5) Include a nonrefundable processing fee that the BLM will determine under 43 CFR 3000.11; and
- (6) Include a signed qualifications statement consistent with Subpart 3902.

Before the BLM will approve a lease modification, the lessee must file a written acceptance of the conditions in the modified lease and a written consent of the surety under the bond covering the original lease as modified. The lessee must also submit evidence that the bond has been amended to cover the modified lease.

Subpart 3933 — Assignments and Subleases

Any lease may be assigned or subleased, and any exploration license may be assigned, in whole or in part, to any person, association, or corporation that meets the qualification requirements at Subpart 3902. The regulations at 43 CFR Subpart 3933 provide that the BLM may approve or disapprove of assignments and subleases.

In addition, any overriding royalty interests may be assigned. The BLM must receive notice of such assignments for record purposes only. 43 CFR 3933.32.

Each application for assignment or sublease of record title or overriding royalty must include the filing fee found in the fee schedule at 43 CFR 3000.12. As updated for Fiscal Year 2023, the amount of that fee is \$80 per response. 88 FR 66695 (Sept. 28, 2023).

The information collection requirements associated with assignments and subleases apply to both assignors and assignees, and are as follows:

- (1) The BLM uses no specific form to collect this information. File in triplicate at the proper BLM office a separate instrument of assignment for each assignment, along with an assignment application, within 90 days of the date of final execution of the assignment instrument. The application must include the:
 - (a) Name and current address of assignee;
 - (b) Interest held by assignor and interest to be assigned;
 - (c) Serial number of the affected lease or license and a description of the lands to be assigned as described in the lease or license;
 - (d) Percentage of overriding royalties retained; and
 - (e) Date and signature of assignor.
- (2) The assignee must provide a single copy of the request for approval of assignment which must contain a:
 - (a) Statement of qualifications and holdings as required by Subpart 3902;
 - (b) Date and signature of assignee; and
 - (c) Nonrefundable filing fee of \$80

Subpart 3934 — Relinquishments, Cancellations, and Terminations

Section 3934.10

A lease or exploration license may be surrendered in whole or in part by the record title holder, by filing a written relinquishment, in triplicate, in the BLM state office having jurisdiction over the lands covered by the relinquishment. Before relinquishing an exploration license, the licensee must give any other parties participating in activities under the exploration license the opportunity to take over operations under the exploration license. The licensee must provide to the BLM written evidence that the offer was made to all other parties participating in the exploration license.

Subpart 3935 — Production and Sale Records

Section 3935.10

Operators or lessees must maintain production and sale records, which must be available for the BLM's examination during regular business hours. Operators or lessees must maintain accurate records of:

- (1) Oil shale mined;
- (2) Oil shale put through the processing plant and retort;
- (3) Mineral products produced and sold;
- (4) Shale oil products, shale gas, and shale oil by-products sold;
- (5) Relevant quality analyses of oil shale mined or processed and of synthetic petroleum, shale oil or shale oil by-products sold; and
- (6) Shale oil products and by-products that are consumed on lease for the beneficial use of the lease.

3. Describe whether, and to what extent, the collection of information involves the use of automated, electronic, mechanical, or other technological collection techniques or other forms of information technology, e.g., permitting electronic submission of responses, and the basis for the decision for adopting this means of collection. Also describe any consideration of using information technology to reduce burden and specifically how this collection meets GPEA requirements.

The BLM has not yet put into place mechanisms for submitting electronic responses in connection with this control number, because the oil shale industry is still in the research and development stage, and the BLM has not begun to collect the information for a commercial leasing program. In anticipation of the future development of the oil shale program, the BLM's regulations provide for respondents to submit either paper or electronic copies, and provide that any electronic copies must be in a BLM-approved format. Some of these regulations also encourage respondents to contact the proper BLM office for detailed information on submitting electronic copies. Examples of such regulations include 43 CFR 3910.31(b)(4) (Application for an Exploration License), 3931.70 (Production Maps and Production Reports), and 3931.80 (Records of Core or Test Hole Samples and Cuttings),

4. Describe efforts to identify duplication. Show specifically why any similar information already available cannot be used or modified for use for the purposes described in Item 2 above.

