

updates to constituents, and a **Federal Register** notice (75 FR 39702; July 12, 2010). The Draft CCP/EA identified and evaluated three alternatives for managing the Refuge for the next 15 years.

Under Alternative A (No Action), management would continue unchanged. Under Alternative B, the Service would develop an inventory and monitoring program; expand tidal restoration and enhancement activities for the benefit of migratory birds, endangered species, and other native wildlife; improve and expand visitor services by developing new public access locations; develop shoreline fishing locations; and provide some additional environmental education programs. Alternative C, which was identified as the preferred alternative, would include all actions in Alternative B, and would also emphasize wildlife management by studying population health and developing population goals for wildlife; provide greater interpretive opportunities; and substantially expand the environmental education program.

We received seven letters on the Draft CCP and EA during the review and comment period. Comments focused upon cultural resources, habitat management and restoration, invasive plants, public access, and mosquito management. We incorporated comments we received into the CCP when appropriate, and we responded to the comments in an appendix to the CCP. In the FONSI, we selected Alternative C for implementation. The FONSI documents our decision and is based on the information and analysis contained in the EA.

Under the selected alternative, the Service will expand both natural resource management and visitor services opportunities on the Refuge. An inventory and monitoring program will be developed, as well as wildlife population goals. In addition to expanded tidal restoration and enhancement activities, additional habitat management activities include improving hydrological connectivity of tidal marsh habitats. Priorities will also be developed for the conservation and restoration of sub-tidal habitat. Visitor service opportunities will be expanded considerably with interpretation and environmental education opportunities. In addition, wildlife observation and fishing programs will be improved and/or expanded.

The selected alternative best meets the Refuges' purposes, vision and goals; contributes to the Refuge System mission; addresses the significant issues and relevant mandates; and is consistent with principles of sound fish and

wildlife management. Based on the associated environmental assessment, this alternative is not expected to result in significant environmental impacts and therefore does not require an environmental impact statement.

**Alexandra Pitts,**

*Acting Regional Director, Pacific Southwest Region, Sacramento, California.*

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## DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR

### Bureau of Land Management

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#### **Notice of Intent To Prepare an Environmental Impact Statement To Address Grazing Permit Renewals in the Jump Creek, Succor Creek, and Cow Creek Watersheds in the Owyhee Field Office of the Boise District, ID**

**AGENCY:** Bureau of Land Management, Interior.

**ACTION:** Notice of Intent.

**SUMMARY:** In compliance with the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969, as amended, and the Federal Land Policy and Management Act of 1976 (NEPA), as amended, the Bureau of Land Management (BLM) Owyhee Field Office in Marsing, Idaho intends to prepare an environmental impact statement (EIS), and by this notice, is announcing the beginning of the scoping process to solicit public comments and identify issues.

**DATES:** This notice initiates the public scoping process for the EIS. We request that comments should be submitted within 30 days of the date of publication of this notice. The date(s) and location(s) of any scoping meeting(s) will be announced at least 15 days in advance through local media and the BLM Web site, <http://www.blm.gov/id>. In order to be considered in the draft EIS, all comments must be received prior to the close of the scoping period or 15 days after the last public meeting, whichever is later.

**ADDRESSES:** You may submit comments and issues related to the Jump Creek, Succor Creek, and Cow Creek Watersheds Grazing Permit Renewal EIS by any of the following methods:

- **Web site:** [http://www.blm.gov/id/st/en/fo/owyhee/owyhee\\_grazing\\_group.html](http://www.blm.gov/id/st/en/fo/owyhee/owyhee_grazing_group.html).
- **Email:** [NPR\\_EIS@blm.gov](mailto:NPR_EIS@blm.gov).
- **Fax:** (208) 373-3805.
- **Mail:** Bureau of Land Management, 1387 S. Vinnell Way, Boise ID 83709,

Attention: Jake Vialpando, Project Manager.

Documents pertinent to this proposal may be examined at the Owyhee Field Office; the BLM Boise District Office, 3948 Development Ave., Boise ID 83705; and the BLM Idaho State Office, 1387 S. Vinnell Way, Boise ID 83709.

**FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:** and/or to have your name added to our mailing list, contact Jake Vialpando, Project Manager, telephone (208) 373-3814, [email jvialpando@blm.gov](mailto:jvialpando@blm.gov).

Persons who use a telecommunications device for the deaf (TDD) may call the Federal Information Relay Service (FIRS) at 1 (800) 877-8339 to contact the above individual during normal business hours. The FIRS is available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, to leave a message or question with the above individual. You will receive a reply during normal business hours.

**SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:** This document provides notice that the BLM Owyhee Field Office in Marsing, Idaho, intends to prepare an EIS to address grazing permit renewal requests in the Jump Creek, Succor Creek, and Cow Creek areas, and announces the beginning of the scoping process. The area covered by the permit renewal requests is located in Owyhee County, Idaho, and encompasses approximately 120,000 acres of public land. The purpose of the public scoping process is to determine relevant issues that will influence the scope of the EIS, including the alternatives. The agency seeks public input to identify issues related to grazing permit renewals that have been proposed for those areas. Preliminary issues have been identified by BLM personnel; Federal, State, and local agencies; and other stakeholders. Some key issues that have already been identified involve the effects of livestock grazing on Greater sage-grouse and its habitat, as well as the potential for disease transmission between domestic and bighorn sheep. In addition to livestock grazing, a variety of other multiple uses exist within this area, including: year-long recreation activities, particularly hiking, boating, fishing, hunting, and off-road vehicle use; wild horse management; potential wind energy development and electrical transmission line development.

