

stakeholders and individuals at this time for initial input. If you would like to meet with planning staff or would like to receive periodic updates, please contact us (*see ADDRESSES*). We anticipate holding public meetings for initial comments and also when we have identified alternative management scenarios. At this time we encourage comments in the form of issues, concerns, ideas, and suggestions for the future management of Hopper Mountain, Bitter Creek, and Blue Ridge NWRs.

We will conduct the environmental review of this project in accordance with the requirements of the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969, as amended (NEPA) (42 U.S.C. 4321 *et seq.*); NEPA regulations (40 CFR parts 1500–1508); other appropriate Federal laws and regulations; and our policies and procedures for compliance with those laws and regulations.

Hopper Mountain National Wildlife Refuge

Hopper Mountain NWR is in Ventura County, approximately 6 miles north of the community of Fillmore. Hopper Mountain NWR was established in 1974 to protect the endangered California condor, its habitat, and other wildlife resources. The refuge encompasses 2,471 contiguous acres owned in fee title by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service. This refuge is currently closed to public use.

Bitter Creek National Wildlife Refuge

Bitter Creek NWR is located approximately 80 miles north of Los Angeles and approximately 10 miles southwest of the community of Maricopa in the arid foothills, primarily in Kern County. The legislatively approved refuge boundary also falls within parts of San Luis Obispo and Ventura Counties. Bitter Creek NWR was established in 1985 to provide safe roosting and foraging habitat for California condors. The refuge encompasses nearly 14,097 acres owned in fee title by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service. The Bitter Creek NWR Grassland Habitat Management and Restoration Plan Environmental Assessment and Compatibility Determination is ongoing. This refuge is currently closed to public use.

Blue Ridge National Wildlife Refuge

Blue Ridge NWR is located in central Tulare County in the foothills of the Sierra Nevada Mountains, 11 miles north of Springville and 17.5 miles northeast of Porterville, California. Blue Ridge NWR was established in 1982 to protect critical habitat for the California

condor. Blue Ridge NWR encompasses 897 acres owned in fee title by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service. This refuge is currently closed to public use.

Scoping: Preliminary Issues, Concerns, and Opportunities

We have identified preliminary issues, concerns, and opportunities that we may address in the CCP. These include: Wildlife management, habitat management, wildlife-dependent recreation, environmental education, and cultural resources. During public scoping, we may identify additional issues.

Public Meetings

We will give the public an opportunity to provide input at public meetings. You can obtain the schedule from the planning team leader or project leader (*see FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT*). You may also submit comments or request a meeting during the planning process by mail, e-mail, or fax (*see ADDRESSES*). There will be additional opportunities to provide public input once we have prepared a draft CCP.

Public Availability of Comments

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.

Dated: March 26, 2010.

Ken McDermond,

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

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DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR

Bureau of Land Management

[**CACA 048811, LLCAD06000, L51010000.FX0000, LVRWB09B2600**]

Notice of Availability of the Draft Environmental Impact Statement/Staff Assessment for the Chevron Energy Solutions/Solar Millennium (CESSM) Blythe Solar Power Plant (BSPP) and Possible California Desert Conservation Area Plan Amendment

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) and the California Energy Commission (CEC) have prepared a Draft Environmental Impact Statement (EIS), Draft California Desert Conservation Area (CDCA) Plan Amendment, and Staff Assessment (SA) as a joint environmental analysis document for the CESSM BSPP Project, Riverside County, California, and by this notice are announcing the opening of the comment period.

DATES: To ensure that comments will be considered, the BLM must receive written comments on the Draft EIS/SA and Plan Amendment within 90 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 comments related to the BSPP Project by any of the following methods:

- *E-mail:* CAPSSolarBlythe@blm.gov.
- *Fax:* (760) 833-7199.
- *Mail or other delivery service:*

Allison Shaffer, Project Manager, Palm Springs South Coast Field Office, Bureau of Land Management, 1201 Bird Center Drive, Palm Springs, California 92262.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:

Allison Shaffer, BLM Project Manager at (760) 833-7100.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: CESSM has submitted a right-of-way (ROW) application to the BLM for development of the proposed BSPP Project, consisting of four parabolic-trough solar thermal power plants, each of which has a “solar field” comprised of rows of parabolic mirrors focusing solar energy on collector tubes. The tubes carry heated oil to a boiler that sends live steam to a steam turbine. The project would be built in four phases, which are designed to generate in total approximately 968 megawatts (MW) of electricity at full development. The total expected project footprint aggregates approximately 7,030 acres of BLM-managed lands, with the total proposed ROW involving about 9,400 acres. The project site is in Riverside County, California, approximately eight miles west of Blythe, California, three miles north of Highway I-10, and one mile north of the Blythe Regional Airport.

The project also includes an electrical transmission line, natural gas pipeline, and an access road. A new single-circuit 500-kilovolt generation-tie transmission line would be constructed to interconnect to the Desert Southwest/Colorado River substation.

