

Tennessee State line for 10.13 miles to the boundary of the Cumberland Gap National Historical Park; then

(2) Proceed southwest, then northwest along the park boundary for approximately 4.78 miles to its intersection with the 500-meter elevation contour on Powell Mountain; then

(3) Proceed southwest, then northeast, then southwest along the meandering 500-meter elevation contour for approximately 11.18 miles, crossing onto the Morristown map, and continuing along the 500-meter elevation contour for approximately 10.38 miles, crossing onto the Oak Ridge map, and continuing along the 500-meter elevation contour for 8.7 miles to the point where it turns sharply northeast just east of Highway 25W and north of Lafollette; then

(4) Proceed west in a straight line for approximately 0.49 mile, crossing over Highway 25W, to the 500-meter elevation contour; then

(5) Proceed southwest, then northeast along the 500-meter elevation contour for approximately 7.46 miles to its intersection with and unnamed tributary of Bruce Creek; then

(6) Proceed west in a straight line to Interstate 75; then

(7) Proceed south in a straight line for approximately 6.34 miles to the intersection of the Campbell and Anderson County lines; then

(8) Proceed south along the shared Campbell-Anderson County line for approximately 6.28 miles, crossing over Stony Fork, to the intersection with an unnamed trail running southwest-to-northeast along Windrock Mountain; then

(9) Proceed southwest in a straight line for 9.26 miles to the intersection with the shared Anderson-Morgan County line; then

(10) Proceed southeast along the Anderson-Morgan County line for approximately 5.59 miles to its intersection with the Roane County line; then

(11) Proceed southwest along the shared Roane-Morgan County line for approximately 5.65 miles, crossing onto the Watts Bar Lake map, and continuing along the Roane-Morgan County line to its intersection with the Cumberland County line; then

(12) Proceed southwest in a straight line for approximately 8.82 miles to the intersection of the Roane and Rhea County lines and State Road 29; then

(13) Proceed southerly along the shared Roane-Rhea County line for approximately 5.47 miles to its intersection with the Meigs County line; then

(14) Proceed south-southeast along the Roane-Meigs County line to its intersection with the McMinn County line; then

(15) Proceed east along the shared Roane-McMinn County line for 1.8 miles to the intersection with the Loudon County line; then

(16) Proceed south, then easterly along the shared Loudon-McMinn County line to its intersection with the Monroe County line; then

(17) Proceed south, then southeast along the shared McMinn-Monroe County line for approximately 10.56 miles, crossing onto the Cleveland, Tennessee-North Carolina map, and continuing along the shared McMinn-Monroe County line for approximately 13.67 miles to the intersection with an unnamed highway known locally as State Road 39/Mecca Highway; then

(18) Proceed southeast along State Road 39 for approximately 3.04 miles to its intersection with the Cherokee National Forest boundary, which is concurrent with Conasauga Creek; then

(19) Proceed southeasterly, then northerly along the Cherokee National Forest boundary for approximately 23.67 miles, crossing onto the Watts Bar Lake map, and continue northeasterly, then easterly along the forest boundary for approximately 15.35 miles as it meanders east through Tellico Lake and becomes concurrent with the Blount-Monroe County line and crosses onto the Knoxville, Tennessee-North Carolina map, to the forest boundary's intersection with Abrams Creek; then

(20) Proceed north in a straight line for approximately 1,500 feet to the Great Smoky Mountains National Park boundary; then

(21) Proceed northeast, then southeast, then northeast along the park boundary line for a total of approximately 51.47 miles to its intersection with the shared Cocke-Sevier County line near Rocky Grove; then

(22) Proceed northeast in a straight line for 6.15 miles to the intersection of the Cherokee National Forest boundary with Highway 321/State Road 32 and Rabbit Branch near Allen Grove; then

(23) Proceed east along the forest boundary for 1.99 miles to its intersection with Interstate 40; then

(24) Proceed north along Interstate 40 for 2.98 miles to its intersection with Highway 321; then

(25) Proceed northeast along the forest boundary for 3.12 miles to its intersection with State Road 73 at Edwina; then

(26) Proceed northeast in a straight line for 9.2 miles, crossing onto the Morristown map, and continuing

northeast in a straight line for 4.16 miles to the shared Greene-Cocke County line; then

(27) Proceed northwest along the Greene-Cocke County line to its intersection with the Hamblen County line; then

(28) Proceed northeast along the Hamblen-Greene County line to its intersection with the Hawkins County line; then

(29) Proceed northwest, then southwest along the Hawkins-Hamblen County line to its intersection with the Grainger County line; then

(30) Proceed northwesterly along the Hawkins-Grainger County line to its intersection with the Hancock County line; then

(31) Proceed west along the Grainger-Hancock County line to its intersection with the Claiborne County line; then

(32) Proceed north along the Hancock-Claiborne County line for approximately 8.14 miles, crossing onto the Middlesboro map, and continuing northwest along the Hancock-Claiborne county line for approximately 8.51 miles to return to the beginning point.

Signed: September 8, 2023.

Mary G. Ryan,
Administrator.

Approved: September 11, 2023.

Thomas C. West, Jr.,
Deputy Assistant Secretary (Tax Policy).

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DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR

Office of Surface Mining Reclamation and Enforcement

30 CFR Part 926

[SATS No. MT–042–FOR; Docket ID: OSM–2023–0007; S1D1S SS08011000 SX064A000 222S180110; S2D2S SS08011000 SX064A000 22XS501520]

Montana Regulatory Program

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

ACTION: Proposed rule; public comment period reopening and opportunity for public hearing on proposed amendment.

