

Meridian, Josephine County, Oregon as shown on a map available at the Medford District, Bureau of Land Management Office.

The following persons, operating within the scope of their official duties, are exempt from the provisions of this closure order: Bureau employees, state, local and federal law enforcement and fire protection personnel; and the holders of BLM permits and/or contracts. Vehicle access by additional parties may be allowed, but must be approved by the Authorized Officer of the BLM.

The purpose of this closure is to protect the trail surfacing for wheelchair use and limit safety hazards of incompatible uses.

Any person who fails to comply with a closure order or rulemaking is subject to arrest and fines of up to \$1,000 and/or imprisonment not to exceed 12 months.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Diane Chung, Area Manager, Bureau of Land Management, Glendale Resource Area, Medford District Office, 3040 Biddle Rd, Medford, OR 97504 or (541) 770-2279.

Dated: March 31, 1997.

Diane Chung,

Glendale Area Manager.

[FR Doc. 97-9211 Filed 4-9-97; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 4310-33-M

DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR

Bureau of Land Management

[CA-CACA 31137, DES 97-10]

Notice of Availability

AGENCY: Bureau of Land Management, Needles Resource Area.

ACTION: Notice of availability for the Castle Mountain Mine Expansion Project, Draft Environmental Impact Statement/Environmental Impact Report, and notice of comment period and public meetings.

SUMMARY: Pursuant to Section 102(2)(c) of the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969, as amended, and in coordination with the County of San Bernardino in its administration of the California Environmental Quality Act, as amended, notice is given that the Bureau of Land Management (BLM) has prepared, with the assistance of a third-party consultant, a Draft Environmental Impact Statement (EIS)/Environmental Impact Report (EIR), on the proposed Castle Mountain Mine Expansion Project, and has made copies available for public and agency review. This notice also announces public meetings

for the purpose of receiving comments on the draft document.

DATES: Written comments on the Draft EIS/EIR must be received no later than 4 p.m., May 28, 1997. Oral and/or written comments may also be presented at two public meetings. The public meetings will be held at the following times and locations: 7 p.m., Tuesday, April 29, 1997 at the Holiday Inn, 1511 East Main Street, Barstow, California; 7 p.m., Wednesday, April 30, 1997 at the Searchlight Community Center, Parks and Recreation Department, 200 Michael Wendall Way, Searchlight, Nevada.

ADDRESSES: Written comments should be addressed to: George R. Meckfessel, U.S.D.I., Bureau of Land Management, Needles Resource Area, 101 West Spikes Road, Needles, California 92363.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION: George R. Meckfessel, Planning and Environmental Coordinator, telephone (619) 326-7000.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: Viceroy Gold Corporation has proposed to mine additional ore adjacent to deposits currently being mined at the Castle Mountain Mine, San Bernardino, California, an open-pit, heap-leach gold mine. Under the present operating permits, mining, processing and reclamation activities could continue through December 31, 2010. Under the proposed expansion, these activities would continue through December 31, 2020. The Proposed Action consists of expanding existing and planned open pit areas, expanding the existing heap leach pad, creating a new overburden storage site and expanding growth media storage areas on approximately 490 additional acres. The action would also incorporate mine pit backfilling on 140 acres of open mine pits. The proposed 10-year extension of the mining and processing phases of the mine would ultimately affect up to 1,380 acres of public and private lands, as compared to the 890 acres presently authorized.

The Draft EIS/EIR has examined potentially significant impacts to geology, water resources, including groundwater quality and quantity, vegetation, wildlife, air quality, visual resources, cultural resources, land use, and hazards.

Public participation has occurred throughout the planning process. A Notice of Intent was published in the **Federal Register** on July 18 and August

29, 1995. Public scoping meetings were held in August 1995.

Molly S. Brady,

Acting Area Manager.

[FR Doc. 97-9172 Filed 4-9-97; 8:45 am]

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DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR

Bureau of Land Management

[WY-060-01-1320-01; WYW127221]

Notice of Availability of the Final Environmental Impact Statement (FEIS) for the North Rochelle Coal Lease Application Located in Northeastern Wyoming's Powder River Basin

AGENCY: Bureau of Land Management, Interior.

SUMMARY: This notice announces the availability of a final Environmental Impact Statement (FEIS) pursuant to 40 CFR 1500-1508 for the North Rochelle Coal Lease Application (WYW127221) in the Wyoming Powder River Basin. The North Rochelle tract (originally called the North Roundup tract) is being considered for sale as a result of a maintenance coal lease application filed by Bluegrass Coal Development Company (formerly SMC Mining Company) for Federal coal located adjacent to the North Rochelle Mine in Campbell County, Wyoming. The FEIS evaluates the impacts of holding a competitive coal lease sale and issuing a lease if there is a successful bidder. The North Rochelle Mine is a producing coal mine, which has met Federal diligent development requirements on its existing Federal lease. There are currently no mining or rail facilities at the mine, which is located approximately 50 miles south of Gillette, Wyoming.

DATES: The FEIS is scheduled to be available to the public on April 11, 1997. In order to assure that comments are considered in the Record of Decision, they should be received no later than close of business on May 12, 1997.

ADDRESSES: Comments, concerns, and requests for copies of the FEIS (or an Executive Summary of the FEIS) should be addressed to Casper District Office, Bureau of Land Management, Attn: Nancy Doelger, 1701 East "E" Street, Casper, Wyoming 82601. Comments can also be faxed to 307-234-1525, Attn: Nancy Doelger.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Nancy Doelger or Mike Karbs, at 307-261-7600, or contact the fax or address listed above.