

Dated: July 5, 2009.

Ivan DeLoatch,

Staff Director, Federal Geographic Data Committee.

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DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR

Bureau of Land Management

[LLNVS03000.L51010000.ER0000.F09F8590;
NVN-84359; 9-08807: TAS:14X5017]

Notice of Intent to Prepare an Environmental Impact Statement for the Proposed Solar Millennium, LLC, Amargosa Farm Road Solar Energy Project, Nye County, NV

AGENCY: Bureau of Land Management, Interior.

ACTION: Notice of Intent.

SUMMARY: The Bureau of Land Management (BLM) Field Office, Southern Nevada District, Pahrump Field Office intends to prepare an environmental impact statement (EIS) for the Amargosa Farm Road Solar Energy Project, located on public lands in Nye County, Nevada and by this notice is announcing the beginning of the scoping process and soliciting input on the identification of issues.

DATES: This notice initiates public scoping. Scoping comments shall be submitted on or before August 12, 2009.

The BLM will announce public scoping meetings to identify relevant issues through local news media, newsletters, and the BLM Web site (<http://www.blm.gov/nv/st/en/fo/lvfo.html>) at least 15 days prior to each meeting. We will provide additional opportunities for public participation upon publication of the Draft RMP/EIS, including a 90-day public comment period.

ADDRESSES: Comments related to the project may be submitted by any of the following methods:

- *E-mail:* solar_millennium@blm.gov.
- *Fax:* (702) 515-5064 (attention: Gregory Helseth).

- *Mail:* Bureau of Land Management, Southern Nevada District Office, Pahrump Field Office, Attn: Gregory Helseth, Project Manager, 4701 North Torrey Pines Drive, Las Vegas, NV 89130-2301.

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

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: For further information and/or to have your

name added to the mailing list, call Gregory Helseth, (702) 515-5173, or e-mail: gregory_helseth@blm.gov.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: Solar Millennium, LLC, has submitted a right-of-way application to BLM to construct two concentrated solar thermal parabolic trough power plant facilities on public lands, approximately 80 miles northwest of Las Vegas, in Nye County, Nevada. The Project site would consist of approximately 4,350 acres of public land located in Amargosa Valley, south of Highway 95. Each facility is expected to operate for approximately 30 years. Each plant would utilize solar thermal parabolic trough technology, consisting of a 242 megawatt (MW) power block equipped with thermal storage tanks capable of producing additional energy for 3.5 hours after sundown, and a solar field composed of parabolic trough mirrors.

The solar field would be highly modular and would consist of "loops," each containing 4 curved glass mirror collectors. A loop is 22m wide and 400m long (72.18' wide and 1312.33' long). The solar field would consist of approximately 400 loops. The orientation of the collectors would be north-south, and the collectors would track the sun from east to west during the day. The collector would focus the sun's direct beam radiation on a receiver tube. The row of collectors would have a hydraulic drive unit with sensors to track the sun's path throughout the day. The solar energy would heat a transfer fluid which cycles through a series of heat exchangers to generate steam, which drives a steam turbine to ultimately generate electricity. The electric output of the Project would be generated entirely by solar energy. No electricity would be generated by the use of fossil fuel in these facilities.

The proposed Project facilities would include the solar fields, power blocks, buildings, parking area, laydown area, stormwater retention pond, and evaporating ponds. A single overhead 230 kilovolt (kV) transmission line would connect the facilities to the nearby Valley Electric Valley substation, located on Anvil Road. Additional elements of the Project would include access roads and optional water pipeline. The proposed Project may require the rerouting of a road and an existing low voltage distribution power line. The EIS will analyze the site-specific impacts of the Project on air quality, biological resources, cultural resources, water resources, geological resources, paleontological resources, public health, socioeconomic, soils, traffic and transportation, and visual

resources. It will analyze the geologic hazards, hazardous materials handling, land use and airspace, noise, waste management, worker safety, and fire protection potentially associated with the Project. It will also analyze facility design engineering, efficiency, and reliability; transmission system engineering; and transmission line safety and nuisance. Native American Tribal consultations will be conducted in accordance with policy, and Tribal concerns will be given due consideration. The EIS will include the consideration of any impacts on Indian trust assets.