SUMMARY: We, the Office of Surface Mining Reclamation and Enforcement (OSMRE), are reopening the public comment period due to a request for an extension of the public comment period to a proposed amendment to the Montana regulatory program (hereinafter, the Montana program) under the Surface Mining Control and Reclamation Act of 1977 (SMCRA or the

Act). Montana proposed this amendment to OSMRE, on its own initiative, following its passing of Montana House Bill 576 (2023), which amends the Montana Code Annotated and proposes changes to the definition of material damage and changes to permit requirements related to hydrologic information. HB 576 also adds four contingencies to the proposed amendments of the MCA: a severability clause, a contingent voidness clause, an effective date clause, and a retroactive applicability clause. This document gives the times and locations that the Montana program and this revised proposed amendment to that program are available for your inspection, the comment period during which you may submit written comments on the revised amendment, and the procedures that we will follow for the public hearing, if one is requested.

DATES: We will accept written comments on this amendment until 4 p.m., Mountain Daylight Time (MDT), November 6, 2023.

ADDRESSES: You may submit comments, identified by SATS No. MT-042-FOR, by any of the following methods:

- *Mail/Hand Delivery:* 100 East B Street, Room 4100, Casper, WY 82601.
- *Fax:* (307) 421-6552.
- *Federal eRulemaking Portal:* The amendment has been assigned Docket ID: OSM-2023-0007. If you would like to submit comments go to <https://www.regulations.gov>. Follow the instructions for submitting comments.

We cannot ensure that comments received after the close of the comment period (see **DATES**) or sent to an address other than the ones listed above will be included in the docket for this rulemaking and considered.

Instructions: All submissions received must include the agency name and docket number for this rulemaking. For detailed instructions on submitting comments and additional information on the rulemaking process, see the *Public Comment Procedures* heading of the **SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION** section of this document.

Docket: For access to the docket to review copies of the Montana program, this amendment, a listing of any scheduled public hearings or meetings, and all written comments received in response to this document, you must go to the address listed below during normal business hours, Monday through Friday, excluding holidays. You may receive one free copy of the amendment by contacting OSMRE's Denver Field Division or the full text of the program amendment is available for you to read at www.regulations.gov.

Jeffrey Fleischman, Chief, Denver Field Division, Office of Surface Mining Reclamation and Enforcement, Dick Cheney Federal Building, POB 11018, 100 East B Street, Casper, Wyoming 82601, Telephone: (307) 261-6550, Email: jfleischman@osmre.gov

In addition, you may review a copy of the amendment during regular business hours at the following location:

Dan Walsh, Chief, Coal and Open-cut Mining Bureau, Montana Department of Environmental Quality, P.O. Box 200901, Helena, Montana 59620-0901, Telephone: (406) 444-6791, Email: dwalsh@mt.gov.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:

Howard Strand, Office of Surface Mining Reclamation and Enforcement, One Denver Federal Center, Building 41, Lakewood, CO 80225-0065, Telephone: (303) 236-2931, Email: hstrand@osmre.gov.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: On August 7, 2023 (88 FR 52084) we published a proposed rule announcing receipt of a program amendment from Montana. Montana submitted this proposed amendment to us, of its own volition, following the passage of Montana House Bill 576 (HB 756) during the 2023 legislative session. HB 576 amends the Montana Strip and Underground Mine Reclamation Act as well as section 82-4-203 and section 82-4-222 of MCA. HB 576 also adds four contingencies that apply to the proposed amendments. First, Montana proposes several changes to section 82-4-203(32), which defines and describes "Material Damage." Next, Montana proposes to amend its coal mine operation permit requirements related to hydrologic information section 82-4-222(1)(m). Lastly, HB 576 adds four contingencies to the proposed amendments of section 82-4-203(32) and section 82-4-222(1)(m) that are not codified into the MCA but apply to the amended sections: a severability clause, a contingent voidness clause, an effective date clause, and a retroactive applicability clause.

By letter dated August 18, 2023 (FDMS Document ID No. OSM-2023-0007-0008), Multiple conservation groups sent us a letter requesting an extension of the public comment period. The conservation groups cited the controversial nature of the amendment, technical difficulties accessing the comment portal, and scheduling difficulties around a public holiday, as to why OSMRE should grant an extension on the comment period. OSMRE reviewed the request for an extension of the public comment period and agree that the controversial nature of the amendment affords the public

more time to submit the fullest and most comprehensive comments possible. The full text of the program amendment is available for you to read at the locations listed above under **ADDRESSES**.

Public Comment Procedures

Under the provisions of 30 CFR 732.17(h), we are seeking your comments on whether the amendment satisfies the applicable program approval criteria of 30 CFR 732.15. If we approve the amendment, it will become part of the State program.

Electronic or Written Comments

If you submit written or electronic comments on the proposed rule during the 15-day comment period, they should be specific, confined to issues pertinent to the proposed regulations, and explain the reason for any recommended change(s). We appreciate any and all comments, but those most useful and likely to influence decisions on the final regulations will be those that either involve personal experience or include citations to and analyses of SMCRA, its legislative history, its implementing regulations, case law, other pertinent State or Federal laws or regulations, technical literature, or other relevant publications.

We cannot ensure that comments received after the close of the comment period (see **DATES**) or sent to an address other than those listed (see **ADDRESSES**) will be included in the docket for this rulemaking and considered.

Public Availability of Comments

Before including your address, phone number, email address, or other personal identifying information in your comment, you should be aware that your entire comment including your personal 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.

List of Subjects in 30 CFR Part 926

State-federal cooperative agreement, State regulatory program approval, Required program amendments.

David A. Berry,

Regional Director, Unified Regions 5, 7-11.

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