Approximately 9.5 miles of this new line would be outside the project area, but is included in the analysis. The new line would occupy approximately 183 acres of public lands, and proposes to utilize a 225-foot wide ROW. This dry-cooled power plant would use approximately 600 acre-feet of water per year for feed water makeup, dust control, domestic uses, and mirror washing. The water would be obtained from on-site water wells.

The BLM's purpose and need for the BSPP project is to respond to CESSM's application under Title V of the Federal Land Policy and Management Act (FLPMA) (43 U.S.C. 1761) for a ROW grant to construct, operate, and decommission a solar thermal facility on public lands in compliance with FLPMA, BLM ROW regulations, and other applicable Federal laws. The BLM will decide whether to grant, grant with modification, or deny a ROW to CESSM for the proposed BSPP project. The BLM is also proposing to amend the CDCA Plan by designating the project area as either available or unavailable for solar energy projects. The CDCA Plan (1980, as amended), while recognizing the potential compatibility of solar generation facilities with other uses on public lands, requires that all sites proposed for power generation or transmission not already identified in the plan be considered through the plan amendment process. If the BLM decides to grant a ROW for this project, the CDCA Plan would be amended as required.

In response to the application received from CESSM, the BLM's proposed action is to authorize the CESSM BSPP project, amend the CDCA Plan to designate the project area as available for solar energy projects, and amend the Plan to provide for the CESSM BSPP project.

In addition to the proposed action, the BLM is analyzing the following action alternatives: A reconfigured, 1,000-MW alternative and a smaller 750-MW alternative, both of which would amend the CDCA Plan to designate the area as available for solar energy projects and approve this project. As required under the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA), the Draft EIS analyzes a no action alternative that would not require a CDCA Plan amendment. The Draft EIS also analyzes two no project alternatives that reject the project, but amend the

CDCA Plan to: (1) Designate the project area as available to future solar energy power generation projects; or (2) designate the project area as unavailable to future solar energy power generation projects. The BLM will take into consideration the provisions of the Energy Policy Act of 2005 and Secretarial Orders 3283 *Enhancing Renewable Energy Development on the Public Lands* and 3285 *Renewable Energy Development by the Department of the Interior* in responding to the BSPP application.

The BLM has entered into a Memorandum of Understanding with the CEC to conduct a joint environmental review of solar thermal projects that are proposed on Federal land managed by the BLM with the CEC as the lead agency preparing the environmental documents. The BLM and CEC have agreed to conduct a joint environmental review of the project in a single combined NEPA/California Environmental Quality Act process and document. The Draft EIS/SA analyzes site-specific impacts of the proposed project on air quality; biological, cultural, water, soil, visual, paleontological, and geological resources; recreation; land use; noise; public health; socioeconomic; and traffic and transportation. The Draft EIS/SA also addresses hazardous materials handling, waste management, worker safety, fire protection, facility design engineering, efficiency, reliability, transmission system engineering, transmission line safety, and nuisance. A Notice of Intent to Prepare an EIS/SA Amendment for the Proposed CESSM BSPP in Riverside County, California was published November 23, 2008 (73 FR 61902). The BLM held one public scoping meeting in Palm Desert, California, on December 11, 2008. The formal scoping period ended December 23, 2009. The CEC held an Informational Hearing, Environmental Scoping Meeting, and Public Site Visit in cooperation with the BLM on January 25, 2010.

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

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: 40 CFR 1506.6 and 1506.10 and 43 CFR 1610.2.

Dated: March 11, 2010.

Karla D. Norris,

Associate Deputy State Director.

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DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR

Bureau of Land Management

[LLNM915000L14200000.BJ0000]

Notice of Filing of Plats of Survey, New Mexico

AGENCY: Bureau of Land Management, Interior.

ACTION: Notice of filing of Plats of Survey.

SUMMARY: The plats of survey described below are scheduled to be officially filed in the New Mexico State Office, Bureau of Land Management (BLM), Santa Fe, New Mexico, thirty (30) calendar days from the date of this publication.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

New Mexico Principal Meridian, New Mexico (NM):

The plat representing the dependent resurvey and survey in Township 15 North, Range 19 West, of the New Mexico Principal Meridian, accepted March 17, 2010, for Group 1103 NM.

The plat representing the dependent resurvey and survey, in Township 23 North, Range 8 East, of the New Mexico Principal Meridian, accepted February 12, 2010, for Group 1092 NM.

The plat, in two sheets, representing the dependent resurvey and survey, of the San Clemente Grant, accepted January 29, 2010, for Group 1072 NM.

The plat, in two sheets, representing the dependent resurvey and survey, in Township 24 North, Range 11 East, of the New Mexico Principal Meridian, accepted March 10, 2010, for Group 992 NM.

Indian Meridian, Oklahoma (OK):

The plat, in two sheets, representing the dependent resurvey and survey in Township 17 North, Range 12 West, of the Indian Meridian, accepted December 24, 2009, for Group 182 OK.

If a protest against a survey, as shown on any of the above plats is received