

**SUMMARY:** In accordance with the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969, as amended, the Bureau of Land Management (BLM) has prepared a Draft Supplemental Environmental Impact Statement (EIS), analyzing the potential impacts of hydraulic fracturing on oil and gas leases within the Bakersfield Field Office planning area, and by this notice the BLM is announcing the opening of the 45-day public comment period.

**DATES:** To ensure consideration, the BLM must receive written comments on the Bakersfield Field Office Hydraulic Fracturing Draft Supplemental EIS within 45 days following the date the Environmental Protection Agency publishes its Notice of Availability in the **Federal Register**. The BLM will announce future meetings or hearings and any other public involvement activities at least 15 days in advance through public notices, media releases, and/or mailings.

**ADDRESSES:** You may submit written comments related to the Bakersfield Field Office Hydraulic Fracturing Draft Supplemental EIS by any of the following methods:

- *Website:* <https://go.usa.gov/xE3Nw>
- *Mail:* Bureau of Land Management,

Bakersfield Field Office, Attn: Bakersfield Hydraulic Fracturing Analysis, 3801 Pegasus Drive, Bakersfield, CA 93308

Copies of the Bakersfield Field Office Hydraulic Fracturing Draft Supplemental EIS are available during regular business hours in the Bakersfield Field Office.

**FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:**

Carly Summers, Supervisory Natural Resources Specialist, telephone: 661-391-6000, email: [csummers@blm.gov](mailto:csummers@blm.gov). Persons who use a telecommunications device for the deaf (TDD) may call the Federal Relay Service (FRS) at 1-800-877-8339 to contact the above individual during normal business hours. The FRS is available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, to leave a message or question. You will receive a reply during normal business hours.

**SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:** The Bakersfield Field Office planning area includes Fresno, Kern, Kings, Madera, San Luis Obispo, Santa Barbara, Tulare, and Ventura counties in California and encompasses approximately 400,000 acres of public land and 1.2 million acres of Federal mineral estate.

The supplemental environmental analysis is being conducted in response to a May 2017, U.S. District Court Order.

The BLM presented preliminary resource issues for public scoping review and comment in the August 8,

2018, **Federal Register** Notice of Intent (83 FR 39116). Issues identified by BLM personnel; Federal, State, and local agencies; and other stakeholders and analyzed in the Draft Supplemental EIS include: Air and atmospheric values; water quality and quantity; seismicity; special status species; and mineral resources (oil and gas). The U.S. District Court Order upheld the range of alternatives analyzed in the Proposed RMP/Final EIS. The five management alternatives as analyzed in the Proposed RMP/Final EIS were:

- The No Action alternative (Alternative A) would continue current management under the existing 1997 Caliente RMP and 1984 Hollister RMP, as amended.
- The Proposed Plan (Alternative B) strives to balance resource conservation and ecosystem health with the production of commodities and public use of the land.
- Alternative C emphasizes conserving cultural and natural resources, maintaining functioning natural systems, and restoring natural systems that are degraded.
- Alternative D follows Alternative C in all aspects except with regard to livestock grazing. Alternative D would eliminate livestock grazing from the BLM-managed lands in the planning area for the life of this land use plan.
- Alternative E emphasizes the production of natural resources and commodities while emphasizing public use opportunities.

The results of this draft supplemental analysis analyzing the impacts of hydraulic fracturing, additive to those identified in the 2012 Final EIS, did not show notable increase in total impacts. No conflicts were found between the estimated impacts of hydraulic fracturing and the resource or program management goals and objectives stated in the RMP. The range of alternatives has not changed between the approved 2014 RMP and its 2012 Final EIS and the Draft Supplemental EIS. Therefore, no amendment to the 2014 RMP is necessary.

You may submit comments on the Draft Supplemental EIS in writing to the BLM using one of the methods listed earlier in the **ADDRESSES** section. To be most helpful, you should submit comments by the close of the 45-day comment period.

The BLM will utilize and coordinate the NEPA process to help fulfill the public involvement process under the National Historic Preservation Act (54 U.S.C. 306108), as provided in 36 CFR 800.2(d)(3). The BLM will continue to consult with Indian tribes on a government-to-government basis, in

accordance with Executive Order 13175 and other policies. Tribal concerns, including impacts on Indian trust assets and potential impacts to cultural resources, will continue to be given due consideration. Federal, State, and local agencies, along with tribes and other stakeholders that may be interested in or affected by the proposed action that the BLM is evaluating, are invited to participate in the comment period.