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. 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 requested or be requested by the BLM to participate as a cooperating agency.

(Authority: 43 CFR Part 2800)

Patrick Putnam,

Field Manager, Pahrump Field Office.

[FR Doc. E9-16415 Filed 7-10-09; 8:45 am]

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DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR

Bureau of Reclamation

Mendota Pool Bypass and Reach 2B Improvements Project Under the San Joaquin River Restoration Program, Fresno and Madera Counties, CA

AGENCY: Bureau of Reclamation, Interior.

ACTION: Notice of intent to prepare an Environmental Impact Statement/ Environmental Impact Report (EIS/EIR) and Notice of Scoping Meetings.

SUMMARY: The Bureau of Reclamation (Reclamation) and the California Department of Water Resources (DWR) are proposing to prepare a joint EIS/EIR, pursuant to the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) and the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA), to evaluate effects of the proposed Mendota Pool Bypass and Reach 2B Channel Improvements Project (Proposed Action) under the San

Joaquin River Restoration Program (SJRRP or Program). The Proposed Action includes the construction, operation, and maintenance of the Mendota Pool Bypass and improvements, including the operation and maintenance of the San Joaquin River channel to allow Reach 2B to convey at least 4,500 cubic feet per second (cfs). The purpose of the proposed action is to improve Reach 2B conveyance conditions enough to provide a capacity of at least 4,500 cfs with integrated floodplain habitat, and to convey restoration flows of at least 4,500 cfs around Mendota Pool from Reach 2B downstream to Reach 3. The planning and environmental review for the Proposed Action is authorized under section 3406(c)(1) of the Central Valley Project Improvement Act (CVPIA) Title 34, (Pub. L. 102-575) and the San Joaquin River Restoration Act (SJRRRA), included in Public Law 111-11. Construction of the Proposed Action is authorized under the SJRRRA (Pub. L. 111-11). The Proposed Action is a component of the San Joaquin River Settlement.

Scoping meetings will be held to solicit input on alternatives, concerns, and issues to be addressed in the EIS/EIR. Written comments may also be sent.

DATES: Two 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 scoping meeting dates and locations are:

- Tuesday, July 28, 2009, 6 p.m.–8 p.m., Piccadilly Inn–Shaw, 2305 West Shaw Avenue, Fresno, California 93711; and
- Wednesday, July 29, 2009, 6 p.m.–8 p.m., Firebaugh City Council Chambers, 1659 13th Street, Firebaugh, California 96322.

Written comments on the scope of the EIS/EIR should be sent by August 17, 2009 to Ms. Margaret Gidding, Bureau of Reclamation, 2800 Cottage Way MP-170, Sacramento, CA 95825 or via e-mail at MendotaPoolBypass@restoresjr.net.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Ms. Margaret Gidding at the above address, by telephone at 916-978-5461, TDD 916-978-5608 or via fax at 916-978-5469. Additional information is available online at <http://www.restoresjr.net>. If special assistance is required at the scoping meetings, please contact Ms. Margaret Gidding at the above phone or fax numbers or via

e-mail at MendotaPoolBypass@restoresjr.net no less than ten working days prior to the meetings.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

Reclamation and DWR are proposing to prepare a joint EIS/EIR, pursuant to NEPA and CEQA, to evaluate the proposed Mendota Pool Bypass and Reach 2B Channel Improvements Project (Proposed Action) under the SJRRP. The Proposed Action includes the construction, operation, and maintenance of the Mendota Pool Bypass and improvements, including the operation and maintenance of the San Joaquin River channel to allow Reach 2B to convey at least 4,500 cfs. The planning and environmental review for the Proposed Action is authorized under section 3406(c)(1) of the CVPIA and the SJRRRA included in Public Law 111-11. Construction of the Proposed Action is authorized under the SJRRRA (Pub. L. 111-11). The Proposed Action is a component of San Joaquin River Settlement.

