



United States Department of the Interior
Bureau of Land Management, Eastern States
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PRESS RELEASE

For Release: Immediately

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BLM Seeks Comment on Proposed Oil and Gas Rule at Upcoming Meeting

The Department of the Interior's Bureau of Land Management (BLM) will hold a public meeting at the Holiday Inn Downtown Riverfront, Shreveport, Louisiana on Wednesday, May 12, 1999 from 1 p.m. to 4 p.m. to provide information and to respond to questions on a proposed new federal oil and gas rule. No formal comments will be taken at the meeting.

"We want to make sure that everyone who has an interest in this program clearly understands this proposal," BLM's Eastern States Director W. Hord Tipton said. "We're hopeful that by answering everyone's questions now, people will be able to provide very specific comments by June 4."

The proposed rule would reduce overlap among current regulations, give operators increased flexibility in meeting agency requirements, ensure appropriate bond amounts to cover such costs as reclamation, and simplify classification of regulatory violations.

"We want to write a rule that does two things -- supports domestic energy development and protects the environment," Acting BLM Director Tom Fry said. "This rule will set a new standard for good government."

Please notify Mr. Sid Vogelpohl at BLM's Jackson Field Office at 601-977-5402 one week in advance of any special needs you may have for the meeting and you will be accommodated.

A meeting will also be held in Washington, D.C. on April 20 at 1 p.m. at the Washington Plaza Hotel. Persons interested in participating in this meeting may contact Kermit Witherbee at (202) 452-0335 for details.

Complete details of the rule are available by calling 202-452-5030. You may also retrieve a copy of the rule from BLM's Internet website (<http://www.blm.gov>). The rule is published in the December 3, 1998, Federal Register. The comment period was extended to June 4. The BLM will consider comments received or postmarked on or before this date in the preparation of the final rule.

Comments may be mailed to the Bureau of Land Management, Administrative Record, Room 401 LS, 1849 C. Street, N.W., Washington, D.C. 20240. They may be transmitted electronically via the Internet to: WoComment@wo.blm.gov and should include the regulation identifier number AC94, your name, and return address.