Please note that public comments and information submitted, including names, street addresses, and email addresses of persons who submit comments, will be available for public review and disclosure at the address listed earlier during regular business hours (8 a.m. to 4 p.m.), Monday through Friday, except holidays.

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 us in your comment to withhold your personal identifying information from public review, we cannot guarantee that we will be able to do so.

(Authority: 40 CFR 1506.6, 40 CFR 1506.10)

**Joe Stout,**

*Acting State Director, California.*

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**DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR**

**Bureau of Land Management**

[LLCAD08000.L12200000.DT0000.19XL1109AF.LXSSB0010000 (MO#4500135579)]

**Notice of Availability of the Final Supplemental Environmental Impact Statement and Proposed Land Use Plan Amendment to the California Desert Conservation Area Plan for the West Mojave Route Network Project, Inyo, Kern, Los Angeles, Riverside, and San Bernardino Counties, California**

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

**ACTION:** Notice of availability.

**SUMMARY:** In accordance with the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969, as amended, and the Federal Land Policy and Management Act of 1976, as amended, the Bureau of Land Management (BLM) has prepared a Final Supplemental Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) and Proposed

Land Use Plan Amendment to the California Desert Conservation Area (CDCA) Plan for the West Mojave Route Network Project (WMRNP), and by this notice is announcing its availability.

**DATES:** BLM planning regulations state that any person who meets the conditions as described in the regulations may protest the BLM's Final Supplemental Environmental Impact Statement and Proposed Land Use Plan Amendment. A person who meets the conditions and files a protest must file the protest within 30 days of the date that the Environmental Protection Agency publishes its Notice of Availability in the **Federal Register**.

**ADDRESSES:** The Final Supplemental EIS and Proposed Land Use Plan Amendment is available electronically on the BLM ePlanning project website at <https://go.usa.gov/xE6YH>.

Copies of the Final Supplemental EIS and Proposed Land Use Plan Amendment are available for public inspection at the BLM-Ridgecrest Field Office, 300 South Richmond Road, Ridgecrest, CA 93555; the BLM-Barstow Field Office, 2601 Barstow Road, Barstow, CA 92311; and the BLM-California Desert District Office, 22835 Calle San Juan de Los Lagos, Moreno Valley, CA 92553.

All protests must be in writing and filed with the BLM Director, either as a hard copy or electronically, via the BLM's ePlanning project website listed previously. To submit a protest electronically, go to the ePlanning project website and follow the protest instructions highlighted at the top of the home page. If submitting a protest in hard copy, it must be mailed to one of the following addresses:

**Regular Mail:** BLM Director (210), Attention: Protest Coordinator, P.O. Box 71383, Washington, DC 20024-1383

**Overnight Delivery:** BLM Director (210), Attention: Protest Coordinator, 20 M Street SE, Room 2134LM, Washington, DC 20003

**FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:** Matt Toedtli, Planning and Environmental Coordinator, telephone: 760-252-6026; address: 2601 Barstow Road, Barstow, CA 92311; email: [mtoedtli@blm.gov](mailto:mtoedtli@blm.gov). Persons who use a telecommunications device for the deaf (TDD) may call the Federal Relay Service (FRS) at 1-800-877-8339 to contact Mr. Toedtli during normal business hours. The FRS is available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, to leave a message or question. You will receive a reply during normal business hours.

**SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:** The BLM prepared the WMRNP Proposed Land

Use Plan Amendment and Final Supplemental EIS to comply with a U.S. District Court Order that partially remanded the 2006 West Mojave (WEMO) Plan Amendment Record of Decision (ROD) to the BLM and directed the BLM to reconsider route designations throughout the WEMO Planning Area, as well as other specified issues in the 2006 WEMO Plan. The Court held that the BLM failed to consider regulatory criteria when designating routes, that the WEMO Plan was inconsistent with language of the CDCA Plan, which limits routes to those existing in 1980, and that the EIS did not contain a reasonable range of alternatives and failed to adequately address the No-Action Alternative or analyze impacts to soils, cultural resources, biological resources, and air quality.

