

always the case in an exploration context. Higher exploration costs can reduce the likelihood that areas will be economically feasible to explore. Potentially productive areas that remain unexplored can prevent the nation and New Mexico from realizing the benefits of domestic energy production.¹³

Conclusion

As previously discussed, you have not identified inconsistencies with state resource related plans, policies, and programs. Neither are your recommendations for federal public lands completely consistent with the management practices on state lands with oil and gas resources. Nevertheless, I have instructed the New Mexico BLM to take steps to further strengthen its support for the state plans, policies, and programs that you have noted. Among these steps are expanded protection for potential bighorn sheep habitat and occupied black-tailed prairie dog habitat in the planning area.

Also, I have reviewed your complete recommended alternative as you requested. In short, your recommendations would place some 1,538,018 acres (75% of the planning area), either off-limits to drilling completely or under stipulations that place significant barriers to effective exploration and development. Such a plan is unbalanced. Your recommended plan does not give reasonable consideration to the federal and state interest in domestic energy exploration and production in Sierra and Otero Counties, and it adds little significant protection for other natural resources. I therefore cannot approve your recommended alternative and must deny your appeal.

The BLM proposed plan allows a reasonable opportunity for exploration and development, but the plan does not ignore the important environmental interests of the area. The plan closes the six Areas of Critical Environmental Concern (ACEC) to leasing. It also closes eight areas that have been nominated for ACEC status. As you previously recommended, the BLM proposed plan will not allow any fluid mineral leasing in the 35,790 acres of potential Aplomado falcon habitat located in the Nutt and Otero Mesa grassland areas. The broader grassland areas are subject to protective stipulations, including the 5% maximum disturbance rule. All of this is under the umbrella of the RFD-based analysis that anticipates short term disturbance from oil and gas activities of 1,589 acres throughout this nearly 2.1 million acre planning area. That disturbed area is less than one-tenth of 1% of the entire planning area. The proposed plan also includes strict landscape reclamation standards that will be applied to any areas of disturbance. I believe the BLM proposed plan offers a reasonable balance between energy needs and environmental considerations and improves the management regime found in the currently effective 1986 *White Sands RMP*.

¹³ For example, the unleased areas closest to the successful Bennett Ranch well location would be subject to the NSO stipulation under your alternative. Under the *Proposed RMPA/EIS* plan this area would be subject to stipulations, such as the 5% rule, that would allow for the possibility of limited exploration with both vertical and directional wells.

Under that plan, some 96% of the planning area would be open to leasing without any special stipulations.

Again, I thank you for your participation in the land use planning process for Sierra and Otero Counties. Your appeal is hereby denied, and I affirm the decision of the New Mexico State Director. Although I have denied this appeal, it is my hope that the New Mexico BLM and the State of New Mexico will continue to communicate and cooperate on future issues.

Sincerely,

Kathleen Clarke,

Director, Bureau of Land Management.

[FR Doc. 05-1315 Filed 1-24-05; 8:45 am]

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DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR

Bureau of Land Management

[NV-952-05-1420-BJ]

Filing of Plats of Survey; Nevada

AGENCY: Bureau of Land Management.

ACTION: Notice.

SUMMARY: The purpose of this notice is to inform the public and interested State and local government officials of the filing of Plats of Survey in Nevada.

EFFECTIVE DATES: Filing is effective at 10 a.m. on the dates indicated below.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:

David D. Morlan, Chief, Branch of Geographic Sciences, Bureau of Land Management (BLM), Nevada State Office, 1340 Financial Blvd., P.O. Box 12000, Reno, Nevada 89520, 775-861-6541.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

1. The Plat of Survey of the following described lands was officially filed at the Nevada State Office, Reno, Nevada, on December 16, 2004:

The plat, in six (6) sheets, representing the dependent reserve survey of a portion of the south boundary of T. 14 N., R. 25 E.; a portion of the subdivisional lines and Mineral Survey Nos. 4499, 4531, and 4778, and the subdivision of certain sections, Township 13 North, Range 25 East, Mount Diablo Meridian, Nevada, under Group No. 806, was accepted December 14, 2004. This survey was executed to meet certain administrative needs of the Bureau of Land Management.

