

habitats used by many other species to the point of desertification, soil salinization, and depletion of vegetative communities (Abraham and Jefferies 1997). The Service believes that the MCLSG population exceeds sustainable levels for their arctic and subarctic breeding habitats, and the population must be reduced to approximately 1.5 million birds to bring the population to within long-term management objective levels (Central/Mississippi Flyway Councils 1982). The Service is also concerned that avian cholera, a highly contagious and deadly disease, could be transmitted to other migratory birds that stage with large concentrations of MCLSG during spring and fall migration.

The Service has attempted to curb the population growth of MCLSG through habitat management, expansion and liberalization of existing seasons, and increases in bag and possession limits, however, the population continues to grow and the geese continue to rapidly degrade their breeding habitats. Over the last year, the Service has consulted with various scientific and conservation organizations in the United States and Canada and has worked in coordination with the Canadian Wildlife Service to bring all available scientific information regarding MCLSG to decision makers.

Under the Act, the Secretary of the Interior has the responsibility for setting appropriate regulations for the take of migratory birds, with due regard for maintaining such populations in a healthy state and at satisfactory levels. As a first step in determining whether and how to reduce the MCLSG population to healthy and sustainable levels, the Service will examine various migratory bird regulatory alternatives and their impacts in an Environmental Assessment, a draft of which will be made available for public review.

Along with the Service's review of regulatory alternatives, the Service will develop habitat management strategies to contribute to a reduction in the MCLSG population. When developed, any proposals will be subject to compliance with the National Environmental Policy Act, as appropriate.

Literature Cited

Abraham, K.F., and R.L. Jefferies. 1997. High goose populations: causes, impacts, and implications. Pages 7-72 in B.D.J. Batt (editor). *Arctic Ecosystems in Peril: Report of the Arctic Goose Habitat Working Group*. Arctic Goose Joint Venture Special Publication. U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Washington, D.C. and Canadian Wildlife Service, Ottawa, Ontario.

Abraham, K.F., R.L. Jefferies, R.F. Rockwell, and C.D. MacInnes. 1996. Why are there so many white geese in North America? Pages 79-92 in J. Ratti (editor). *Proceedings of the 7th International Waterfowl Symposium*. Ducks Unlimited, Memphis, Tennessee.

Central and Mississippi Flyway Councils. 1982. *Management guidelines for mid-continent snow geese in Wildfowl Management Guidelines*. 22 pages.

Dated: March 26, 1998.

Donald J. Barry,

Acting Assistant Secretary for Fish and Wildlife and Parks.

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DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR

Bureau of Land Management

[NV-930-1430-01; N-62050]

Intent To Prepare a Planning Amendment to the Sonoma-Gerlach Resource Area Management Framework Plan

AGENCY: Bureau of Land Management, Interior.

ACTION: Notice of intent to prepare a plan amendment.

SUMMARY: The following described land has been proposed for direct sale under the authority of the Federal Land Policy and Management Act of October 21, 1976 (43 U.S.C. 1713 and 1719) to the Pershing County Fair and Recreation Board:

Mount Diablo Meridian, Nevada

T. 27 N., R. 31 E.,

Sec. 7: E $\frac{1}{2}$ SE $\frac{1}{4}$ NE $\frac{1}{4}$, NE $\frac{1}{4}$ SW $\frac{1}{4}$ SE $\frac{1}{4}$,

S $\frac{1}{2}$ SW $\frac{1}{4}$ SE $\frac{1}{4}$, E $\frac{1}{2}$ SE $\frac{1}{4}$;

Sec. 8: SW $\frac{1}{4}$ NW $\frac{1}{4}$, W $\frac{1}{2}$ SW $\frac{1}{4}$;

Sec. 18: N $\frac{1}{2}$ NE $\frac{1}{4}$, E $\frac{1}{2}$ NE $\frac{1}{4}$ NW $\frac{1}{4}$.

The land has not been specifically identified for disposal under the authority of the Federal Land Policy and Management Act, and the proposed plan amendment/environmental assessment would identify the subject lands for disposal under the authority of the subject Act.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: The lands are currently under lease to the Pershing County Fair and Recreation Board under the auspices of the Recreation and Public Purposes Act of 1926, as amended (43 U.S.C. 869 *et seq.*), for a golf course.

The Fair and Recreation Board desires to purchase the lands in order to provide more flexibility in procuring financing and in management of the proposed golf course.

DATES AND ADDRESS: For a period of 30 days from the date of publication of this notice in the **Federal Register**, interested persons may submit written comments regarding the proposed plan amendment to: Ron Wenker, District Manager, Winnemucca Field Office, 5100 E. Winnemucca Boulevard, Winnemucca, NV 89445.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Ken Detweiler, Realty Specialist, at the above Winnemucca Field Office address or telephone (702) 623-1500.

Dated: March 26, 1998.

Colin P. Christensen,

Acting District Manager, Winnemucca, Nevada.

[FR Doc. 98-8861 Filed 4-3-98; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 4310-HC-P

DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR

Bureau of Land Management

[NV-020-1430-10]

Notice of Intent

AGENCY: Bureau of Land Management, Interior.

ACTION: Notice of intent.

SUMMARY: The Bureau of Land Management, Winnemucca District, intends to develop an Activity Plan/Land Use Plan amendment for the Back Rock Desert located in the northwest portion of the district. The purpose of the plan and amendment is to better manage the resources and increasing level of activities occurring on the desert. Currently the Black Rock region reflects very few man-made developments and contains pristine sections of the Applegate/Lassen National Historic Trail. Plan goals include [1] Managing the varied resources while providing for a wide range of dispersed recreational activities and opportunities in a prudent manner; [2] Providing economic opportunities and other human values within a sustainable, healthy ecosystem. Competitive events and commercial uses of the desert have increased tremendously since the original Management Framework Plan was completed in 1982.

During July, 1997, five public scoping meetings were held to gather public input as to their concerns and suggestions for the Black Rock Desert. Input gathered from these meetings will be used to develop the objectives for the plan and to formulate the alternatives for the Environmental Impact Statement leading to the amendment of the Land Use Plan.