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## News Release

### Office of Public Affairs

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## **DOI, ONRR seeking to simplify coal valuations**

*Federal Register notice seeks input on Federal, American Indian leases*

WASHINGTON, DC – The Department of the Interior and its Office of Natural Resources Revenue (ONRR) announced today that the Department is soliciting public comments and suggestions to simplify regulations governing the valuation of coal produced on Federal and American Indian leases.

“This is another step in the Department’s overall regulatory reform initiative to offer greater simplicity, certainty and clarity in coal production valuation,” said Rhea Suh, Assistant Secretary for the DOI’s Office of Policy, Management and Budget (PMB). “Our goal is to make the regulations easy to understand, reduce the government’s and industry’s cost of compliance, and provide early certainty to industry and ONRR that companies have paid every dollar due.”

Greg Gould, Acting Deputy Assistant Secretary for Natural Resources Revenue, said the existing Federal and Indian coal valuations have been in effect since March 1989, with minor amendments. “These existing coal valuation regulations have not kept pace with the significant changes that have occurred in the domestic coal market during the last 20 years,” he said.

Gould added that the Advance Notice of Proposed Rulemaking that is being published in the *Federal Register* “is intended to solicit comments and suggestions on possible new methodologies to establish the royalty value of coal produced from Federal and American Indian lands.” He said ONRR also plans to hold public workshops to discuss changes to the valuation regulations after the written comment period closes, and ONRR has had time to review and analyze the comments.

According to Assistant Secretary Suh, “We very much want to hear comments and suggestions from those who may be impacted by the proposed rulemaking. We want input from industry, states, American Indian Tribes and individual Indian mineral owners, and the general public.”

The *Federal Register* notice will be published Friday, May 27, 2011, and is available for public inspection today via the web at: <http://www.archives.gov/federal-register/public-inspection/>. On Friday, the *Federal Register* notice can be accessed via the web at: [www.regulations.gov](http://www.regulations.gov).

Comments and suggestions will be accepted for 60 days, or until July 26.

Also to be published in the *Federal Register* Friday will be an Advance Notice of Proposed Rulemaking soliciting comments on streamlining regulations that govern the calculation of royalties from oil and natural gas produced offshore and on federal lands, as announced by DOI Secretary Ken Salazar on May 24.

The Office of Natural Resources Revenue is the Federal agency responsible for collecting and disbursing revenues from energy production that occurs on Federal onshore and offshore lands, and American Indian lands. During Fiscal Year 2010, the agency disbursed more than \$9.1 billion to states, American Indian Tribes and individual Indian mineral owners, and to various Federal accounts, including the U.S. Treasury, the Land and Water Conservation Fund, and the Reclamation Fund.

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