

collection requirements and provide the requested data in the desired format.

We are soliciting comments on the proposed ICR that is described below. We are especially interested in public comment addressing the following issues: (1) Is the collection necessary to the proper functions of the BIA; (2) will this information be processed and used in a timely manner; (3) is the estimate of burden accurate; (4) how might the BIA enhance the quality, utility, and clarity of the information to be collected; and (5) how might the BIA minimize the burden of this collection on the respondents, including through the use of information technology.

Comments that you submit in response to this notice are a matter of public record. We will include or summarize each comment in our request to OMB to approve this ICR. Before including your address, phone number, email 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.

**Abstract:** The Division of Economic Development (DED), within the Office of Indian Energy and Economic Development (IEED), established the Native American Business Development Institute (NABDI) to provide technical assistance funding to federally recognized American Indian Tribes seeking to retain universities and colleges, private consulting firms, non-academic/non-profit entities, or others to prepare feasibility studies of potential economic development opportunities. These studies will empower American Indian Tribes and Tribal businesses to make informed decisions regarding their economic futures. Studies may concern the viability of an economic development project or business or the practicality of a technology a Tribe may choose to pursue. The DED will specifically exclude from consideration proposals for research and development projects; requests for funding of salaries for Tribal government personnel; funding to pay legal fees; funding for the purchase or lease of structures, machinery, hardware or other capital items; and funding related to mineral, energy, or broadband development, as these are addressed by other IEED grant programs

This is an annual program whose primary objective is to create jobs and foster economic activity within Tribal

communities. The DED will administer the program within IEED; and studies as described herein will be sole discretionary projects DED will consider or fund absent a competitive bidding process. When funding is available, DED will solicit proposals for studies. To receive these funds, Tribes may, if eligible, obtain adjustments to their funding from the Office of Self-Governance. *See* 25 U.S.C. 450 *et seq.*

Interested applicants must submit a Tribal resolution requesting funding, a statement of work describing the project for which the study is requested, the identity of the academic institution, consultants, or other entity the applicant wishes to retain (if known) and a budget indicating the funding amount requested and how it will be spent. The DED expressly retains the authority to reduce or otherwise modify proposed budgets and funding amounts.

Applications for funding will be juried and evaluated primarily on the basis of a proposed project's potential to generate jobs and economic activity in a Tribal community.

**Title of Collection:** Native American Business Development Institute (NABDI) Funding Solicitations and Reporting.

**OMB Control Number:** 1076–0178.

**Form Number:** None.

**Type of Review:** Extension without change of currently approved collection.

**Respondents/Affected Public:** Indian Tribes with trust or restricted land.

**Total Estimated Number of Annual Respondents:** 20 applicants per year; 20 project participants each year, on average.

**Total Estimated Number of Annual Responses:** 40.

**Estimated Completion Time per Response:** 50 hours per application; 1.5 hours per progress report.

**Total Estimated Number of Annual Burden Hours:** 1,030 hours (1,000 for applications and 30 for final reports).

**Respondent's Obligation:** Response is required to obtain a benefit.

**Frequency of Collection:** Once per year for applications and final report.

**Total Estimated Annual Nonhour Burden Cost:** \$0.

An agency may not conduct or sponsor and a person is not required to respond to a collection of information unless it displays a currently valid OMB control number.

The authority for this action is the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995 (44 U.S.C. 3501 *et seq.*).

**Elizabeth K. Appel,**

*Director, Office of Regulatory Affairs and Collaborative Action—Indian Affairs.*

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**BILLING CODE 4337–15–P**

## DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR

### Bureau of Land Management

[DOI-BLM-NV-W010-2020-0012-EIS; LLNVW00000.L51100000.GN0000. LVEMF1907180.19X .MO#4500145138]

### Notice of Availability of the Draft Environmental Impact Statement

**AGENCY:** Bureau of Land Management, Interior.

**ACTION:** Notice of availability.

**SUMMARY:** In accordance with the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969, as amended (NEPA), and the Federal Land Policy and Management Act of 1976, as amended, the Bureau of Land Management (BLM) Humboldt River Field Office, Winnemucca, Nevada, as the lead agency, has prepared a Draft Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) to analyze the potential impacts of approving the Lithium Nevada Corp. (LNC), Thacker Pass Project Proposed Plans of Operations and Reclamation Plan Permit Applications (Project) in Humboldt County, Nevada. In accordance with the Bald and Golden Eagle Protection Act (Eagle Act), the Fish and Wildlife Service (FWS) is a cooperating agency with the BLM on the development of this Draft EIS to analyze the potential impacts of approving LNC's request for an incidental take permit for golden eagles. The FWS will evaluate LNC's Eagle Conservation Plan (ECP), which describes their request for incidental take of eagles and a 5-year incidental take permit for golden eagles under the Eagle Act. This notice announces the beginning of the public comment period to solicit public comments on the Draft EIS.

**DATES:** To ensure comments will be considered, BLM must receive written comments on the Draft EIS no later than 45 days after the Environmental Protection Agency publishes its notice of availability of the Thacker Pass Lithium Mine Project Draft Environmental Impact Statement DOI-BLM-NV-W010-2020-0012-EIS in the **Federal Register**, and will coordinate with the FWS on any comments received regarding impacts to golden eagles, and the Eagle Act permitting process. The BLM will announce the dates and locations of any future meetings or hearings and any other public involvement activities at least 15 days in advance through local media, newspapers and the BLM website at: <https://www.blm.gov/office/winnemucca-district-office>.

