

DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR**Bureau of Indian Affairs**

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**HEARTH Act Approval of the San
Pasqual Band of Diegueno Mission
Indians of California Business Site
Leasing Ordinance**

AGENCY: Bureau of Indian Affairs,
Interior.

ACTION: Notice.

SUMMARY: The Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA) approved the San Pasqual Band of Diegueno Mission Indians of California Business Site Leasing Ordinance under the Helping Expedite and Advance Responsible Tribal Homeownership Act of 2012 (HEARTH Act). With this approval, the Tribe is authorized to enter into business leases without further BIA approval.

DATES: BIA issued the approval on October 30, 2020.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Ms. Sharlene Round Face, Bureau of Indian Affairs, Division of Real Estate Services, 1001 Indian School Road NW, Albuquerque, NM 87104, sharelene.roundface@bia.gov, (505) 563-3132.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

I. Summary of the HEARTH Act

The HEARTH Act makes a voluntary, alternative land leasing process available to Tribes, by amending the Indian Long-Term Leasing Act of 1955, 25 U.S.C. 415. The HEARTH Act authorizes Tribes to negotiate and enter into business leases of Tribal trust lands with a primary term of 25 years, and up to two renewal terms of 25 years each, without the approval of the Secretary of the Interior (Secretary). The HEARTH Act also authorizes Tribes to enter into leases for residential, recreational, religious or educational purposes for a primary term of up to 75 years without the approval of the Secretary. Participating Tribes develop Tribal leasing regulations, including an environmental review process, and then must obtain the Secretary's approval of those regulations prior to entering into leases. The HEARTH Act requires the Secretary to approve Tribal regulations if the Tribal regulations are consistent with the Department of the Interior's (Department) leasing regulations at 25 CFR part 162 and provide for an environmental review process that meets requirements set forth in the HEARTH Act. This notice announces that the Secretary, through the Assistant

Secretary—Indian Affairs, has approved the Tribal regulations for the San Pasqual Band of Diegueno Mission Indians of California.

II. Federal Preemption of State and Local Taxes

The Department's regulations governing the surface leasing of trust and restricted Indian lands specify that, subject to applicable Federal law, permanent improvements on leased land, leasehold or possessory interests, and activities under the lease are not subject to State and local taxation and may be subject to taxation by the Indian Tribe with jurisdiction. See 25 CFR 162.017. As explained further in the preamble to the final regulations, the Federal government has a strong interest in promoting economic development, self-determination, and Tribal sovereignty. 77 FR 72,440, 72,447–48 (December 5, 2012). The principles supporting the Federal preemption of State law in the field of Indian leasing and the taxation of lease-related interests and activities applies with equal force to leases entered into under Tribal leasing regulations approved by the Federal government pursuant to the HEARTH Act.

Section 5 of the Indian Reorganization Act, 25 U.S.C. 5108, preempts State and local taxation of permanent improvements on trust land. *Confederated Tribes of the Chehalis Reservation v. Thurston County*, 724 F.3d 1153, 1157 (9th Cir. 2013) (citing *Mescalero Apache Tribe v. Jones*, 411 U.S. 145 (1973)). Similarly, section 5108 preempts State taxation of rent payments by a lessee for leased trust lands, because “tax on the payment of rent is indistinguishable from an impermissible tax on the land.” See *Seminole Tribe of Florida v. Stranburg*, 799 F.3d 1324, 1331, n.8 (11th Cir. 2015). In addition, as explained in the preamble to the revised leasing regulations at 25 CFR part 162, Federal courts have applied a balancing test to determine whether State and local taxation of non-Indians on the reservation is preempted. *White Mountain Apache Tribe v. Bracker*, 448 U.S. 136, 143 (1980). The *Bracker* balancing test, which is conducted against a backdrop of “traditional notions of Indian self-government,” requires a particularized examination of the relevant State, Federal, and Tribal interests. We hereby adopt the *Bracker* analysis from the preamble to the surface leasing regulations, 77 FR at 72,447–48, as supplemented by the analysis below.

The strong Federal and Tribal interests against State and local taxation

of improvements, leaseholds, and activities on land leased under the Department's leasing regulations apply equally to improvements, leaseholds, and activities on land leased pursuant to Tribal leasing regulations approved under the HEARTH Act. Congress's overarching intent was to “allow Tribes to exercise greater control over their own land, support self-determination, and eliminate bureaucratic delays that stand in the way of homeownership and economic development in Tribal communities.” 158 Cong. Rec. H. 2682 (May 15, 2012). The HEARTH Act was intended to afford Tribes “flexibility to adapt lease terms to suit [their] business and cultural needs” and to “enable [Tribes] to approve leases quickly and efficiently.” H. Rep. 112–427 at 6 (2012).

Assessment of State and local taxes would obstruct these express Federal policies supporting Tribal economic development and self-determination, and also threaten substantial Tribal interests in effective Tribal government, economic self-sufficiency, and territorial autonomy. See *Michigan v. Bay Mills Indian Community*, 572 U.S. 782, 810 (2014) (Sotomayor, J., concurring) (determining that “[a] key goal of the Federal Government is to render Tribes more self-sufficient, and better positioned to fund their own sovereign functions, rather than relying on Federal funding”). The additional costs of State and local taxation have a chilling effect on potential lessees, as well as on a Tribe that, as a result, might refrain from exercising its own sovereign right to impose a Tribal tax to support its infrastructure needs. See *id.* at 810–11 (finding that State and local taxes greatly discourage Tribes from raising tax revenue from the same sources because the imposition of double taxation would impede Tribal economic growth).