2. The above-listed survey is now the basic record for describing the lands for all authorized purposes. This survey has been placed in the open files in the BLM Nevada State Office and is available to the public as a matter of information. Copies of the survey and related field notes may be furnished to the public upon payment of the appropriate fees.

Dated: January 13, 2005.

David D. Morlan,

Chief Cadastral Surveyor, Nevada.

[FR Doc. 05-1260 Filed 1-24-05; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 4310-HC-P

DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR

Bureau of Reclamation

Contra Costa Water District Alternative Intake Project, Contra Costa and San Joaquin Counties, CA

AGENCY: Bureau of Reclamation, Interior.

ACTION: Notice of Intent to prepare an environmental impact statement (EIS) and notice of scoping meetings.

SUMMARY: Pursuant to section 102(2)(c) of the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA), the Department of the Interior, Bureau of Reclamation (Reclamation) intends to prepare an EIS to evaluate Contra Costa Water District's (CCWD's) proposed Alternative Intake Project. The project purpose is to protect and improve water quality for CCWD's customers. The proposed action includes the construction of a new intake and fish screen in the Central Delta, a pumping plant, and an associated pipeline from the new intake to CCWD's Old River Pumping Plant on Old River. The proposed action would involve adding a new point of diversion to certain existing water rights held by CCWD and by Reclamation. In addition to the proposed action, other alternatives will be evaluated that may include different intake locations, desalination, and other treatment options. Potential Federal involvement may include the approval of an additional point of diversion pursuant to CCWD's water service contract with Reclamation, and operational changes. The EIS will be combined with an Environmental Impact Report (EIR) prepared by CCWD pursuant to the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA).

DATES: Three public scoping meetings will be held to solicit comments from interested parties to assist in determining the scope of the environmental analysis, including the alternatives to be addressed, and to identify the significant environmental issues related to the proposed action. The meeting dates are:

- Tuesday, February 15, 6-8 p.m. in Concord, California.
- Wednesday, February 16, 10 a.m.-12 p.m. in Sacramento, California.
- Thursday, February 17, 6-8 p.m. in Antioch, California.

Written comments on the scope of the environmental document, alternatives, and impacts to be considered should be sent to Ms. Samantha Salvia at the address below. All comments are requested by March 4, 2005.

ADDRESSES: The scoping meetings will be held at:

- Concord at the CCWD Board Room, Contra Costa Water District, 1331 Concord Avenue.
- Sacramento at the Federal Building Cafeteria Conference Room C-1001, Bureau of Reclamation, 2800 Cottage Way.
- Antioch at the Veterans of Foreign Wars Hall, 815 Fulton Shipyard Road.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Ms. Samantha Salvia, Project Manager, Contra Costa Water District, P.O. Box H2O, Concord, CA 94524-2099, (925) 688-8057, alternativeintake@ccwater.com; or Mr. Robert Eckart, Supervisory Environmental Specialist, Bureau of Reclamation, Mid-Pacific Region, 2800 Cottage Way, MP-152, Sacramento, CA, 95825-1898, (916) 978-5051, reckart@mp.usbr.gov. If you would like to be included on the EIS/EIR mailing list, please contact Ms. Salvia by e-mail at alternativeintake@ccwater.com.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

Background

CCWD's mission is "to strategically provide its service area with a reliable supply of high-quality water at the lowest cost possible, in an environmentally responsible manner." CCWD relies entirely upon the Sacramento-San Joaquin Delta for its supply, which includes both Central Valley Project (CVP) water and water diverted under CCWD water rights. Water quality problems for CCWD result from elevated concentrations of salinity, minerals, bromide and organic carbon, and turbidity in Delta source water. These constituents can cause taste and odor problems for consumers and may contribute to health risks in some individuals. Water quality degradation in the Delta from increased diversions, upstream development, and runoff, have made it more difficult for CCWD to meet increasingly stringent drinking water regulations and the water quality objectives that CCWD has set for service to its customers.