The Proposed Action would include a bypass around the Mendota Pool to convey at least 4,500 cfs around the Mendota Pool and re-connect with the San Joaquin River downstream of Mendota Dam. The Proposed Action would also include constructing a bifurcation structure at the upper end of the bypass to convey at least 4,500 cfs into the Mendota Pool Bypass. The proposed Mendota Bypass Bifurcation Structure would be designed to divert water from the San Joaquin River to the Mendota Pool, consistent with the design channel capacity of Reach 2B which conveys flows to the Mendota Pool. The bifurcation structure would be designed to direct fish into the bypass channel and minimize or avoid fish passage into the Mendota Pool. Specific bypass alignments and facilities locations will be determined through the course of this site-specific study.

Reach 2B of the San Joaquin River extends from the Chowchilla Bypass Bifurcation Structure to the Mendota Dam. Proposed improvements to Reach 2B would include modifications to the San Joaquin River channel from the Chowchilla Bypass Bifurcation Structure to the new Mendota Bypass Bifurcation Structure to provide a capacity of at least 4,500 cfs with integrated floodplain habitat. The project would expand the Reach 2B channel capacity while accounting for new floodplain habitat. Specific channel modification actions would be determined through the course of this site-specific study. These actions would consider fisheries requirements, land

uses, subsurface conditions, topography, and the condition of existing levees.

San Joaquin River Restoration Program

In 1988, a coalition of environmental groups led by the Natural Resources Defense Council (NRDC) filed a lawsuit challenging the renewal of the long-term water service contracts between the United States and the Central Valley Project Friant Division Contractors. After more than 18 years of litigation known as *NRDC, et al. v. Kirk Rodgers, et al.*, the NRDC, Friant Water Users Authority, and the Departments of the Interior and Commerce (Settling Parties) reached agreement on the terms and conditions of the San Joaquin River Settlement (Settlement) which was subsequently approved by the Court on October 23, 2006. The Settlement can be found online at <http://www.restoresjr.net>.

The Settlement Is Based on Two Parallel Goals

- The Restoration Goal—To restore and maintain fish populations in “good condition” in the main stem of the San Joaquin River below Friant Dam to the confluence of the Merced River, including naturally reproducing and self-sustaining populations of salmon and other fish; and
- The Water Management Goal—To reduce or avoid adverse water supply impacts to all of the Friant Division long-term Contractors that may result from the Interim Flows and Restoration Flows provided for in the Settlement.

The Settling Parties acknowledge that accomplishing the Goals requires planning, implementation, and funding of certain activities, such as environmental review, design, and construction. With regard to the Restoration Goal, the Settlement calls for a combination of channel and structural improvements along the San Joaquin River below Friant Dam, releases of additional water from Friant Dam to the confluence of the Merced River, and the reintroduction of spring and/or fall-run Chinook salmon.

The Settlement states that the Secretary of the Interior shall implement the terms and conditions of the Settlement. Additionally, the Settling Parties agreed that implementation of the Settlement shall also require participation of the State of California. Therefore, concurrent with the execution of the Settlement, the Settling Parties entered into a Memorandum of Understanding with the State of California, by and through the California Resources Agency, DWR, the Department of Fish and Game (DFG), and the California Environmental

Protection Agency (CalEPA), regarding the State's role in the implementation of the Settlement. The program established to implement the Settlement is the SJRRP, and the "Implementing Agencies" responsible for the management of the SJRRP include Reclamation, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS), the National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS), DWR, and DFG. The Federal Implementing agencies (Reclamation, USFWS and NMFS) are authorized to implement the Settlement under the SJRRRA included in Public Law 111-11.

A Program Environmental Impact Statement/Environmental Impact Report (PEIS/EIR) is currently being developed for implementation of the SJRRP. If applicable, the EIS/EIR for the Proposed Action will supplement, tier from, incorporate by reference, or adopt relevant NEPA analyses from the PEIS/EIR. The Record of Decision for the PEIS/EIR is anticipated to be signed in 2010.

Public Disclosure

Before including your name, 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: July 2, 2009.

Anastasia T. Leigh,

Acting Regional Environmental Officer, Mid-Pacific Region.

