

**§ 2884.16 What provisions do Master Agreements contain and what are their limitations?**

(a) A Master Agreement:

(1) Specifies that you must comply with all applicable laws and regulations;

(2) Describes the work you will do and the work BLM will do to process the application;

(3) Describes the method of periodic billing, payment, and auditing;

(4) Describes the processes, studies, or evaluations you will pay for;

(5) Explains how BLM will monitor the grant and how BLM will recover monitoring costs;

(6) Contains provisions allowing for periodic review and updating, if required;

(7) Contains specific conditions for terminating the Agreement; and

(8) Contains any other provisions BLM considers necessary.

(b) BLM will not enter into any Agreement that is not in the public interest.

**§ 2884.17 How will BLM process my Processing Category 6 application?**

(a) For Processing Category 6 applications, you and BLM must enter into a written agreement that describes how BLM will process your application. The final agreement consists of a work plan and a financial plan.

(b) In processing your application, BLM will:

(1) Determine the issues subject to analysis under NEPA;

(2) Prepare a preliminary work plan;

(3) Develop a preliminary financial plan, which estimates the actual costs of processing your application and monitoring your project;

(4) Discuss with you:

(i) The preliminary plans and data;

(ii) The availability of funds and personnel;

(iii) Your options for the timing of processing and monitoring fee payments; and

(iv) Financial information you must submit; and

(5) Complete final scoping and develop final work and financial plans which reflect any work you have agreed to do. BLM will also present you with the final estimate of the costs

you must reimburse the United States, including the cost for monitoring the project.

(c) BLM retains the option to prepare any environmental documents related to your application. If BLM allows you to prepare any environmental documents and conduct any studies that BLM needs to process your application, you must do the work following BLM standards. For this purpose, you and BLM may enter into a written agreement. BLM will make the final determinations and conclusions arising from such work.

(d) BLM will periodically, as stated in the agreement, estimate processing costs for a specific work period and notify you of the amount due. You must pay the amount due before BLM will continue working on your application. If your payment exceeds the costs that the United States incurred for the work, BLM will either adjust the next billing to reflect the excess, or refund you the excess under 43 U.S.C. 1734. You may not deduct any amount from a payment without BLM's prior written approval.

**§ 2884.18 What if there are two or more competing applications for the same pipeline?**

(a) If there are two or more competing applications for the same pipeline and your application is in:

(1) *Processing Categories 1 through 4.* You must reimburse BLM for processing costs as if the other application or applications had not been filed.

(2) *Processing Category 6.* You are responsible for processing costs identified in your application. If BLM cannot readily separate costs, such as costs associated with preparing environmental analyses, you and any competing applicants must pay an equal share or a proportion agreed to in writing among all applicants and BLM. If you agree to share costs that are common to your application and that of a competing applicant, and the competitor does not pay the agreed upon amount, you are liable for the entire amount due. The applicants must pay the entire processing fee in advance. BLM will not process the application until we receive the advance payments.