The WMRNP involves both a land use plan amendment and implementation-level actions within the WEMO Planning Area. The land use plan amendment addresses specific regulation and policies, including travel management guidance for route designation, and amends language that limits the route network to routes that existed in 1980. Proposed changes to the land use plan include guidelines for stopping, parking, and camping adjacent to designated routes. Alternative 2 also considers changes to the livestock grazing program, which would re-allocate forage from livestock use to wildlife use and ecosystem function in desert tortoise critical habitat. Other plan-level changes considered include identifying travel management areas, modifying off-highway vehicle use on four lakebeds, modifying competitive event access, and eliminating the permit requirement for motorized access to the Rand Mountains-Fremont Valley Management Area. Implementation-level decisions considered include the adoption of travel management plans and a designated route network based on the designation criteria of 43 CFR 8342.1.

The WEMO planning area covers 9.4 million acres of the CDCA in the western portion of the Mojave Desert in southern California, including parts of San Bernardino, Los Angeles, Riverside, Kern, and Inyo counties. The WMRNP applies to the 3.1 million acres of public lands within the WEMO planning area. The 9.4 million-acre WEMO planning area includes several large Department of Defense facilities covering almost 3 million acres, a portion of one National Park, 3 million acres of private lands, and approximately 100,000 acres of State lands, including Red Rock Canyon State Park. Much of the planning area is

managed as part of the BLM's National Landscape Conservation System, including portions of the Pacific Crest Trail and the Old Spanish National Historic Trail. The planning area includes 63 Areas of Critical Environmental Concern, 5 California Desert National Conservation Lands, 7 National Register Archaeological and 6 National Register Historic Districts, 4 Critical Habitat Units for the federally listed desert tortoise, and 8 Off-Highway Vehicle Open Areas.

On March 16, 2018, the BLM issued a Draft Land Use Plan Amendment and Supplemental EIS. The Draft Supplemental EIS evaluated four alternatives, including a No-Action Alternative. During the 90-day public comment period, the BLM held four public meetings. The BLM received more than 9,000 public comments of which more than 7,900 were route-specific comments.

Public comments on the Draft Land Use Plan Amendment and Supplemental EIS were considered and incorporated as appropriate into the WMRNP Proposed Land Use Plan Amendment and Final Supplemental EIS. Public comments resulted in changes to the route designation alternatives, including addition of one alternative, additional environmental analysis for several resources, addition of clarifying text, re-organization of text including appendices, and removal of duplicative text. Comments that were not route-specific were organized into categories and responses were developed to each group of comments. The response-to-comment document is provided in Appendix I of the Final Supplemental EIS. The BLM has added and selected Alternative 5 as the Agency Proposed Action in the Proposed Land Use Plan Amendment and Final Supplemental EIS.

Instructions for filing a protest with the Director of the BLM regarding the Proposed Land Use Plan Amendment and Final Supplemental EIS may be found online at <https://go.usa.gov/xE6gN>, and at 43 CFR 1610.5-2. All protests must be in writing and mailed to the appropriate address, as set forth in the **ADDRESSES** section, or submitted electronically through the BLM ePlanning project website as described earlier. Protests submitted electronically by any means other than the ePlanning project website protest section will be invalid unless a protest is also submitted in hard copy. Protests submitted by fax will also be invalid unless also submitted either through the ePlanning project website protest section or in hard copy.

Unlike land use planning decisions, implementation decisions included in this Proposed Land Use Plan Amendment and Final Supplemental EIS are not subject to protest under the BLM planning regulations, but are subject to an administrative review process through appeals to the Office of Hearings and Appeals, Interior Board of Land Appeals pursuant to 43 CFR part 4 subpart E. Implementation decisions generally constitute the BLM's final approval allowing on-the-ground actions to proceed. Where implementation decisions are made as part of the land use planning process, they are still subject to the appeals process or other administrative review as prescribed by specific resource program regulations once the BLM resolves the protests to land use planning decisions and issues a Record of Decision.

Before including your address, phone number, email address, or other personal identifying information in your protest, please be aware that your entire protest—including your personal identifying information—may be made publically 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.