The information we request is unique to the lessee and licensees and prospective lessees and licensees, for the exploration and development of oil shale resources on public lands, and no other source is available. The BLM must obtain this information in order to authorize development of oil shale resources, to monitor and evaluate the program, and to facilitate the billing for this use of public lands. There is no similar information already available and no duplication of information collection.

5. If the collection of information impacts small businesses or other small entities, describe any methods used to minimize burden.

Section 369 of the Energy Policy Act requires the Department of the Interior to establish regulations for a commercial oil shale leasing program. Although this information collection would only affect entities that choose to explore and develop oil shale resources from land administered by the BLM, there is no way to determine which firms would hold exploration licenses or leases or operate on Federal lands in the future. The extent to which the information collection would have an actual impact on any firm depends on whether the firm would hold exploration licenses or leases or would operate on Federal lands.

Currently, the following companies hold oil shale R, D and D leases for federal lands:

- EAO Federal Lease LLC (UTU 84087);
- American Shale Oil, LLC (COC 69169).

These lessees are not small businesses or other small entities.

The number of firms, large or small, involved in oil shale development on Federal lands would likely remain quite limited. Given the likely size of the industry that may eventually be involved in the leasing and development of Federal oil shale resources, it is reasonable to conclude that this information collection would not have a significant impact on a substantial number of small entities.

In the near future, it is unlikely that small entities will be operating under the regulations because of the large capital outlays required for oil shale development. However, the regulations have been designed to avoid requirements that would make applications by small entities more difficult. For example:

- Exploration licenses have no minimum acreage and require only a nominal filing fee (\$400 per filing);
- Leases have no minimum tract acreage;
- Lease processing costs are paid only by a successful bidder; and
- Bonus bids may be deferred over a 5-year period.

These aspects of the licensing and leasing procedures are intended to reduce the front-loading impact of both procedural and information collection costs to small businesses and other small entities.

6. Describe the consequence to Federal program or policy activities if the collection is not conducted or is conducted less frequently, as well as any technical or legal obstacles to reducing burden.

This information is collected on an “on occasion” basis. If the BLM fails to conduct the information collection, we will not have the information necessary for authorizing exploration and development of oil shale resources, protecting the public lands, billing and collection of fees to meet statutory financial responsibilities, or for evaluating and monitoring the program.

7. Explain any special circumstances that would cause an information collection to be conducted in a manner:

- * requiring respondents to report information to the agency more often than quarterly;
- * requiring respondents to prepare a written response to a collection of information in fewer than 30 days after receipt of it;
- * requiring respondents to submit more than an original and two copies of any document;
- * requiring respondents to retain records, other than health, medical, government contract, grant-in-aid, or tax records, for more than three years;
- * in connection with a statistical survey that is not designed to produce valid and reliable results that can be generalized to the universe of study;
- * requiring the use of a statistical data classification that has not been reviewed and approved by OMB;
- * that includes a pledge of confidentiality that is not supported by authority established in statute or regulation, that is not supported by disclosure and data security policies that are consistent with the pledge, or which unnecessarily impedes sharing of data with other agencies for compatible confidential use; or
- * requiring respondents to submit proprietary trade secrets, or other confidential information, unless the agency can demonstrate that it has instituted procedures to protect the information's confidentiality to the extent permitted by law.

There are no special circumstances requiring the collection to be conducted in a manner inconsistent with OMB guidelines under 5 CFR 1320.5(d).

8. If applicable, provide a copy and identify the date and page number of publication in the Federal

Register of the agency's notice, required by 5 CFR 1320.8(d), soliciting comments on the information collection prior to submission to OMB. Summarize public comments received in response to that notice and in response to the PRA statement associated with the collection over the past three years, and describe actions taken by the agency in response to these comments. Specifically address comments received on cost and hour burden.

