

will serve as a comprehensive "blueprint" sufficient to guide future management of the Merced River corridor in Yosemite National Park.

Background: In 1987, Congress designated 122 miles of the Merced River and its South Fork as Wild and Scenic, including the 81 miles within Yosemite National Park and the El Portal Administrative Site. The National Park Service (NPS) completed the Merced Wild and Scenic River Comprehensive Management Plan/Final Environmental Impact Statement in August 2000. Soon after, two citizens' groups filed suit in the U.S. District Court for the Eastern District of California, resulting in the production of the Merced Wild and Scenic River Revised Comprehensive Management Plan/Supplemental Environmental Impact Statement (MCMP/SEIS) in 2005. Subsequent court proceedings culminated in a 2006 U.S. District Court decision that invalidated the park's MCMP/SEIS and ordered the NPS to prepare a new comprehensive management plan. On January 9, 2007, the NPS proposed a 33-month timeline to the court for the preparation of the NMRP/EIS, which would result in a Record of Decision on September 30, 2009. The NPS initiated public scoping for the NMRP on March 28, 2007; a Notice of Intent to prepare an Environmental Impact Statement was published on April 11, 2007 in the **Federal Register** (public scoping lasted 74 days, closing on June 10, 2007). Concurrently, the NPS appealed U.S. District Court's decision that the 2005 MCMP/SEIS was invalid. On March 27, 2008 the U.S. Court of Appeals for the Ninth Circuit (Ninth Circuit) issued an opinion affirming the judgment of the District Court and expanding the scope of what the NPS had previously understood must be included in a legally valid Merced Wild and Scenic River Comprehensive Management Plan. Consequently the NPS is reopening public scoping for the NMRP/EIS so as to provide additional opportunity for public involvement in developing a new plan.

The NMRP/EIS will address: resource protection; existing and potential development of lands and facilities; user capacities; and the kinds and amounts of use which the river area can sustain without impacting values for which it was designated. It will identify specific management measures that will be used to protect and enhance the outstandingly remarkable values (ORVs) for each of the river segments, including the scenic, recreational, geological, fish and wildlife, historic, cultural or other similar values. In addition, the NMRP/

EIS will address the quantity and mixture of recreation and other public uses that may be permitted without adverse impact to the ORVs, including a discussion of the maximum number of people that may be received at the river while protecting and enhancing the values for which the Merced and South Fork Merced were included in the Wild and Scenic Rivers system.

Scoping and Public Meetings: The purpose of re-opening scoping is to receive any new public comments about issues and concerns that should be addressed in the New MRP/EIS, including a suitable range of alternatives, appropriate mitigation measures, and the nature and extent of potential environmental impacts. Given that all prior scoping comments remain under consideration, at this time only pertinent information or concerns not previously provided need to be submitted. Broad participation of interested individuals and organizations is important to the planning and analysis process. During this concluding phase, the public is invited to share new concerns that should be considered in the development of the draft NMRP/EIS. Yosemite National Park will also further consult tribal, federal, state, and local governments. The renewed opportunity for scoping will be posted on the park Web site, and press releases will be distributed to local and regional media. Dates, times, specific locations, and additional information will be released through regional and local news sources, and updates will be posted at www.nps.gov/yose/planning/mrp. In addition, updates regarding future public involvement opportunities, including workshops for alternatives formulation and later release of the draft NMRP/EIS for public review, will be similarly announced in regional news media and on the park's Web site, and through direct mailings.

Written comments should be addressed to the Superintendent, Attn: Merced River Plan, Yosemite National Park, PO Box 577, Yosemite National Park, CA 95389, or faxed to (209) 379-1294, and must be postmarked or transmitted not later than 60 days from the publication date of this NOI in the **Federal Register** (immediately upon confirmation of this date it will be posted on the park's Web site and announced via local and regional press). Before including your address, phone number, e-mail address, or other personal identifying information in your comment, be advised 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 from public review your personal identifying information, we cannot guarantee that we will be able to do so.

Decision Process: At this time it is expected that following due consideration of all comments on the draft NMRP/EIS as may be received, the final NMRP/EIS would be made available during spring-summer 2012, with preparation of a Record of Decision anticipated during September, 2012. As a delegated EIS the official responsible for final approval of the NMRP/EIS is the Regional Director, Pacific West Region. Subsequently the official responsible for implementing the approved new Merced Wild and Scenic River Comprehensive Management Plan would be the Superintendent, Yosemite National Park.

Dated: March 10, 2009.

Jonathan B. Jarvis,

Regional Director, Pacific West Region.

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DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR

Bureau of Land Management

[LLNVS0100.L51010000.ER0000.
LVRWF09F8770; NVN-085077 and NVN-
085801; 09-08807; TAS: 14X5017]

Notice of Intent To Prepare an Environmental Impact Statement for the Proposed NextLight Renewable Power, LLC, Silver State North Solar Project and Silver State South Solar Project, Pimm, NV

AGENCY: Bureau of Land Management, Interior.

ACTION: Notice of intent.

SUMMARY: In compliance with the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969, as amended (NEPA), the Bureau of Land Management (BLM), Las Vegas Field Office, will prepare one environmental impact statement (EIS) for two proposed solar energy projects located on public lands in Clark County, Nevada. Publication of this notice initiates the beginning of the scoping process to solicit public comments and identify issues.

DATES: This notice initiates the public scoping process. Comments on issues may be submitted in writing until July 30, 2009. The date(s) and location(s) of any scoping meetings will be announced at least 15 days in advance through local news media and the BLM Web site at: <http://www.blm.gov/nv/st/en/fo/lvfo.html>.