(Authority: 40 CFR 1506.6, 40 CFR 1506.10, 43 CFR 1610.2, 43 CFR 1610.5, 43 CFR 1610.6)

**Danielle Chi,**

*Deputy State Director, Fire and Resources.*

[FR Doc. 2019-08281 Filed 4-25-19; 8:45 am]

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## DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR

### Bureau of Land Management

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#### Notice of Availability of the Proposed San Pedro Riparian National Conservation Area Resource Management Plan and Final Environmental Impact Statement, Arizona

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

**ACTION:** Notice of availability.

**SUMMARY:** In accordance with the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969, as amended, and the Federal Land Policy and Management Act of 1976, as amended, the Bureau of Land Management (BLM) Tucson Field Office has prepared a Proposed Resource

Management Plan (RMP) and Final Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) for the San Pedro Riparian National Conservation Area and by this notice is announcing its availability.

**DATES:** BLM planning regulations state that any person who meets the conditions as described in the regulations may protest the BLM's Proposed RMP/Final EIS. A person who meets the conditions and files a protest must file the protest within 30 days of the date that the Environmental Protection Agency publishes its Notice of Availability in the **Federal Register**.

**ADDRESSES:** The Proposed RMP and Final EIS is available on the BLM ePlanning project website at <https://go.usa.gov/xQKFU>. Click the "Documents & Reports" link on the left side of the screen to find the electronic version of these materials. Hard copies of the Proposed RMP/Final EIS are also available for public inspection at the Arizona State Office, One North Central Ave., Suite 800 (8th Floor), Phoenix, AZ 84004; and the Tucson Field Office, 3201 East Universal Way, Tucson, AZ 85756.

All protests must be in writing and filed with the BLM Director, either as a hard copy or electronically via the BLM's ePlanning project website listed previously. To submit a protest electronically, go to the ePlanning project website and follow the protest instructions highlighted at the top of the home page. If submitting a protest in hard copy, it must be mailed to one of the following addresses:

**Regular Mail:** BLM Director (210),  
Attention: Protest Coordinator, P.O.  
Box 71383, Washington, DC 20024-  
1383

**Overnight Delivery:** BLM Director (210),  
Attention: Protest Coordinator, 20 M  
Street SE, Room 2134LM,  
Washington, DC 20003

**FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:**

Amy McGowan, Planning & Environmental Specialist, telephone 520-258-7231; address 3201 East Universal Way, Tucson, AZ 85756; email [blm\\_az\\_tfo\\_sprnca\\_rmp@blm.gov](mailto:blm_az_tfo_sprnca_rmp@blm.gov).

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

**SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:** The Conservation Area was established by Public Law 100-696 on November 18, 1988. The planning area is located in Cochise County in southeastern

Arizona, and encompasses approximately 55,990 acres of public land administered by the BLM Tucson Field Office. The Proposed RMP/Final EIS was prepared to address long-term management of the Conservation Area, accounting for the requirements of the enabling legislation.

Issues identified as part of the planning process and addressed in the Proposed RMP/Final EIS include management of riparian, water, vegetation, soil resources, fire, threatened and endangered species, wildlife, cultural resources, paleontological resources, educational, scientific, livestock grazing, access, recreation, socio-economics, and lands and realty. It also considers lands with wilderness characteristics, wild and scenic rivers, and Areas of Critical Environmental Concern.

The Proposed RMP/Final EIS evaluates a range of alternatives including the No Action and the proposed plan. A detailed description of these alternatives can be found in Chapter 2 of the Final EIS. The BLM's proposed plan is Alternative C, except that it includes the livestock grazing allocation from Alternative A, which allows grazing on 7,030 acres. This grazing allocation represents current management on the Conservation Area. The BLM's proposed plan represents a balance between resource protection and public access, authorizes livestock grazing on existing allotments, and provides for a diverse mix of recreation opportunities. The proposed plan focuses on active resource management and allows for the broadest array of management tools for ecosystem restoration to meet goals and objectives.

Comments on the Draft RMP/Draft EIS received from cooperators, tribes, other agencies, the public, and internal BLM review were considered and incorporated as appropriate into the proposed plan. In response to public comments, additional information related to increased livestock grazing was analyzed in the Final EIS and showed additional impacts on wildlife habitat and cultural and water resources would occur in areas not currently grazed. As a result, the BLM chose the existing grazing allocation as part of the proposed plan.

Instructions for filing a protest with the Director of the BLM regarding the Proposed RMP and Final EIS may be found online at <https://www.blm.gov/programs/planning-and-nepa/public-participation/filing-a-plan-protest> and at 43 CFR 1610.5-2. All protests must be in writing and mailed to the appropriate address, as set forth previously in the **ADDRESSES** section or submitted