

DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR**Bureau of Land Management**

[NV-060-1990; 08-08807; TAS: 14X1109]

Notice of Availability of Final Cortez Hills Expansion Project Environmental Impact Statement, Nevada**AGENCY:** Bureau of Land Management, Interior.**ACTION:** Notice of availability.

SUMMARY: In accordance with the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969 (NEPA, 42 U.S.C. 4321 *et seq.*), the Bureau of Land Management (BLM) has prepared a Final Environmental Impact Statement (FEIS) for the Cortez Gold Mines (CGM) proposed Cortez Hills Expansion Project (project) and by this Notice is announcing its availability.

DATES: The BLM will not issue a Record of Decision (ROD) on the proposal for a minimum of 30 days following the Environmental Protection Agency's publication of a Notice of Availability (NOA) of this document in the **Federal Register**.

ADDRESSES: Copies of the Cortez Hills Expansion Project Final EIS are available in the BLM Battle Mountain District Office, 50 Bastian Road, Battle Mountain, Nevada, during regular business hours of 7:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m., Monday through Friday, except holidays. Copies are also available via the Internet at www.blm.gov/nvst/en/fo/battle_mountain_field.html. Electronic (on CD-ROM) or paper copies are also available.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Stephen Drummond, BLM Battle Mountain District Office at (775) 635-4000.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: CGM, on behalf of the Cortez Joint Venture, proposes to expand its Pipeline/South Pipeline Project, an existing open-pit gold mining and processing operation. The Pipeline/South Pipeline Project is located in north-central Nevada approximately 31 miles south of Beowawe in Lander County.

The proposed project is located in Lander and Eureka counties:

Mount Diablo Meridian, Nevada

T. 27 N., R. 48 E.;
T. 27 N., R. 47 E.;
T. 27 N., R. 46 E.;
T. 26 N., R. 47 E.;
T. 26 N., R. 48 E.;
T. 28 N., R. 46 E.;
T. 28 N., R. 47 E.

The proposed project would require new surface disturbance of approximately 6,633 acres, including

6,412 acres of public land administered by the BLM Battle Mountain District and 221 acres of private land owned by CGM. Existing CGM mining and processing facilities are located in three main areas in the Cortez Gold Mines Operations Area. These areas are referred to as the Pipeline Complex, Cortez Complex, and Gold Acres Complex. The proposed project would include development of new mining facilities in the proposed Cortez Hills Complex, including development of a new open pit, underground mining, three new waste rock facilities, new heap leach pad, construction of a 12-mile conveyor system and modification or construction of related roads and ancillary facilities. The proposed project also would include continued use of existing facilities in the Pipeline Complex, Cortez Complex, and Gold Acres Complex, as well as expansion of existing facilities (pits and waste rock facilities) in the Pipeline Complex and Cortez Complex. The life of the mine would include approximately 10 years of active mining and concurrent reclamation as areas become available, as well as an additional three years for on-going ore processing, final reclamation, and closure.

A range of alternatives was developed and analyzed in the Draft and Final EIS to address the concerns and issues that were identified. These include alternate waste rock facility and heap leach pad locations, underground mining only, revised pit design, and the No Action Alternative. The rationale for alternatives considered but eliminated from detailed analysis also is discussed. Mitigation measures have been identified, as needed, to minimize potential environmental impacts and to assure that the proposed project would not result in undue or unnecessary degradation of public lands. In addition, the Final EIS includes an analysis of cumulative impacts, including a comprehensive evaluation of potential impacts to Native American cultural values.

A Notice of Intent (NOI) to prepare an EIS was published in the **Federal Register** on December 2, 2005. Two public scoping meetings were held in 2005 in Crescent Valley and Battle Mountain. The Draft EIS was released for public review, with a 60-day comment period, on October 7, 2007. Following release of the Draft EIS, two public comment meetings were held in Crescent Valley and Battle Mountain in November 2007 to solicit additional comments on the document. Comment responses and resultant changes in the impact analyses are documented in the Final EIS.

Based on the results of the analysis of the Proposed Action for the Draft EIS and in response to public comments, CGM developed the Revised Cortez Hills Pit Design Alternative, which the BLM evaluated as an alternative to the Proposed Action in the Final EIS. This alternative was developed to address long-term stability issues identified for the east wall of the proposed Cortez Hills Pit. The revised Cortez Hills Pit design includes a flatter east pit wall and associated reduction in the size of the open pit, expansion of the underground mining component, and an associated reduction in the size of the Canyon, North, and South waste rock facilities. The Revised Cortez Hills Pit Design Alternative lies within the spectrum of alternatives analyzed in the Draft EIS, and is a minor variation of an alternative analyzed.

Authority: 40 CFR 1506.6.

Gerald M. Smith,

District Manager, Battle Mountain.

[FR Doc. E8-23251 Filed 10-2-08; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 4310-HC-P

DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR**Bureau of Land Management**

[NM-030-1430-FB; NMNM 120291]

Recreation and Public Purpose (R&PP) Act Classification; Doña Ana County, NM**AGENCY:** Bureau of Land Management (BLM), Interior.**ACTION:** Notice of realty action.

SUMMARY: The Bureau of Land Management (BLM) has determined that land located in Doña Ana County, New Mexico is suitable for classification for lease and/or conveyance to New Mexico State University (NMSU) under authority of the Recreation and Public Purposes Act (R&PP), as amended (43 U.S.C. 869 *et seq.*). NMSU proposes to use the land as a new satellite campus for the Doña Ana Community College.

DATES: Comments must be received by no later than November 17, 2008.