Describe efforts to consult with persons outside the agency to obtain their views on the availability of data, frequency of collection, the clarity of instructions and recordkeeping, disclosure, or reporting format (if any), and on the data elements to be recorded, disclosed, or reported.

Consultation with representatives of those from whom information is to be obtained or those who must compile records should occur at least once every three years — even if the collection of information activity is the same as in prior periods. There may be circumstances that may preclude consultation in a specific situation. These circumstances should be explained.

On September 12, 2023, the BLM published a Federal Register notice soliciting comments for a period of 60 days on this collection of information (88 FR 62592). The comment period closed on November 13, 2023. No comments were received in response to this notice.

Additionally, as required by 5 CFR 1320.5(a)(1)(iv), BLM published a notice in the Federal Register announcing the submission of this request to OMB and allowing the public 30 days to send comments on the proposed extension of this OMB number to OMB.

Although the BLM has issued eight oil shale R, D and D leases (six leases in 2007 and two leases in 2017), there are currently only two R, D and D leases (one lease in Colorado and one lease in Utah). No R, D and D lessee has achieved production of commercial quantities on its lease. There is currently no established commercial oil shale industry in the U.S. with which to consult regarding the burdens of this information collection. The current respondents have not provided any feedback on the burdens associated with these collections of information.

9. Explain any decision to provide any payment or gift to respondents, other than remuneration of contractors or grantees.

We provide no payments or gifts to respondents.

10. Describe any assurance of confidentiality provided to respondents and the basis for the assurance in statute, regulation, or agency policy.

Upon request from the BLM, an oil shale exploration licensee must provide copies of all data obtained under the exploration license. To the extent authorized by the Freedom of Information Act, the BLM will consider the data confidential and proprietary until the BLM determines that public access to the data will not damage the competitive position of the licensee or the lands involved have been leased, whichever comes first. 43 CFR 3910.44, 3900.30(b); 43 CFR 2.23 and 2.24.

11. Provide additional justification for any questions of a sensitive nature, such as sexual behavior and attitudes, religious beliefs, and other matters that are commonly considered private. This justification should include the reasons why the agency considers the questions necessary, the specific uses to be made of the information, the explanation to be given to persons from whom the information is requested, and any steps to be taken to obtain their consent.

We do not require respondents to answer questions of a sensitive nature.

12. Provide estimates of the hour burden of the collection of information. The statement should:

- * **Indicate the number of respondents, frequency of response, annual hour burden, and an explanation of how the burden was estimated. Unless directed to do so, agencies should not conduct special surveys to obtain information on which to base hour burden estimates. Consultation with a sample (fewer than 10) of potential respondents is desirable. If the hour burden on respondents is expected to vary widely because of differences in activity, size, or complexity, show the range of estimated hour burden, and explain the reasons for the variance. Generally, estimates should not include burden hours for customary and usual business practices.**
- * **If this request for approval covers more than one form, provide separate hour burden estimates for each form and aggregate the hour burdens.**
- * **Provide estimates of annualized cost to respondents for the hour burdens for collections of information, identifying and using appropriate wage rate categories. The cost of contracting out or paying outside parties for information collection activities should not be included here. Instead, this cost should be included under “Annual Cost to Federal Government.”**

The average hourly cost for respondents is shown at Table 12-1. The hourly wage for Table 12-1 was determined using national Bureau of Labor Statistics data at: http://www.bls.gov/oes/current/oes_nat.htm. The benefits multiplier of 1.4 is supported by information at <http://www.bls.gov/news.release/ecec.nr0.htm>.

