

Barstow. The Notice of Intent for this effort was published in the **Federal Register** on September 5, 1995 announcing the beginning of the conservation planning process. The planning team conducted 20 public scoping meetings in September 1995 and April 1997 to gather information about public concerns and issues on management direction for the Preserve and BLM lands. In addition, a number of agency scoping meetings were also held. From this data and meetings with interested parties (such as county departments, special interest groups, state agencies, Native American tribes, etc.) and discussions with NPS and BLM staff, proposed management plans were developed.

In September 1998 the Mojave National Preserve Draft Environmental Impact Statement and General Management Plan was released for public review. Approximately 450 printed and 100 CD-ROM copies of the Draft EIS/GMP were distributed for review. The entire document was also posted on the Internet with links from the park's homepage and the Northern and Eastern Mojave planning page. A notice of filing of the Draft EIS/GMP was published in the **Federal Register** by the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) on September 11, 1998 (FR 48727). Written comments were accepted from September 11, 1998 through January 15, 1999, a period of 127 days. Eleven public meetings were held in October 1998 throughout the planning region of southern California and southern Nevada. In addition, the planning team attended and participated in numerous meetings of the Mojave Advisory Commission to obtain their feedback, concerns, and direction regarding the development of the general management plan. The NPS received approximately 390 comment letters from government agencies, tribes, interest groups, and individuals. In addition, members of environmental groups (National Parks and Conservation Association, The Sierra Club, and The Wilderness Society) sent in approximately 1,800 identical postcards. Several additional letters and postcards were received after the closing date for public comments.

Due to the large number of substantial changes required as a result of public comment on the 1998 Draft EIS/GMP, the NPS decided to rewrite the document. In September 2000, a Revised Draft Environmental Impact Statement and General Management Plan was released for 92 days of public review. Responses to all written substantive comments on the 1998 Draft EIS/GMP were addressed in a separately

bound report. The EPA published a notice of filing in the **Federal Register** on September 6, 2000 (FR 54064–54065). Eleven more public meetings on the revised draft plan were held in southern California and southern Nevada during October and November 2000. During the public comment period, a total of 202 written comments were received.

Upon review of public and agency comments regarding the Revised EIS/GMP, it was determined that no new substantive issues were raised, therefore, the NPS decided to prepare an Abbreviated Final EIS/GMP, dated June 2001. The abbreviated format for the Final EIS/GMP was used because the changes to the revised document were minor and confined primarily to factual corrections, which did not modify the analysis. Use of this format is in accord with regulations implementing the 1969 National Environmental Policy Act (40 CFR 1503.4[c]). This abbreviated format requires that the material in this document be integrated with the Revised Draft Environmental Impact Statement and General Management Plan to comprise a full and complete record of the environmental impact analysis, public and agency comment, and decisionmaking process.

Conclusion

Following the signing of this Record of Decision, the NPS will excerpt and print the final General Management Plan as a stand-alone document, which can be readily used by park staff and interested individuals and organizations as the “blueprint” for managing the Preserve over the next 10–15 years. The selected alternative was the agency preferred alternative and the environmentally preferred alternative as documented in the Abbreviated Final Environmental Impact Statement and General Management Plan, dated June 2001. Persons desiring a copy of the Presentation Plan when it becomes available, or the complete Record of Decision at this time, may contact the Superintendent, Mojave National Preserve, 222 E. Main St., Ste. 202, Barstow, California, 92311.

September 28, 2001.

Patricia L. Neubacher,

Acting Regional Director

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DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR

National Park Service

Final Environmental Impact Statement/General Management Plan, Mount Rainier National Park, Pierce and Lewis Counties, WA; Notice of Approval of Record of Decision

Summary

Pursuant to § 102(2)(C) of the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969 (Public Law 91–190, as amended) and the regulations promulgated by the Council on Environmental Quality (40 CFR part 1505.2), the Department of the Interior, National Park Service has prepared and approved a Record of Decision for the Final Environmental Impact Statement/General Management Plan for Mount Rainier National Park. The no-action period was initiated November 9, 2001, with the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency's **Federal Register** (V66, N218, P56673) notification of the filing of the Final Environmental Impact Statement (FEIS).

Decision

As soon as practical the National Park Service will begin to implement the General Management Plan described as the Preferred Alternative (Alternative 2) contained in the FEIS, issued in October 2001. This alternative was deemed to be the “environmentally preferred” alternative, and it was further determined that implementation of the selected actions will not constitute an impairment of park values or resources. This course of action and two alternatives were identified and analyzed in the Final and Draft Environmental Impact Statements (the latter was distributed in November 2000). The full ranges of foreseeable environmental consequences were assessed, and appropriate mitigation measures identified.

Copies

Interested parties desiring to review the Record of Decision may obtain a copy by contacting the Superintendent, Mount Rainier National Park, Tahoma Woods, Star Route, Ashford, Washington 98304–9751; or via telephone request at (360) 589–2211 ext. 2332.

Dated: February 7, 2002.

John J. Reynolds,

Regional Director, Pacific West Region.

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