ADDRESSES: Written comments concerning this Notice should be addressed to: District Manager, BLM Las Cruces District Office, 1800 Marquess Street, Las Cruces, New Mexico 88005.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Al Chavez, Realty Specialist at the address above or by telephone at (575) 525-4350.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: In accordance with section 7 of the Taylor Grazing Act, as amended, 43 U.S.C.

315f, the following described land has been examined and found suitable for classification as a non-profit, public purpose—specifically, a site for a new satellite campus of the NMSU Doña Ana Community College. The land is hereby classified accordingly. The parcel of public land is described as follows:

New Mexico Principal Meridian

T. 26 S., R. 5 E.,

Sec. 13, S $\frac{1}{2}$ SW $\frac{1}{4}$ NE $\frac{1}{4}$.

The area described contains 19.967 acres, more or less in Doña Ana County.

NMSU proposes to develop the land to construct a new satellite campus to meet the educational needs of the rapidly growing community. The site would be leased for a period of 5 years with the option to purchase after the sites are developed according to NMSU. Conveying title to the affected public land is consistent with current BLM land use planning.

The lease or conveyance, when issued, would be subject to the following terms, conditions, and reservations.

1. Provisions of the R&PP Act and to all applicable regulations of the Secretary of the Interior.

2. A right-of-way for ditches and canals constructed by the authority of the United States, Act of August 30, 1890 (43 U.S.C. 945).

3. The United States will reserve all minerals together with the right to prospect for, mine, and remove the minerals.

4. All valid existing rights documented on the official public land records at the time of lease/patent issuance.

5. Any other reservations that the authorized officer determines appropriate to ensure public access and proper management of Federal land and interests therein.

Additional detailed information concerning this Notice of Realty Action, including environmental documents, is available for review at the address above. On October 3, 2008, the lands described above will be segregated from all other forms of appropriation under the public land laws, including the mining and mineral leasing laws, except for lease or conveyance under the R&PP Act. On or before November 17, 2008, comments may be submitted regarding the proposed classification lease or conveyance of the land to the District Manager, BLM Las Cruces District Office, at the address above.

Only written comments will be accepted. Before including your address, phone number, e-mail address, or other personal identifying information in your comment, you

should be aware that your entire comment—including your personal identifying information—may be made publicly available at any time. While you can ask us in your comment to withhold your personal identifying information from public review, we cannot guarantee that we will be able to do so.

Classification Comments: Interested parties may submit comments involving the suitability of the land for the proposed satellite campus. Comments on the classification is restricted to whether the land is physically suited for the proposal, where the use will maximize the future use or uses of the land, whether the use is consistent with local planning and zoning, or if the use is consistent with State and Federal programs.

Additional Comments: Interested parties may submit comments regarding the specific use proposed in the application and plan of development, whether the BLM followed proper administrative procedures in reaching the decision, or any other factor not directly related to the suitability of the land for a satellite campus. The State Director will review any adverse comments. In the absence of adverse comment, the classification will become effective on December 2, 2008. The land will not be offered for lease or conveyance until after the classification becomes effective.

(Authority: 43 CFR 2741.5)

Bill Childress,

District Manager, Las Cruces.

[FR Doc. E8-23431 Filed 10-2-08; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 4310-VC-P

DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR

Bureau of Land Management

[CO-160-1430-EQ; COC-73222]

Notice of Realty FLPMA Section 302 Permit/Lease, Gunnison County, CO

AGENCY: Bureau of Land Management, Interior.

ACTION: Notice of Realty Action.

SUMMARY: Gunnison Aggregate Resources has submitted a proposal for a land use authorization to operate an asphalt batch plant and other materials processing and temporary storage pursuant to Section 302 of the Federal Land Policy and Management Act of 1976 and regulations at Title 43 CFR 2920. The land consists of approximately 1.25 acres of public lands approximately 5 miles southwest of Gunnison in Gunnison County,

Colorado, within a portion of the SW $\frac{1}{4}$ SW $\frac{1}{4}$ SE $\frac{1}{4}$ of Section 17, T.49N., R.1W., New Mexico Principal Meridian. The land is within a 50-acre parcel of public land designated as the McCabe Lane community gravel pit. The proponent is a permit holder authorized to extract gravel from the McCabe Lane pit.

DATES: Interested parties may submit comments concerning the proposed permit/lease until November 17, 2008. Only written comments will be accepted.

ADDRESSES: Address all written comments concerning this notice to the Field Manager, BLM Gunnison Field Office, 216 N. Colorado St., Gunnison, Colorado 81230.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Marnie Medina, Realty Specialist, at the above address, or call (970) 642-4457.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: This is a notice of a proposal for a land use authorization. No additional proposals will be accepted. After review, the BLM has determined that the proposed use is in conformance with the Gunnison Resource Area Resource Management Plan, and that the above described land is available for that use. Therefore, pursuant to section 302(b) of the Federal Land Policy and Management Act of 1976 (43 U.S.C. 1732(b)) and the implementing regulations at Title 43 CFR 2920, the BLM will accept for processing an application to be filed by Gunnison Aggregate Resources, or its duly qualified designee, for a noncompetitive permit/lease of the above described lands, to be used, occupied, and developed as stated above. It is the judgment of the authorized officer that, as provided for in 43 CFR 2920.5-4(b), no competitive interest exists, or competitive bidding would represent unfair competitive and economic disadvantage to the originator of the unique land use concept that is compatible with the public interest. The rental for the noncompetitive permit/lease shall not be less than fair market value.

The BLM will estimate the costs of processing the permit/lease application. Before the BLM begins to process the application, the applicant must pay the full amount of the estimated costs to the United States. If a lease is not granted, the applicant must pay to the United States, in addition to the estimated costs, the reasonable costs incurred by the BLM in processing the application in excess of the estimated costs. Rent, payable annually or otherwise in advance, will be determined by the BLM, if and when a lease application is