ADDRESSES: Submit comments related to the project by any of the following methods:

- *E-mail:*

Nextlight Primm NV SEP@blm.gov

- *Fax:* (702) 515-5010, attention

Gregory Helseth.

- *Mail:* BLM, Las Vegas Field Office, Attn: Gregory Helseth, 4701 North Torrey Pines Drive, Las Vegas, NV 89130-2301.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: For further information and/or to have your name added to the mailing list, contact Gregory Helseth, Renewable Energy Project Manager, at (702) 515-5173; or e-mail at

Nextlight Primm NV SEP@blm.gov.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: NextLight Renewable Power, LLC, has submitted two applications for rights-of-way for the construction, operation, maintenance, and termination of two solar energy generation sites. The two applications are identified as NVN-085077 Silver State South Solar Project, and NVN-085801 Silver State North Solar Project. The proposed projects would consist of photovoltaic panels and related right-of-way appurtenances, including a substation and switchyard facilities. The proposed projects, combined, would produce approximately 400 megawatts of electricity, and would be located on approximately 7,840 acres of public lands east of Primm, Nevada.

Issues that are anticipated to be addressed in this EIS include threatened and endangered species impacts, visual impacts, socioeconomic impacts, and cumulative impacts. The EIS will analyze the site-specific impacts on air quality, biological resources, cultural resources, water resources, geological resources and hazards, hazardous materials handling, land and airspace use, noise, paleontological resources, public health, socioeconomic, soils, traffic and transportation, visual resources, waste management, worker safety, and fire protection, as well as facility design engineering, efficiency, reliability, transmission system engineering, transmission line safety, and nuisance. Native American Tribal consultations will be conducted in accordance with policy, and Tribal concerns will be given due consideration, including impacts on Indian trust assets. Federal, State, and local agencies, as well as individuals or organizations that may be interested in 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.

Documents pertinent to this project may be examined at the Las Vegas Field Office. Additional opportunities for public participation will be provided upon publication of the draft EIS.

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.

(Authority: 43 CFR Part 2800)

Robert B. Ross Jr.,

Las Vegas Field Manager.

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DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR

Bureau of Land Management

[LLW0350000.L14300000]

Notice of Availability of Maps and Additional Public Scoping for Programmatic Environmental Impact Statement To Develop and Implement Agency-Specific Programs for Solar Energy Development; Bureau of Land Management Approach for Processing Existing and Future Solar Applications

AGENCY: Bureau of Land Management, Interior.

ACTION: Notice of Availability.

SUMMARY: The Department of Energy (DOE) and the Bureau of Land Management (BLM) (the Agencies) are announcing the availability of maps depicting solar energy study areas to be analyzed in their joint Programmatic Environmental Impact Statement to Develop and Implement Agency-Specific Programs for Solar Energy Development (Solar PEIS) and the opportunity for additional public scoping. The BLM is issuing this Notice to inform the public of the availability of the solar energy study area maps; to solicit public comments for consideration in identifying environmental issues, existing resource data, and industry interest with respect to the solar energy study areas in particular; and to explain how the BLM will address existing and future solar energy development applications on BLM-administered lands.

DATES: The time period for public comments starts with the publication of this notice in the **Federal Register** and

will continue through July 30, 2009. Comments received or postmarked after that date will be considered to the extent practicable.

ADDRESSES: You may submit written comments by the following methods:

- Electronically, using the online comment form available on the project Web site: <http://solareis.anl.gov>. This is the preferred method of commenting.

- In writing, addressed to: Solar Energy PEIS, Argonne National Laboratory, 9700 S. Cass Avenue—EVS/900, Argonne, IL 60439.

Availability of Maps: Maps of the solar energy study areas are available electronically from the project Web site: <http://solareis.anl.gov>. The maps may also be obtained from the following BLM offices:

Arizona State Office, One North Central Avenue, Suite 800, Phoenix, AZ 85004.

California State Office, 2800 Cottage Way, Suite W-1623, Sacramento, CA 95825.

Colorado State Office, 2850 Youngfield Street, Lakewood, CO 80215.

Nevada State Office, 1340 Financial Blvd., Reno, NV 89520.

New Mexico State Office, 1474 Rodeo Road, Santa Fe, NM 87505.

Utah State Office, 440 West 200 South, Suite 500, Salt Lake City, UT 84101.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: For further information contact: Linda Resseguie, BLM Washington Office, linda_reseguie@blm.gov, 202-452-7774; or Lisa Jorgensen, Department of Energy, Golden Field Office, lisa.jorgensen@go.doe.gov, 303-275-4906. You may also visit the Solar PEIS Web site at <http://solareis.anl.gov>.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: On May 29, 2008, the Agencies published a Notice of Intent to Prepare a Programmatic Environmental Impact Statement to Evaluate Solar Energy Development (73 FR 30908). Subsequently, the Agencies held a series of public scoping meetings, received public comments, and published a scoping summary report, available at <http://solareis.anl.gov>.

On March 11, 2009, the Secretary of the Interior issued Secretarial Order No. 3285, which announced a policy goal of identifying and prioritizing specific locations best suited for large-scale production of solar energy. Also, the BLM received funding from the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act to accelerate permitting of renewable energy projects on public lands. A portion of that funding is being used to enhance the Solar PEIS by enabling in-depth environmental analysis of 24 specific tracts of public