

action; (2) ask participants to identify key issues that should be analyzed during the environmental review and compliance process; and (3) provide an opportunity for participants to ask questions regarding project alternatives and the overall conservation planning and environmental impact analysis process. As a result of the public scoping process, the NPS received two letters via U.S. mail and oral comments at the meetings. Issues identified during the public scoping process were summarized in the Draft EIS under the Planning Issues section, in Chapter I, Purpose and Need. All comments received during the public scoping process were duly considered in preparing the Draft EIS. In addition to public scoping, the park and its cooperating agency have also consulted with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, California State Historic Preservation Office, and Lahontan Regional Water Quality Control Board.

The Draft EIS was available for public review during a 60-day comment period formally initiated with EPA's notice of filing of the document published in the **Federal Register** on November 14, 2005. The comment period concluded December 12, 2005. The NPS hosted two public meetings during the public review period to encourage comments from the public. The meetings were held on November 15 (in Death Valley National Park) and November 16 (in Pahrump, Nevada). The NPS received 7 comments on the Draft EIS, including 2 comments from unaffiliated individuals and 5 comments from Federal and State agencies. All comments and responses are included in the FEIS. Comments from the California Regional Water Quality Control Board and the EPA raised the possibility of additional alternatives for disposal of the brine resulting from the reverse osmosis water treatment process. These techniques are addressed in the possible disposal alternatives considered in the FEIS.

#### Copies

A printed copy of the FEIS may be obtained by telephoning (760) 786-3243, e-mailing ([deva\\_superintendent@nps.gov](mailto:deva_superintendent@nps.gov)), or faxing (760) 786-3283 a request to Death Valley National Park. The document also can be viewed via the Internet at the PEPC Web site <http://www.nps.gov/deva/pphtml/documents.html>. For further information, please contact: James T. Reynolds, Superintendent, Death Valley National Park, Death Valley, California 92328; telephone: (760) 786-3243.

#### Decision Process

The National Park Service will execute a Record of Decision not sooner than 30 days following publication by the Environmental Protection Agency of the notice of filing and availability of the FEIS. Announcement of the decision will be noticed in the **Federal Register** and via local and regional press media. As a delegated EIS, the official responsible for the final decision regarding the Furnace Creek water system is the Regional Director, Pacific West region. Subsequently the official responsible for implementing the approved project will be the Superintendent, Death Valley National Park.

Dated: April 20, 2006.

**Jonathan B. Jarvis,**

*Regional Director, Pacific West Region.*

[FR Doc. 06-6072 Filed 7-7-06; 8:45 am]

**BILLING CODE 4312-FF-M**

#### DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR

##### National Park Service

#### **General Management Plan for Lava Beds National Monument Siskiyou and Modoc Counties, California; Notice of Intent To Prepare an Environmental Impact Statement**

**SUMMARY:** Pursuant to the provisions of the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969 (Pub. L. 91-190) and Council on Environmental Quality's implementing regulations (40 CFR 1502.9(c)), the U.S. Department of Interior, National Park Service (NPS), is initiating the scoping phase of the conservation planning and environmental impact analysis process for updating the General Management Plan (GMP) for Lava Beds National Monument (Monument). Following the scoping phase and consideration of public concerns and other agency comments, a Draft Environmental Impact Statement for the GMP will be prepared and released for public review. The GMP will address desired conditions for the Monument, uses or treatment needs for resource protection, visitor use and other management goals; it will serve as a "blueprint" to guide future management for the next 15-20 years. The purpose of the scoping outreach efforts is to elicit early public comment regarding issues and concerns, the nature and extent of potential environmental impacts (and as appropriate, mitigation measures), and alternatives which should be addressed in the plan update.

Consistent with NPS Planning Program Standards the updated GMP

will: (1) Describe the Monument's purpose, significance, and primary interpretive themes; (2) identify the fundamental resources and values of the Monument, its other important resources and values, and describe the condition of these resources; (3) describe desired conditions for cultural and natural resources and visitor experiences throughout the Monument; (4) develop management zoning to support these desired conditions; (5) develop alternative applications of these management zones to the Monument landscape (i.e., zoning alternatives); (6) address user capacity; (7) analyze potential boundary modifications; (8) ensure that management recommendations are developed in consultation with interested stakeholders and the public and adopted by NPS leadership after an adequate analysis of the benefits, environmental impacts, and economic costs of alternative courses of action; and (9) identify and prioritize subsequent detailed studies, plans and actions that may be needed to implement the updated GMP.

*Scoping:* Through the outreach activities planned in the scoping phase, the NPS welcomes information and suggestions from the public regarding resource protection, visitor use, and land management. This notice formally initiates the public scoping comment phase for the EIS process for the GMP update. All scoping comments must be postmarked or transmitted not later than September 2, 2006. All written responses should be submitted to the following address: General Management Plan, Lava Beds National Monument, Attn.: Craig Dorman, Superintendent, 1 Indian Well Headquarters, Tulelake, CA 96134. As noted, a key purpose of the scoping process is to elicit early public comment on matters which should be considered in updating the GMP in order to inform the development of the Draft EIS. At this time it is expected that three public meetings will be hosted in towns near the Monument during June 5-8, 2006. Detailed information regarding these meetings will be posted on the GMP Web site (<http://parkplanning.nps.gov/labe>). All attendees will be given the opportunity to ask questions and provide comments to the planning team. The GMP Web site will provide the most up-to-date information regarding the project, including project description, planning process updates, meeting notices, reports and documents, and useful links associated with the project.