**ADDRESSES:** You may submit comments related to the Project by any of the following methods:

- *Website:* <https://bit.ly/2Npgf9l>.
- *Email:* [blm\\_nv\\_wdo\\_thacker\\_pass@blm.gov](mailto:blm_nv_wdo_thacker_pass@blm.gov), include "Thacker Pass Project EIS Comments" in the subject line.
- *Fax:* (775) 623-1740, please mark "Attn: Thacker Pass Project EIS Comments".
- *Mail:* Bureau of Land Management, Attn: Thacker Pass Project EIS Comments, 5100 E Winnemucca Blvd., Winnemucca, NV 89445.

**FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:** For questions about the proposed Project, contact Mr. Ken Loda, telephone: (775) 623-1500, address: 5100 E Winnemucca Blvd., Winnemucca, NV 89445. Contact Mr. Loda to have your name added to our mailing list. For questions concerning the Eagle Act permitting process, contact Mr. Thomas Leeman at (916) 978-6189. Persons who use a telecommunications device for the deaf (TDD) may call the Federal Relay Service (FRS) at 1-800-877-8339 to contact the above individual during normal business hours. The FRS is available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, to leave a message or question with the above individual. You will receive a reply during normal business hours.

**SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:** The applicant LNC proposes to construct, operate, reclaim, and eventually close an open pit lithium mine, processing operation, and continued exploration activities on public lands in northern Humboldt County, Nevada. LNC currently has two approved Plans of Operations (PoOs), one for exploration and one for a specialty clay mine, approved within the area proposed for the new lithium mine. There are 75 acres of exploration disturbance approved under LNC's existing exploration PoO, and 140 acres of existing disturbance approved under their clay mine PoO. LNC has submitted two new PoOs to develop the Project and to provide a description of the proposed lithium mining, processing, and exploration operations. Each of these PoOs include a reclamation plan for the activities identified under the respective PoO. The operations proposed under the two new PoOs would involve a project area of about 18,000 acres, with an ultimate disturbance footprint of approximately 5,700 acres. The proposed lithium mine PoO boundary overlaps the existing PoO boundaries.

LNC proposes to develop the Project in two phases over the estimated 41-year mine life. Pending LNC receiving the required authorizations and permits

for Phase 1 of the Project, pre-stripping would commence in early 2021 and construction in the first quarter of 2021, with mining production and ore processing estimated to commence in late 2022. LNC estimates that it would complete mining, processing and concurrent reclamation activities in 2061, after which, reclamation, site closure activities, and post-closure monitoring would occur for a minimum of five years.

The proposed activities and facilities associated with the Project include development of an open pit mine; construction and operation of lithium processing and production facilities, mine facilities to support mining operations, two waste rock storage facilities, a run-of-mine stockpile, a clay tailings filter stack, water supply facilities, two power transmission lines and substations, and various ancillary facilities. Pit dewatering is not expected to be required as part of the Project until 2055, and concurrent backfill of the open pit would occur after sufficient volume has been excavated to initiate direct placement of waste rock. Continued exploration would be conducted under both PoOs. Upon further review the BLM has determined that an amendment to the Winnemucca District Resource Management Plan is not necessary.

In addition, the Project would affect golden eagle nests and territories by planned blasting within a two-mile radius of golden eagle nests; therefore, LNC has requested authorization from the FWS to disturb eagle nests and a 5-year incidental take permit for golden eagles under the Eagle Act. LNC's Eagle Conservation Plan is the foundation of the permit application and contains commitments to avoid, minimize, and mitigate adverse effects on golden eagles resulting from the implementation of the Project. Issuance of an eagle take permit must comply with the Eagle Act and all related regulatory requirements (50 CFR 22.26).

The purpose of this comment period is for the public to comment on the Draft EIS. The Draft EIS, through scoping, has identified and analyzed impacts to the following resources: Air and atmospheric resources; cultural resources; noxious weeds, invasive species, and nonnative species; migratory birds; golden eagles; Native American religious concerns; wastes and materials (hazardous and solid); water quality (surface and ground); geology, minerals and energy; lands and realty; paleontology; rangeland management; recreation; social values and economics; soils; special status species (plants and wildlife);

transportation and access; vegetation; visual resources; and wildlife. The Draft EIS describes and analyzes the proposed Project's direct, indirect, and cumulative impacts on all affected resources. In addition to the Proposed Action, Alternative A, the following alternatives are also analyzed in the document: Alternative B, which is a partial backfilling of the pit that would result in a small wet area; Alternative C which does not backfill the pit and would result in three small, and probably seasonal, pit lakes; and the No Action Alternative. Alternatives A, B and C request an eagle take permit for loss of productivity of three golden eagle breeding pairs. Additionally, Alternative C would require nest site enhancement as compensatory mitigation under the Bald and Golden Eagle Protection Act.

The BLM has consulted and continues to consult with Indian tribes on a government-to-government basis in accordance with Executive Order 13175 and other policies. Tribal concerns, including impacts to Indian trust assets and potential impacts to cultural resources have been analyzed in the Draft EIS. Federal, State, and local agencies, along with tribes and other stakeholders that may be interested in or affected by the proposed Project that the BLM and FWS are evaluating, are invited to participate in the comment process.

Before including your address, phone number, email 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 may request in your comment that your personal identifying information be withheld from public review, we cannot guarantee that we will be able to do so.

**Authority:** 40 CFR 1501.7.

**Ester McCullough,**

*Winnemucca District Manager.*

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