The Owyhee Field Office will consult with the Shoshone-Paiute Tribes and other parties, as applicable, on this action during regular consultation proceedings and briefings. Federal, State, and local agencies, along with other stakeholders that may be interested or affected by the BLM's decision on this project are invited to

participate in the scoping process and, if eligible, may request or be requested by the BLM to participate as a cooperating agency. The BLM will also brief county commissioners, Congressional delegations and grazing permittees during the EIS process.

You may submit comments on issues and planning criteria in writing to the BLM using one of the methods listed in the **ADDRESSES** section above. To be most helpful, please submit comments by the close of the 30-day scoping period or within 15 days after the last public meeting, whichever is later. Before including your address, phone number, email 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 in your comment to withhold your personal identifying information from public review, we cannot guarantee that we will be able to do so.

The public is also encouraged to help identify any other management questions and concerns that should be addressed in the EIS.

The BLM will use an interdisciplinary approach to develop the EIS in order to consider the variety of resource issues and concerns identified. Specialists with expertise in the following disciplines will be involved in the NEPA process: Range management, wildlife biology, archaeology, riparian, soils, and outdoor recreation.

**Authority:** 40 CFR 1501.7, 43 CFR 1610.2.

**Loretta Chandler,**

*Field Manager, BLM Owyhee Field Office.*

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## DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR

### Bureau of Land Management

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### Notice of Intent To Prepare an Environmental Impact Statement for the Proposed Copper Flat Mine Plan of Operations, Sierra County, NM

**AGENCY:** Bureau of Land Management, Interior.

**ACTION:** Notice of Intent.

**SUMMARY:** In compliance with the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) of 1969, as amended, and the Federal Land Policy and Management Act of 1976, as amended, the Bureau of Land Management (BLM) Las Cruces

District Office, Las Cruces, New Mexico, intends to prepare an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) and by this notice is announcing the beginning of the scoping process to solicit public comments and identify issues.

**DATES:** This notice initiates the public scoping process for the EIS. Comments on issues may be submitted in writing until February 8, 2012. The date(s) and location(s) of any scoping meetings will be announced at least 15 days in advance through local media, newspapers and the BLM Web site at: [http://www.blm.gov/nm/st/en/fo/Las\\_Cruces\\_District\\_Office.html](http://www.blm.gov/nm/st/en/fo/Las_Cruces_District_Office.html). To be included in the Draft EIS, all comments must be received prior to the close of the scoping period or 15 days after the last public meeting, whichever is later. We will provide additional opportunities for public participation upon publication of the Draft EIS.

**ADDRESSES:** You may submit comments related to the Copper Flat EIS Project by any of the following methods:

- *Email:* [dhaywood@blm.gov](mailto:dhaywood@blm.gov).
- *Fax:* (575) 525-4412.
- *Mail:* BLM Las Cruces District Office, 1800 Marquess Street, Las Cruces, NM 88005.

Documents pertinent to this proposal may be examined at the Las Cruces District Office.

#### FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:

Michael Smith, Geologist; telephone (575) 525-4421; address 1800 Marquess Street, Las Cruces, NM 88005 or by email [michaelsmith@blm.gov](mailto:michaelsmith@blm.gov) and to have your name added to the mailing list. Persons who use a telecommunications device for the deaf (TDD) may call the Federal Information Relay Service (FIRS) at 1-(800) 877-8339 to contact the above individual during normal business hours. The FIRS is available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, to leave a message or question with the above individual. You will receive a reply during normal business hours.

**SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:** The BLM Las Cruces District Office has received a Mine Plan of Operations (Mine Plan) from the New Mexico Copper Corp. to re-start the Copper Flat Mine located in Sierra County, New Mexico. The proposed mine is located approximately 4 miles north-northeast of the town of Hillsboro, New Mexico. Lands involved in the mine include parts of the following sections:

#### New Mexico Principal Meridian

T. 15 S., R. 6 W.,  
Sec. 31.

T. 15 S., R. 7 W.,  
Secs. 25, 26, 35 and 36.

Mining, ore processing, and related activities would occur on both private land and public domain administered by the BLM. The proponent currently holds active mining claims over public domain land included in the proposed operation. The estimated project duration is 27 years from site construction to mine reclamation and closure. Mining at the existing open pit would be completed using standard multiple-bench methods. The pit would eventually widen to approximately 2,500 by 2,500 feet and deepen to 900 feet. Ore from the pit would be drilled, blasted, loaded and hauled to a planned processing facility immediately east of the pit. At this facility, the ore would be crushed and ground and copper and molybdenum minerals would be separated and concentrated using standard flotation techniques. Mineral concentrates would be transported by truck and rail to be processed offsite; onsite smelting or refining is not included in this proposal. Waste rock created during operations would be banked primarily on public domain land, and tailings would be disposed of into an expanded, existing tailings impoundment. Water for the proposed operation would be obtained from a well field located on BLM-administered land approximately 8 miles east of the mine in:

#### New Mexico Principal Meridian

T. 15 S., R. 5 W.,  
Secs. 30 and 31.

Water would be piped to the proposed operation through an existing pipeline which roughly parallels the existing highway (New Mexico State Route 152). The total estimated disturbance on public domain land would be 745 acres. Reclamation would consist of removing processing equipment from Federal land, and restoring and seeding waste rock dumps and other disturbed areas. The BLM and the New Mexico Department of Energy, Minerals and Natural Resources would bond the proponent for site reclamation prior to granting authorization.

The purpose of the public scoping process is to determine relevant issues that will influence the scope of the environmental analysis, including alternatives, and guide the process for developing the EIS. At present, the BLM has identified the following preliminary issues:

1. Water use and effects on surface and subsurface hydrology;
2. Water quality effects and water quality protection;
3. Traffic;
4. Cultural Resources and Native American Religious Concerns;