It is the practice of the NPS to make all comments, including names and addresses of respondents who provide

that information, available for public review. NPS will make all submissions from organizations or businesses, and from individuals identifying themselves as representatives or officials of organizations or businesses, available for public inspection in their entirety. Individuals may request that the NPS withhold their name and/or address from public disclosure. If you wish to do this, you must state this prominently at the beginning of your comments. Respondents using the Web site can make such a request by checking the box: "keep my contact information private." NPS will honor such requests to the extent allowable by law, but you should be aware that NPS may still be required to disclose your name and address pursuant to the Freedom of Information Act.

#### **SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:**

This unit of the National park System was established in 1925 to protect and interpret volcanic and natural features of scientific interest, and evidence of prehistoric and historic human settlement, use, and conflict. The 46,560 acre Monument covers 10% of the Medicine Lake shield volcano which lies on the margin of the Cascade Range and Great Basin Geologic Provinces. This remote landscape contains outstanding, diverse, abundant and well-preserved lava flows, cinder cones, Maar volcanoes, and other volcanic features associated with the Medicine Lake shield volcano, including one of the largest concentrations of lava tube caves in the continental United States. The Monument's geologic resources provide many opportunities for exploration and research of unique habitats.

The dramatic volcanic landscape served as the setting for the Modoc War (1872–1873) and contains archeological evidence of over 11,000 years of human occupation. The lands are significant to Modoc people as part of their traditional homeland. In addition, the Monument has two designated units of the National Wilderness Preservation System totaling 28,460 acres. Wilderness areas provide a primitive recreation experience for visitors in a volcanic Great Basin landscape, as well as invaluable scientific and educational opportunities as surrounding landscapes and social conditions continue to change.

The Monument is primarily surrounded by public lands. The northern edge is bounded by the Tule Lake National Wildlife Refuge. The western, southern and eastern edges are bounded by the Modoc National Forest. A small area on the northeast corner is bounded by privately owned lands, and

a commercial forest products inholding is adjacent to the Monument to the south. Petroglyph Point, a detached unit of the Monument, is surrounded by, or very close to, private lands.

The previous GMP, completed in June 1996, identified needed infrastructure and other improvements. Most of the recommendations in this prior plan have since been implemented, including construction of a research center and a new visitor center. Resource management, interpretation, visitor protection and other GMP components were not addressed in the last plan. New inventories and research have been completed since the last GMP including the discovery of additional caves within the Monument, a macro-invertebrate study, and study of fire effects on exotic plants. Drafts of a Wilderness Plan and a Cave Management Plan have also been completed. Future management direction is needed for staff to address changing patterns of visitor use and for effective and long term management of natural and cultural resources.

#### **Decision Process**

Availability of the forthcoming Draft EIS for public review and written comment will be formally announced through the publication of a Notice of Availability in the **Federal Register**, as well as through local and regional news media, direct mailing to the project mailing list, and via the Internet at <http://parkplanning.nps.gov/labe>. Following due consideration of all agency and public comment, a Final EIS will be prepared. As a delegated EIS, the official responsible for the final decision on the proposed plan is the Regional Director, Pacific West Region, National Park Service. Subsequently, the official responsible for implementation of the approved plan is the Superintendent, Lava Beds National Monument. It is anticipated that the final plan will be available in winter 2009.

Dated: May 3, 2006.

**Jonathan B. Jarvis,**

*Regional Director, Pacific West Region.*

[FR Doc. 06–6074 Filed 7–7–06; 8:45 am]

**BILLING CODE 4312–GE–M**

## **DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR**

### **National Park Service**

#### **Tuolumne Wild and Scenic River Comprehensive Management Plan and Tuolumne Meadows Concept Plan, Yosemite National Park; Madera, Mariposa, Mono and Tuolumne Counties, California; Notice of Intent To Prepare an Environmental Impact Statement**

*Summary:* Pursuant to section 102(2)(C) of the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969 and the Wild and Scenic Rivers Act (Pub. L. 90–542), the National Park Service is initiating a public scoping process as necessary to obtain information which will aid in the preparation of the Tuolumne Wild and Scenic River Comprehensive Management Plan and Tuolumne Meadows Concept Plan for Yosemite National Park, California. The purpose of this scoping phase is to elicit early public comments regarding issues and concerns to be addressed in preparing an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS), including a suitable range of alternatives, the nature and extent of potential environmental impacts, and appropriate mitigation strategies.

During the ensuing conservation planning and environmental impact analysis process, the National Park Service (NPS) will develop a range of management alternatives that is intended to: (1) Provide broad guidance for the protection and enhancement of the river's Outstandingly Remarkable Values (ORVs); (2) address river boundaries and classifications pursuant to the Wild and Scenic Rivers Act; (3) define a user capacity program for the river which includes the Visitor Experience and Resource Protection framework; (4) prescribe management zones for the river corridor (i.e., desired conditions); and (5) establish the section 7 determination process. The plan/EIS will also make technical corrections to the description and mapping of the Dana Fork headwaters, and clarify the language for definition of river segments below Hetch Hetchy; these corrections will be in accordance with the directives of the Wild and Scenic Rivers. In addition, the Tuolumne Meadows Concept Plan will address such factors as day use parking and transportation, water collection and wastewater treatment facility needs, optimal spatial organization of park and concession facilities, and options for enhancing visitor information services. In some cases a site-specific environmental impacts analysis may be included to facilitate possible future