Table 12-1: Hourly Cost Calculations

| Position and Occupation Code | Mean Hourly Wage | Benefits Multiplier | Hourly Rate with Benefits | Percent of Collection Time Completed by Each Occupation | Weighted Average Hourly Cost |
|--------------------------------|------------------|---------------------|---------------------------|---|------------------------------|
| Lawyer (23-1011) | \$71.17 | 1.4 | \$99.64 | 10% | \$9.96 |
| Engineering Manager (11-9041) | \$76.43 | 1.4 | \$107.00 | 20% | \$21.40 |
| General Office Clerk (43-9061) | \$18.75 | 1.4 | \$26.25 | 30% | \$7.88 |
| Engineer (17-2199) | \$51.83 | 1.4 | \$72.56 | 40% | \$29.02 |
| Totals: | ----- | ----- | ----- | 100% | \$68.26 |

The estimated hour and cost burdens to respondents are shown in Table 12-2, and include time spent for researching, preparing, and submitting information. The frequency of responses for each aspect of the information collection is “on occasion.” Currently, as noted above in Item 1, there are only two active leases that are subject to 43 CFR Part 3900; therefore, the BLM estimates the burden for these collections of information based on the current two respondents.

Table 12-2: Estimated Hour Burdens

| Collection of Information | Number of Responses | Time Per Response (hour) | Total Annual Hours | Benefits Multiplier | Dollar Equivalent |
|--|---------------------|--------------------------|--------------------|---------------------|-------------------|
| Application for Waiver, Suspension, or Reduction of Rental or Payment In Lieu of Production; Application for Reduction in Royalty; or Application for Waiver of Royalty 43 CFR 3903.54(b) | 1 | 1 | 1 | \$68.26 | \$68 |
| Bonding Requirements 43 CFR Subpart 3904 | 1 | 1 | 1 | \$68.26 | \$68 |
| Application for an Exploration License 43 CFR 3910.31(a) through (e) | 1 | 24 | 24 | \$68.26 | \$1,638 |
| Notice Seeking Participation in an Exploration License 43 CFR 3910.31(f) | 1 | 1 | 1 | \$68.26 | \$68 |
| Data Obtained Under an Exploration License 43 CFR 3910.44 | 1 | 8 | 8 | \$68.26 | \$546 |
| Response to Call for Expression of Leasing Interest 43 CFR 3921.30 | 1 | 4 | 4 | \$68.26 | \$273 |

| Collection of Information | Number of Responses | Time Per Response (hour) | Total Annual Hours | Benefits Multiplier | Dollar Equivalent |
|---|---------------------|--------------------------|--------------------|---------------------|-------------------|
| Application for a Lease — Individuals 43 CFR 3902.23, 3922.20, and 3922.30 | 1 | 308 | 308 | \$68.26 | \$21,024 |
| Application for a Lease — Associations, Including Partnerships 43 CFR 3902.24, 3922.20, and 3922.30 | 1 | 308 | 308 | \$68.26 | \$21,024 |
| Application for a Lease — Corporations 43 CFR 3902.25, 3922.20, and 3922.30 | 1 | 308 | 308 | \$68.26 | \$21,024 |
| Sealed Bid 43 CFR 3924.10 | 1 | 8 | 8 | \$68.26 | \$546 |
| Application to Convert Research, Development, and Demonstration Lease to Commercial Lease 43 CFR 3926.10(c) | 1 | 308 | 308 | \$68.26 | \$21,024 |
| Drill and Geophysical Logs 43 CFR 3930.11(b) | 1 | 19 | 19 | \$68.26 | \$1,297 |
| New Geologic Information 43 CFR 3930.20(b) | 1 | 19 | 19 | \$68.26 | \$1,297 |
| Plan of Development 43 CFR 3931.11 | 1 | 308 | 308 | \$68.26 | \$21,024 |
| Application for Suspension of Lease Operations and Production 43 CFR 3931.30 | 1 | 24 | 24 | \$68.26 | \$1,638 |
| Exploration Plan 43 CFR 3931.41 | 1 | 24 | 24 | \$68.26 | \$1,638 |
| Modification of Approved Exploration Plan or Plan of Development 43 CFR 3931.50 | 1 | 24 | 24 | \$68.26 | \$1,638 |
| Production Maps and Production Reports 43 CFR 3931.70 | 1 | 16 | 16 | \$68.26 | \$1,092 |
| Records of Core or Test Hole Samples and Cuttings 43 CFR 3931.80 | 1 | 16 | 16 | \$68.26 | \$1,092 |
| Application for Modification of Lease Size 43 CFR 3932.10, 3930.20, and 3932.30 | 1 | 12 | 12 | \$68.26 | \$819 |
| Request for Approval of Assignment of Record Title or Sublease or Notice of Overriding Royalty Interest Assignment 43 CFR Subpart 3933 | 2 | 10 | 20 | \$68.26 | \$683 |
| Relinquishment of Lease or Exploration License 43 CFR 3934.10 | 1 | 18 | 18 | \$68.26 | \$1,229 |
| Production and Sale Records 43 CFR 3935.10 | 1 | 16 | 16 | \$68.26 | \$1,092 |
| Totals: | 24 | ----- | 1,795 | ----- | \$121,844 |

