

oriented recreation and education. Of the acquired lands, 15,100 acres are located in South San Francisco Bay with the remaining lands located in Napa County in the North Bay. The draft Environmental Impact Report/Environmental Impact Statement (EIR/EIS) on the Initial Stewardship Project of the South Bay Salt Ponds addresses the 15,100 acres in South San Francisco Bay.

Under commercial salt production, Cargill managed the South Bay salt ponds as shallow water ponds with various salinity levels. The salinity levels varied both geographically, based on the location of the pond within the system, and temporally, based on seasonal and climatic conditions.

Although these ponds were managed for commercial salt production, they provided habitat for many water bird species including waterfowl and shorebirds. Ponds that were owned by Cargill in fee title were closed to public access. Other ponds, for which Cargill only held salt-making rights and which were part of the Don Edwards San Francisco Bay National Wildlife Refuge, were open to several types of public use.

The restoration of the salt ponds is taking place in three independent stages. First, Cargill is reducing the salinity levels in the ponds by moving the saltiest brines to its plant site in Newark, California. After the salinities are reduced to levels that are allowed to be discharged to the Bay, Cargill will no longer manage the ponds for salt production. Management of the Baumberg ponds will be turned over to the California Department of Fish and Game and management of the Alviso ponds and West Bay ponds will be turned over to the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service.

In the second stage of restoration, the ponds will be managed by the agencies in a manner that provides habitat values while the long-term restoration plan is being developed and implemented. In this initial stewardship stage, Bay waters will be circulated through the ponds following installation of water control structures and the existing levees will be maintained for minimum flood protection. The draft EIR/EIS covers only this second stage of restoration, *i.e.*, initial stewardship.

The third stage of restoration is the actual long-term restoration of the salt ponds to a mix of tidal marshes, managed ponds and other habitats. The planning process for this long-term restoration has just begun and will include a substantial amount of data collection, studies, modeling efforts, and public involvement. The long-term

planning process will include development of a separate EIR/EIS.

Implementation of the long-term restoration plan is expected to be conducted in phases beginning in 5 years, but with some phases extending beyond 20 years. Therefore, some ponds may be managed under the Initial Stewardship Plan for as little as 5 years, while others may require such management for over 20 years.

Alternatives Analyzed

The draft EIS/EIR considers four alternatives for initial stewardship: a no action alternative, a seasonal pond alternative, and two pond management alternatives which vary based on the dates for initial release of saline pond waters.

Under the no action alternative, there would be no flow circulation through the pond systems. Remaining brines would dry through the evaporation process and the ponds would then fill seasonally with rainwater in winter. No new public access would be available. No action would be conducted by the agencies, including no levee maintenance, and some levees would likely fail during this period. The existing open water ponds in South San Francisco Bay would be dry during most of the year.

In the seasonal pond alternative, there would be no flow circulation through the pond systems. Remaining brines would dry through the evaporation process and the ponds would then fill seasonally with rainwater in winter. No new public access would be available. The only action taken by the agencies would be to maintain the levees at their current standard of maintenance to prevent release of existing brines, to assure continued public access, and to maintain a minimum level of flood control. The existing open water ponds in South San Francisco Bay would be dry during most of the year.

Under the two pond management alternatives, bay waters would be circulated through the ponds, the pond levees would continue to be maintained at the current level, existing public access would continue and the ponds previously kept closed by Cargill would be open to some limited public access. The majority of the existing open water ponds would remain in open water habitat throughout the year. The two action alternatives differ in the timing of the initial release of the existing low to mid salinity brines in the ponds.

In the simultaneous March/April initial release alternative, the contents of most of the Alviso and Baumberg ponds would be released simultaneously in March and April. The

ponds would then be managed as a mix of continuous circulation ponds, seasonal ponds and batch ponds, though management of some ponds could be altered through adaptive management during the continuous circulation period. Higher salinity ponds in Alviso and in the West Bay would be discharged in March and April in a later year when salinities in the ponds have been reduced to appropriate levels. The Island ponds (A-19, 20, and 21) would be breached and open to tidal waters.

In the phased release alternative, many of the lower salinity ponds in Alviso and Baumberg would be discharged in July, and the medium salinity ponds would be discharged the following March and April. The ponds would then be managed in the same manner as in the simultaneous March/April release alternative during the continuous circulation period.

The Service invites the public to comment on the draft Environmental Impact Statement during a 45-day public comment period. The Service will evaluate the comments submitted thereon to prepare a Final Environmental Impact Statement. A decision will be made no sooner than 30 days after the publication of the Final Environmental Impact Statement.

This notice is provided pursuant to regulations for implementing the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969 (40 CFR 1506.6).

Dated: January 12, 2004.

Steve Thompson,

Manager, California/Nevada Operations Office.

[FR Doc. 04-1034 Filed 1-22-04; 8:45 am]

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DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR

Bureau of Land Management

[OR-100-5882-AF; HAG04-0069]

Notice of Public Meeting, Roseburg Resource Advisory Committee Meeting

AGENCY: Bureau of Land Management, Interior.

ACTION: Notification of a meeting for the Roseburg District Bureau of Land Management (BLM) Resource Advisory Committee under Section 205 of the Secure Rural Schools and Community Self Determination Act of 2000 (Pub.L. 106-393).

SUMMARY: This notice is published in accordance with Section 10(a)(2) of the Federal Advisory Committee Act. Meeting notice is hereby given for the Roseburg District BLM Resource Advisory Committee pursuant to

Section 205 of the Secure Rural School and Community Self Determination Act of 2000, Public Law 106-393 (the Act). Topics to be discussed by the Roseburg District BLM Resource Advisory Committee include specific information of specific projects and/or decisions on specific projects.