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DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR

Fish and Wildlife Service

[FWS-R9-IA-2009-N0103; 96300-1671-0000 FY09 R4]

Conference of the Parties to the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES); Fifteenth Regular Meeting: Proposed Resolutions, Decisions, and Agenda Items Being Considered; Taxa Being Considered for Amendments to the CITES Appendices; Observer Information

AGENCY: Fish and Wildlife Service, Interior.

ACTION: Notice.

SUMMARY: The United States, as a Party to the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES), may submit proposed resolutions, decisions, and agenda items for consideration at meetings of the Conference of the Parties to CITES. The United States may also propose amendments to the CITES Appendices for consideration at meetings of the Conference of the Parties. The fifteenth regular meeting of the Conference of the Parties to CITES (CoP15) is tentatively scheduled to be held in Doha, Qatar, March 13–25, 2010.

With this notice, we describe proposed resolutions, decisions, and agenda items that the United States is considering submitting for consideration at CoP15; describe proposed amendments to the CITES Appendices (species proposals) that the United States is considering submitting for consideration at CoP15; invite your comments and information on these proposals; and provide information on how nongovernmental organizations based in the United States can attend CoP15 as observers.

DATES: We will consider written information and comments you submit concerning potential species proposals, and proposed resolutions, decisions, and agenda items that the United States is considering submitting for consideration at CoP15, and other items relating to CoP15, if we receive them by September 11, 2009.

ADDRESSES: Comments pertaining to proposed resolutions, decisions, and agenda items should be sent to the Division of Management Authority, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, 4401 North Fairfax Drive, Room 212, Arlington, VA 22203, or via e-mail at: CoP15@fws.gov, or via fax at: 703-358-2298. Comments pertaining to species proposals should be sent to the Division of Scientific Authority, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, 4401 North Fairfax Drive, Room 110, Arlington, VA 22203, or via e-mail at: scientificauthority@fws.gov, or via fax at: 703-358-2276.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: For information pertaining to resolutions, decisions, and agenda items contact: Robert R. Gabel, Chief, Division of Management Authority, phone 703-358-2095, fax 703-358-2298, e-mail: CoP15@fws.gov. For information pertaining to species proposals contact: Rosemarie Gnam, Chief, Division of Scientific Authority, phone 703-358-1708, fax 703-358-2276, e-mail: scientificauthority@fws.gov.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

Background

The Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora, hereinafter referred to as CITES or the Convention, is an international treaty designed to control and regulate international trade in certain animal and plant species that are now or potentially may be threatened with extinction. These species are listed in Appendices to CITES, which are available on the CITES Secretariat's website at <http://www.cites.org/eng/app/index.shtml>. Currently, 175 countries, including the United States, are Parties to CITES. The Convention calls for biennial meetings of the Conference of the Parties, which reviews its implementation, makes provisions enabling the CITES Secretariat in Switzerland to carry out its functions, considers amendments to the lists of species in Appendices I and II, considers reports presented by the Secretariat, and makes recommendations for the improved effectiveness of CITES. Any country that is a Party to CITES may propose for these meetings amendments to Appendices I and II, and resolutions, decisions, and agenda items for consideration by all the Parties.

This is our second in a series of **Federal Register** notices that, together with an announced public meeting, provide you with an opportunity to participate in the development of the U.S. negotiating positions for the fifteenth regular meeting of the Conference of the Parties to CITES (CoP15). We published our first CoP15-related **Federal Register** notice on September 29, 2008 (73 FR 56605), in which we requested information and recommendations on species proposals and proposed resolutions, decisions, and agenda items for the United States to consider submitting for consideration at CoP15. You may obtain information on that **Federal Register** notice from the following sources: for information on proposed resolutions, decisions, and agenda items, contact the Division of Management Authority at the address provided in "ADDRESSES" above; and for information on species proposals, contact the Division of Scientific Authority at the address provided in "ADDRESSES" above. Our regulations governing this public process are found in 50 CFR 23.87.

CoP15 is tentatively scheduled to be held in Doha, Qatar, March 13–25, 2010.