13. Provide an estimate of the total annual non-hour cost burden to respondents or recordkeepers resulting from the collection of information. (Do not include the cost of any hour burden already reflected in item 12.)

- * The cost estimate should be split into two components: (a) a total capital and start-up cost component (annualized over its expected useful life) and (b) a total operation and maintenance and purchase of services component. The estimates should take into account costs associated with generating, maintaining, and disclosing or providing the information (including filing fees paid for form processing). Include descriptions of methods used to estimate major cost factors including system and technology acquisition, expected useful life of capital equipment, the discount rate(s), and the time period over which costs will be incurred. Capital and start-up costs include, among other items, preparations for collecting information such as purchasing computers and software; monitoring, sampling, drilling and testing equipment; and record storage facilities.

- * **If cost estimates are expected to vary widely, agencies should present ranges of cost burdens and explain the reasons for the variance. The cost of purchasing or contracting out information collection services should be a part of this cost burden estimate. In developing cost burden estimates, agencies may consult with a sample of respondents (fewer than 10), utilize the 60-day pre-OMB submission public comment process and use existing economic or regulatory impact analysis associated with the rulemaking containing the information collection, as appropriate.**
- * **Generally, estimates should not include purchases of equipment or services, or portions thereof, made: (1) prior to October 1, 1995, (2) to achieve regulatory compliance with requirements not associated with the information collection, (3) for reasons other than to provide information or keep records for the government, or (4) as part of customary and usual business or private practices.**

There are no capital or start-up costs involved with this information collection; respondents are not required to purchase additional computer hardware or software to comply with these information collection requirements. The non-hour costs of this collection pertain to processing.

Two fixed document processing fees are required for this collection. The regulations addressing those fees (43 CFR 3910.31, 3933.20, and 3933.31(b)(3)) incorporate by reference another regulation (43 CFR 3000.12), in which the BLM established or revised certain fees and service charges, and established a method by which those fees and charges are adjusted annually. The most recent adjustments are at 88 FR 66695 (September 28, 2023). Other fees that apply to this information collection are determined on a case-by-case basis. The case-by-case cost-recovery fees that are shown in the table below are our estimates of the average per-submission fee, based on criteria at 43 CFR 3000.11. However, prospectively estimating the amount of case-by-case fees is difficult because there can be considerable variation in the processing cost depending on the size of the prospective lease and its location. The individual estimated fees and totals are itemized as follows:

Table 13: Estimated Non-Hour Cost Burdens

| Collection of Information | Number of Responses | Fixed Processing Fee | Estimated Average Case-by-Case Cost Recovery Fee | Annual Cost Burden of Fixed Processing Fees | Total Fees |
|--|---------------------|----------------------|--|---|------------|
| Application for an Exploration License 43 CFR 3910.31(a) through (e) | 1 | \$400 | N/A | \$400 | \$400 |
| Application for a Lease — Individuals 43 CFR 3902.23, 3922.20, and 3922.30 | 1 | N/A | \$172,323 | N/A | \$172,323 |
| Application for a Lease — Associations, Including Partnerships 43 CFR 3902.24, 3922.20, and 3922.30 | 1 | N/A | \$172,323 | N/A | \$172,323 |
| Application for a Lease — Corporations 43 CFR 3902.25, 3922.20, and 3922.30 | 1 | N/A | \$172,323 | N/A | \$172,323 |
| Application for Modification of Lease Size 43 CFR 3932.10(b) and 3932.30(c) | 1 | N/A | \$9,208 | N/A | \$9,208 |