DATES: The Roseburg Resource Advisory Committee will meet at the BLM Roseburg District Office, 777 NW. Garden Valley Boulevard, Roseburg, Oregon 97470 on February 23, 2004 from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. For briefing information please refer to HAG-03-0134.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: Pursuant to the Act, five Resource Advisory Committees have been formed for western Oregon BLM district that contain Oregon & California (O&C) Grant Lands and Coos Bay Wagon Road lands. The Act establishes a six-year payment schedule to local counties in lieu of funds derived from the harvest of timber on Federal lands, which have dropped dramatically over the past 10 years.

The Act creates a new mechanism for local community collaboration with Federal land management activities in the selection of projects to be conducted on Federal lands or that will benefit resources on Federal lands using funds under Title II of the Act. The Roseburg District BLM Resource Advisory Committee consists of 15 local citizens (plus 6 alternates) representing a wide array of interests.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Additional information concerning the Roseburg District BLM Resource Advisory Committee may be obtained from E. Lynn Burkett, Public Affairs Officer, Roseburg District Office, 777 NW. Garden Valley Blvd., Roseburg, Oregon 97470 or elynn_burkett@blm.gov, or on the Web at <http://www.or.blm.gov>.

Dated: January 15, 2004.

Mark Buckbee,

Acting Roseburg District Manager.

[FR Doc. 04-1304 Filed 1-22-04; 8:45 am]

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DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR

Bureau of Land Management

[OR-085-5882-PE-SP01; HAG 04-0074]

Salem, OR Resource Advisory Committee Meeting

AGENCY: Bureau of Land Management.

ACTION: Meeting notice for the Salem, Oregon, Bureau of Land Management

(BLM) Resource Advisory Committee under Section 205 of the Secure Rural Schools and Community Self Determination Act of 2000 (PL 106-393).

SUMMARY: This notice is published in accordance with Section 10(a)(2) of the Federal Advisory Committee Act. Meeting notice is hereby given for the Salem Oregon BLM Resource Advisory Committee pursuant to Section 205 of the Secure Rural Schools and Community Self Determination Act of 2000, Pub. L. 106-393 (the Act). Topics to be discussed by the Salem BLM Resource Advisory Committee include: reviewing 2004 project applications, developing funding recommendations for 2004 projects, monitoring progress of previously approved projects, and scheduling field reviews of projects.

DATES: The Salem Resource Advisory Committee will meet at the BLM Salem District Office, 1717 Fabry Road, Salem, Oregon 97306, from 8:30 a.m. to 3 p.m., on February 26, 2004, June 17, 2004 and if an additional meeting is needed it will be held on June 24, 2004.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: Pursuant to the Act, five Resource Advisory Committees have been formed for western Oregon BLM districts that contain Oregon & California (O&C) Grant Lands and Coos Bay Wagon Road lands. The Act establishes a six-year payment schedule to local counties in lieu of funds derived from the harvest of timber on federal lands, which have dropped dramatically over the past 10 years.

The Act creates a new mechanism for local community collaboration with federal land management activities in the selection of projects to be conducted on federal lands or that will benefit resources on federal lands using funds under Title II of the Act. The BLM Resource Advisory Committees consist of 15 local citizens (plus 6 alternates) representing a wide array of interests.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Additional information concerning the Salem BLM Resource Advisory Committee may be obtained from Paul Jeske, Salem District Designated Federal Official (503-375-5644) or Trish Hogervorst, Salem BLM Public Affairs Officer, (503-375-5657) at 1717 Fabry Rd. SE, Salem, OR 97306.

Dated: January 15, 2004.

Brad Keller,

Acting District Manager.

[FR Doc. 04-1423 Filed 1-22-04; 8:45 am]

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DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR

Office of Surface Mining Reclamation and Enforcement

Notice of Proposed Information Collection for 1029-0039

AGENCY: Office of Surface Mining Reclamation and Enforcement.

ACTION: Notice and request for comments.

SUMMARY: In compliance with the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995, the Office of Surface Mining Reclamation and Enforcement (OSM) is announcing its intention to request renewed approval for the collection of information on Underground Mining Permit Applications—Minimum Requirements for Reclamation and Operation Plans, 30 CFR 784.

DATES: Comments on the proposed information collection must be received by March 23, 2004, to be assured of consideration.

ADDRESSES: Comments may be mailed to John A. Trelease, Office of Surface Mining Reclamation and Enforcement, 1951 Constitution Avenue, NW., Room 210-SIB, Washington, DC 20240. Comments may also be submitted electronically to jtreleas@osmre.gov.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: To request a copy of the information collection request, explanatory information and related form, contact John A. Trelease, at (202) 208-2783, or electronically at jtreleas@osmre.gov.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: The Office of Management and Budget (OMB) regulations at 5 CFR 1320, which implement provisions of the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995 (Pub. L. 104-13), require that interested members of the public and affected agencies have an opportunity to comment on information collection and recordkeeping activities [see 5 CFR 1320.8 (d)]. This notice identifies information collections that OSM will be submitting to OMB for extension. These collections are contained in 30 CFR 784.

OSM has revised burden estimates, where appropriate, to reflect current reporting levels or adjustments based on reestimates of burden or respondents and costs. OSM will request a 3-year term of approval for this information collection activity.

Comments are invited on: (1) The need for the collection of information for the performance of the functions of the agency; (2) the accuracy of the agency's burden estimates; (3) ways to enhance the quality, utility and clarity of the information collection, and (4)