Similar to BIA's surface leasing regulations, Tribal regulations under the HEARTH Act pervasively cover all aspects of leasing. See 25 U.S.C. 415(h)(3)(B)(i) (requiring Tribal regulations be consistent with BIA surface leasing regulations). Furthermore, the Federal government remains involved in the Tribal land leasing process by approving the Tribal leasing regulations in the first instance and providing technical assistance, upon request by a Tribe, for the development of an environmental review process. The Secretary also retains authority to take any necessary actions to remedy violations of a lease or of the Tribal regulations, including terminating the lease or rescinding approval of the Tribal regulations and

reassuming lease approval responsibilities. Moreover, the Secretary continues to review, approve, and monitor individual Indian land leases and other types of leases not covered under the Tribal regulations according to the Part 162 regulations.

Accordingly, the Federal and Tribal interests weigh heavily in favor of preemption of State and local taxes on lease-related activities and interests, regardless of whether the lease is governed by Tribal leasing regulations or Part 162. Improvements, activities, and leasehold or possessory interests may be subject to taxation by the San Pasqual Band of Diegueno Mission Indians of California.

Tara Sweeney,

Assistant Secretary—Indian Affairs.

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DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR

Bureau of Land Management

[LLC0956000 L14400000.BJ0000 212]

Notice of Filing of Plats of Survey, Colorado

AGENCY: Bureau of Land Management, Interior.

ACTION: Notice of official filing.

SUMMARY: The plats of survey of the following described lands are scheduled to be officially filed in the Bureau of Land Management (BLM), Colorado State Office, Lakewood, Colorado, 30 calendar days from the date of this publication. The surveys, which were executed at the request of the U.S. Forest Service and the BLM, are necessary for the management of these lands.

DATES: Unless there are protests of this action, the plats described in this notice will be filed on December 7, 2020.

ADDRESSES: You may submit written protests to the BLM Colorado State Office, Cadastral Survey, 2850 Youngfield Street, Lakewood, CO 80215–7210.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:

Randy Bloom, Chief Cadastral Surveyor for Colorado, (303) 239–3856; rbloom@blm.gov. Persons who use a telecommunications device for the deaf may call the Federal Relay Service at 1–800–877–8339 to contact the above individual during normal business hours. The Service is available 24 hours a day, seven days a week, to leave a message or question with the above individual. You will receive a reply during normal business hours.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: The plat, in 3 sheets, incorporating the field notes of the dependent resurvey in fractional Township 43 North, Range 12 East, New Mexico Principal Meridian, Colorado, was accepted on August 25, 2020.

The plat, in 3 sheets, incorporating the field notes of the dependent resurvey and subdivision of section 32 in Township 49 North, Range 8 East, New Mexico Principal Meridian, Colorado, was accepted on October 1, 2020.

The plat, in 2 sheets, incorporating the field notes of the dependent resurvey in Township 46 North, Range 9 East, New Mexico Principal Meridian, Colorado, was accepted on October 16, 2020.

A person or party who wishes to protest any of the above surveys must file a written notice of protest within 30 calendar days from the date of this publication at the address listed in the **ADDRESSES** section of this notice. A statement of reasons for the protest may be filed with the notice of protest and must be filed within 30 calendar days after the protest is filed. If a protest against the survey is received prior to the date of official filing, the filing will be stayed pending consideration of the protest. A plat will not be officially filed until the day after all protests have been dismissed or otherwise resolved.

Before including your address, phone number, email address, or other personal identifying information in your protest, please be aware that your entire protest, 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.

Authority: 43 U.S.C. Chap. 3.

Randy A. Bloom,

Chief Cadastral Surveyor.

[FR Doc. 2020–24607 Filed 11–4–20; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 4310–JB–P

DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR

Bureau of Land Management

[LLC0956000 L14400000.BJ0000 212]

Notice of Filing of Plats of Survey, Colorado

AGENCY: Bureau of Land Management, Interior.

ACTION: Notice of official filing.

SUMMARY: The Bureau of Land Management (BLM) Colorado State

Office is publishing this notice to inform the public of the official filing of the amended protraction diagram listed below. The diagram, which was executed at the request of the U.S. Forest Service and the BLM, is necessary for the management of these lands. The plat is available for viewing in the BLM Colorado State Office.

DATES: The plat described in this notice was filed on August 21, 2017.

ADDRESSES: You may submit written protests to the BLM Colorado State Office, Cadastral Survey, 2850 Youngfield Street, Lakewood, CO 80215–7093.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:

Randy Bloom, Chief Cadastral Surveyor for Colorado, (303) 239–3856; rbloom@blm.gov. Persons who use a telecommunications device for the deaf may call the Federal Relay Service at 1–800–877–8339 to contact the above individual during normal business hours. The Service is available 24 hours a day, seven days a week, to leave a message or question with the above individual. You will receive a reply during normal business hours.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: The plat of Amended Protraction Diagram No. 24D in unsurveyed Township 41 North, Range 7 West, New Mexico Principal Meridian, Colorado, was accepted on August 21, 2017, and filed on August 21, 2017.

A person or party who wishes to protest the above plat must file a written notice of protest within 30 calendar days from the date of this publication at the address listed in the **ADDRESSES** section of this notice. A statement of reasons for the protest may be filed with the notice of protest and must be filed within 30 calendar days after the protest is filed.

Before including your address, phone number, email address, or other personal identifying information in your protest, please be aware that your entire protest, 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.

Authority: 43 U.S.C. Chap. 3.

Randy A. Bloom,

Chief Cadastral Surveyor for Colorado.

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