| Collection of Information | Number of Responses | Fixed Processing Fee | Estimated Average Case-by-Case Cost Recovery Fee | Annual Cost Burden of Fixed Processing Fees | Total Fees |
|---|---------------------|----------------------|--|---|------------|
| Request for Approval of Assignment of Record Title or Sublease or Notice of Overriding Royalty Interest Assignment 43 CFR Subpart 3933 | 2 | \$80 | N/A | \$140 | \$160 |
| Totals: | 7 | --- | \$526,177 | \$490 | \$526,737 |

14. Provide estimates of annualized cost to the Federal government. Also, provide a description of the method used to estimate cost, which should include quantification of hours, operational expenses (such as equipment, overhead, printing, and support staff), and any other expense that would not have been incurred without this collection of information.

The hourly cost to the Federal Government is shown in Table 14-1 and based on data at: https://www.opm.gov/policy-data-oversight/pay-leave/salaries-wages/salary-tables/pdf/2023/RUS_h.pdf. The benefits multiplier of 1.6 is implied by information at: <http://www.bls.gov/news.release/ecec.nr0.htm>. The hourly labor cost calculations are shown below:

Table 14-1: Hourly Cost Calculations

| Occupational Category and GS level | Hourly Wage | Benefits Multiplier | Hourly rate including benefits (1.6 multiplier) | Percent of the Information Collection Completed by Each Occupation | Weighted average (\$/hr) |
|------------------------------------|-------------|---------------------|---|--|--------------------------|
| Manager GS 13/Step 6 | \$55.06 | 1.6 | \$88.10 | 10% | \$8.81 |
| Technical GS-11/Step 6 | \$38.63 | 1.6 | \$61.81 | 80% | \$49.45 |
| Clerical GS-6/Step 6 | \$23.49 | 1.6 | \$37.58 | 10% | \$3.76 |
| Total: | ----- | ----- | ----- | 100% | \$62.01 |

Table 14-2, below, shows the estimated Federal hours and costs for each component of this information collection.

Table 14-2: Estimated Annual Cost to the Government

| Information Collection | Number of Responses | Staff Time Per Response (hours) | Total Staff Hours | Average Hourly Staff Cost | Total Wage Cost |
|--|---------------------|---------------------------------|-------------------|---------------------------|-----------------|
| Application for Waiver, Suspension, or Reduction of Rental or Payment In Lieu of Production; Application for Reduction in Royalty; or Application for Waiver of Royalty 43 CFR 3903.54(b) | 1 | 1 | 1 | \$62.01 | \$62 |
| Bonding Requirements 43 CFR Subpart 3904 | 1 | 1 | 1 | \$62.01 | \$62 |
| Application for an Exploration License 43 CFR 3910.31(a) through (e) | 1 | 25 | 25 | \$62.01 | \$1,550 |
| Notice Seeking Participation in an Exploration License 43 CFR 3910.31(f) | 1 | 25 | 25 | \$62.01 | \$1,550 |
| Data Obtained Under an Exploration License 43 CFR 3910.44 | 1 | 25 | 25 | \$62.01 | \$1,550 |

