

Wednesday, August 20, 2008

Regulatory Division  
Attention: 1004-AD90  
U.S. Department of the Interior, Director (630)  
Mail Stop 401 LS  
1849 C Street, NW  
Washington, DC 20240

**RE: Support an Established Commercial Oil Shale Program**

Dear Members of the Regulatory Division:

Access to our nation's natural energy resources, such as oil shale, renewables, nuclear and coal, could be a tremendous help in increasing domestic energy security and lowering consumer costs. It is vital that the government allow thoughtful development of our national oil shale resources as outlined by the Bureau of Land Management (BLM) in its proposed regulations now in order to better prepare for the future.

Not only does modern technology allow for the responsible development of oil shale resources, but according to the proposed regulations, all oil shale projects on public lands will be required to undergo federally-mandated site-specific environmental review before the project can proceed. This review will specifically analyze the impacts of the project on issues ranging from the environment to the economy. With an environmentally-sound commercial oil shale program in place, our nation will have access to resources in portions of Colorado, Utah and Wyoming that contain at least 800 billion barrels of recoverable oil from oil shale - almost three times the volume of Saudi Arabia's oil resources, according to government estimates.

I support the BLM's decision to create standards for a commercial oil shale program, but the program must be created to foster new technologies and innovation in oil shale development. The proposed royalty rates, including the flat five percent rate, are too high and would hinder the success of a new oil shale industry. Canadian oil sands development began and succeeded because of deliberately low 1% royalty rates for start up operations, and the BLM should consider similar rates in its oil shale regulations.

With smaller royalty rates, a new oil shale industry could help stabilize energy supply, create tens of thousands of jobs for Americans, decrease our trade deficit and reduce the need for foreign energy imports.

Sincerely,



Dan Rickett

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