To continue to protect and improve water quality delivered to its customers, CCWD is initiating a two-year planning study that will evaluate the benefits of CCWD adding a new, screened intake and conveyance system in the southwest portion of the central Delta, to access better source water quality.

The study will complete project planning, alternatives analyses, a joint EIR/EIS, permitting, and preliminary engineering design by mid-2006. At that point, it will be decided whether to proceed with design and construction of the recommended project.

The proposed project would add a new intake at a location with better quality water, but would not increase CCWD's total diversion capacity (rate or annual quantity). The existing Old River Intake and Pump Station, with a current capacity of 250 cubic feet per second (cfs), would remain in place. The new up to 250 cfs intake would provide CCWD with the operational flexibility to divert water from Old River or the new intake to provide the highest water quality for CCWD customers (the total maximum diversion rate of 250 cfs would not change). A new pipeline, approximately two to four miles in length, would convey water from the new intake, in the southwest portion of the Delta, to CCWD's existing Old River conveyance system.

The proposed project would involve adding a new point of diversion to certain existing water rights held by CCWD and by Reclamation. CCWD would not seek to increase its water rights, CVP contract amounts, or Los Vaqueros Reservoir filling or release rates through this project; CCWD and Reclamation would only seek to add a new point of diversion.

If implemented, it is anticipated that the project would help protect CCWD customers' future water quality, ensure that CCWD is able to meet or exceed future drinking water regulatory requirements, and provide increased operational flexibility. The project would be developed in a way that avoids or minimizes impacts, including impacts to Delta water users and to the environment.

Additional Information

The environmental review will be conducted pursuant to NEPA, CEQA, the federal and state Endangered Species Acts, and other applicable laws, to analyze the potential environmental impacts of implementing a range of feasible alternatives. There are no known Indian Trust Assets or environmental justice issues associated with the proposed action. Public input on the range of alternatives to be considered will be sought through the public scoping process.

Our practice is to make comments, including names and home addresses of respondents, available for public review. Individual respondents may request that we withhold their home addresses from public disclosure, which

we will honor to the extent allowable by law. There also may be circumstances in which we would withhold a respondent's identity from public disclosure, as allowable by law. If you wish us to withhold your name and/or address, you must state this prominently at the beginning of your comment. We will make all submissions from organizations or businesses, and from individuals identifying themselves as representatives or officials of organizations or businesses, available for public disclosure in their entirety.

Dated: January 18, 2005.

Frank Michny,

Regional Environmental Officer, Mid-Pacific Region.

[FR Doc. 05-1286 Filed 1-24-05; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 4310-MN-P

DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE

[OVW Docket No. 0001]

Office on Violence Against Women; Notice of Meeting

AGENCY: Office on Violence Against Women, Justice.

ACTION: Notice of meeting.

SUMMARY: This notice sets forth the schedule and proposed agenda of the forthcoming public meeting of the National Advisory Committee on Violence Against Women (hereinafter "the Committee").

DATES: The meeting will take place on February 10, 2005, from 8:30 a.m. to 4 p.m. and on February 11, 2005, from 8:30 am to 12 noon.

ADDRESSES: The meeting will take place at the Westin Embassy Row, 2100 Massachusetts Avenue NW., Washington, DC 20008.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Jana Sinclair White, The National Advisory Committee on Violence Against Women, 810 Seventh Street, NW., Washington, DC, 20531; by telephone at: (202) 307-6026; e-mail: Jana.S.White@usdoj.gov; or fax: (202) 307-3911. You may also view the Committee's Web site at: <http://www.ojp.usdoj.gov/vawo/nac/welcome.html>.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: Notice of this meeting is required under section 10(a)(2) of the Federal Advisory Committee Act. The Committee is chartered by the Attorney General, and co-chaired by the Attorney General and the Secretary of Health and Human Services (the Secretary), to provide the Attorney General and the Secretary with practical and general policy advice concerning implementation of the