| Information Collection | Number of Responses | Staff Time Per Response (hours) | Total Staff Hours | Average Hourly Staff Cost | Total Wage Cost |
|---|---------------------|---------------------------------|-------------------|---------------------------|------------------|
| Response to Call for Expression of Leasing Interest 43 CFR 3921.30 | 1 | 17 | 17 | \$62.01 | \$1,054 |
| Application for a Lease — Individuals 43 CFR 3902.23, 3922.20, and 3922.30 | 1 | 4,500 | 4,500 | \$62.01 | \$279,045 |
| Application for a Lease — Associations, Including Partnerships 43 CFR 3902.24, 3922.20, and 3922.30 | 1 | 4,500 | 4,500 | \$62.01 | \$279,045 |
| Application for a Lease — Corporations 43 CFR 3902.25, 3922.20, and 3922.30 | 1 | 4,500 | 4,500 | \$62.01 | \$279,045 |
| Sealed Bid 43 CFR 3924.10 | 1 | 1 | 1 | \$62.01 | \$62 |
| Application to Convert Research, Development, and Demonstration Lease to Commercial Lease 43 CFR 3926.10(c) | 1 | 40 | 40 | \$62.01 | \$2,480 |
| Drill and Geophysical Logs 43 CFR 3930.11(b) | 1 | 8 | 8 | \$62.01 | \$496 |
| New geologic information 43 CFR 3930.20(b) | 1 | 9 | 9 | \$62.01 | \$558 |
| Plan of Development 43 CFR 3931.11 | 1 | 80 | 80 | \$62.01 | \$4,961 |
| Application for Suspension of Lease Operations and Production 43 CFR 3931.30 | 1 | 50 | 50 | \$62.01 | \$3,101 |
| Exploration Plan 43 CFR 3931.41 | 1 | 80 | 80 | \$62.01 | \$4,961 |
| Modification of Approved Exploration Plan or Plan of Development 43 CFR 3931.50 | 1 | 240 | 240 | \$62.01 | \$14,882 |
| Production Maps and Production Reports 43 CFR 3931.70 | 1 | 200 | 200 | \$62.01 | \$12,402 |
| Records of Core or Test Hole Samples and Cuttings 43 CFR 3931.80 | 1 | 50 | 50 | \$62.01 | \$3,101 |
| Application for Modification of Lease Size 43 CFR 3932.10(b) and 3932.30(c) | 1 | 240 | 240 | \$62.01 | \$14,882 |
| Request for Approval of Assignment of Record Title or Sublease or Notice of Overriding Royalty Interest Assignment 43 CFR Subpart 3933 | 2 | 100 | 200 | \$62.01 | \$12,402 |
| Relinquishment of Lease or Exploration License 43 CFR 3934.10 | 1 | 100 | 100 | \$62.01 | \$6,201 |
| Production and Sale Records 43 CFR 3935.10 | 1 | 15 | 15 | \$62.01 | \$930 |
| Totals: | 24 | ---- | 14,907 | ---- | \$924,383 |

15. Explain the reasons for any program changes or adjustments in hour or cost burden.

There are no changes to the information collection requirements under this OMB Control Number. There are, however, two cost adjustments, both of which affect the fixed document processing fees are required for this collection. The most recent annual adjustments in those fees are at 88 FR 66695 (September 28, 2023). The fees and current amounts are as follows:

- \$400 for an Application for an Exploration License (This fee increased from \$375 to \$400); and
- \$80 for an Application for Request for Approval of Assignment of Record Title or Sublease or Notice of Overriding Royalty Interest Assignment.

Because BLM changed the fees, the resulting increase of \$70 non-hour cost burden (from \$526,667 to \$526,737) is recorded as a program change.

16. For collections of information whose results will be published, outline plans for tabulation and publication. Address any complex analytical techniques that will be used. Provide the time schedule for the entire project, including beginning and ending dates of the collection of information, completion of report, publication dates, and other actions.

The BLM has no plans to publish the results of this collection of information.

17. If seeking approval to not display the expiration date for OMB approval of the information collection, explain the reasons that display would be inappropriate.

There are no forms associated with this information collection on which to display the expiration date. The OMB Control Number and expiration are available at www.reginfo.gov.

18. Explain each exception to the topics of the certification statement identified in "Certification for Paperwork Reduction Act Submissions."

There are no exceptions to the certification requirements of 5 CFR 1320.9.

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