

publishes this 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 Alamogordo Regional Water Supply Project by any of the following methods:

- *E-mail:*  
[nmlcdo\\_comments@blm.gov](mailto:nmlcdo_comments@blm.gov).
- *Fax:* 575-525-4412.
- *Mail:* Bureau of Land Management, Alamogordo Regional Water Supply Project, Attention: Lorraine Salas, Project Manager, 1800 Marquess Street, Las Cruces, NM 88005.

Copies of the Alamogordo Regional Water Supply Project Draft EIS are available in the BLM Las Cruces District Office at the above address; the BLM New Mexico State Office, 301 Dinosaur Trail, Santa Fe, NM; the City of Alamogordo Public Library, 920 Oregon Avenue, Alamogordo, NM; the Village of Tularosa Public Library, 515 Fresno Street, Tularosa, NM.

**FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:** Lorraine Salas, Project Manager; telephone 575-525-4388; address 1800 Marquess Street, Las Cruces, NM 88005; e-mail: [nmlcdo\\_comments@blm.gov](mailto:nmlcdo_comments@blm.gov).

**SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:** The City of Alamogordo (the City) has submitted to the BLM an application for a right-of-way (ROW) for the construction and use of up to 10 groundwater wells in order to produce approximately 4,000 acre-feet per year of water with supporting infrastructure on BLM-managed public land. Under the Federal Land Policy and Management Act of 1976, as amended, and supported by NEPA analysis, the BLM will decide whether to grant the ROW or grant the ROW with modifications, and, if so, under what terms and conditions. The BLM is the lead Federal agency for this EIS. Cooperating agencies include the Bureau of Reclamation (BOR) and Otero County.

In 1983, a study concluded that the City's long-term water supply is inadequate and that critical water shortages could occur should the region experience a prolonged drought. The study concluded that the City's projected water demand is 10,842 acre-feet per year (afy) through the year 2045. In response to the study, the City obtained water rights through the New Mexico Office of the State Engineer (State Engineer) and has approached the BLM for a ROW to withdraw water on BLM-managed public land with supporting infrastructure.

The City seeks to address the water demand through the desalination of brackish groundwater located in the Tularosa Underground Water Basin. The proposed wells would be drilled on BLM-managed public land located 26 miles north of the City. The BOR will decide whether to seek and approve funding for a portion of the project costs through BOR's budget under Title XVI, Public Law 102-575, as amended—the Reclamation Wastewater and Groundwater Facilities Act; 43 U.S.C. § 39h, provides authority for the BOR water recycling and reuse program.

The Draft EIS addresses the direct, indirect, and cumulative environmental impacts of two alternatives. The proposed action (Alternative B) by the City includes obtaining unappropriated brackish groundwater from the Snake Tank Well Field, constructing and operating 10 groundwater wells at Snake Tank Well Field, installing water transmission lines to Alamogordo, and constructing a desalination facility and a booster pump station in Alamogordo to treat the brackish groundwater to drinking water standards. This alternative has been developed to incorporate the State Engineer ruling, which was affirmed by the New Mexico State District Court to allow 4,000 afy of brackish groundwater (approximately 3,200 afy of potable water) from the Snake Tank Well Field and up to 5,000 acre-feet in any one year so long as withdrawals do not exceed 20,000 acre-feet in any 5-year period. The remaining future water supply (198 afy) would have to come from other sources, all of which are undetermined, and are not part of the Draft EIS.

Alternative A is the "No Action" Alternative, as required by NEPA. The No Action Alternative describes conditions expected to occur if there would be no new well field development or additional water supply beyond the City's current water supply. The No Action Alternative assumes the City would continue to enforce water conservation measures and use existing infrastructure. Since the publication of the Notice of Intent to prepare an EIS in the **Federal Register** on August 26, 2004, scoping meetings and mailings have been conducted to solicit public comment and identify key issues. Tribal governments with interest in this project were also contacted.

Approximately 216 scoping comments were received during the development of the Draft EIS. Key issues identified by individuals, groups, and governmental entities include: Balancing growth with water use in the Alamogordo/Tularosa region; groundwater draw-down in existing

residential wells and mitigation measures for any impacts to those wells; potential social and economic impacts on ranching and agriculture in the region; and potential impacts on Indian trust land, community acequias, and surface water.

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, 40 CFR 1506.10.

**Bill Childress,**

*District Manager, Las Cruces.*

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## DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR

### Bureau of Land Management

[LLNVB00000 L71220000.EX0000  
LVTFF0986020 241A.00; MO #4500014477;  
10-08807; TAS: 14X8069]

### Notice of Availability of the Draft Supplemental Environmental Impact Statement for the Cortez Hills Expansion Project, Lander County, NV

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

**ACTION:** Notice of Availability.

**SUMMARY:** In compliance with the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969 (NEPA), as amended, and the Federal Land Policy and Management Act of 1976 (FLPMA), as amended, the Bureau of Land Management (BLM), Battle Mountain District, Mount Lewis Field Office, Battle Mountain, Nevada, has prepared a Draft Supplemental Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) for the Cortez Hills Expansion Project in Lander County, Nevada. The project was authorized in a Record of Decision and Plan of Operations Amendment Approval in November 2008 and by this notice the BLM is announcing the opening of the comment period for the Draft Supplemental EIS.

**DATES:** The Cortez Hills Expansion Project Draft Supplemental EIS is available for public comment for 45 days following the date the Environmental Protection Agency publishes its Notice of Availability in the **Federal Register**. To provide the

public with an opportunity to review and comment on the Draft Supplemental EIS, the BLM will host public meetings in Crescent Valley and Battle Mountain, Nevada. 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 Cortez Hills Expansion Project Draft Supplemental EIS by the following methods:

- *Fax:* (775) 635-4034
- *E-mail:* [CortezHills\\_DSEIS@blm.gov](mailto:CortezHills_DSEIS@blm.gov)
- *Mail:* Bureau of Land Management,

50 Bastian Road, Battle Mountain, Nevada 89020, ATTN: Christopher Worthington.

- *Web site:* [http://www.blm.gov/nv/st/en/fo/battle\\_mountain\\_field.html](http://www.blm.gov/nv/st/en/fo/battle_mountain_field.html)

**FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:**

Christopher Worthington, telephone (775) 635-4000; or e-mail: [Christopher\\_Worthington@blm.gov](mailto:Christopher_Worthington@blm.gov).

**SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:** The BLM signed a Record of Decision and Plan of Operations Approval on November 12, 2008, for the Cortez Gold Mines (CGM) Cortez Hills Expansion Project, which is an expansion of an existing open-pit gold mining and processing operations in northeastern Nevada. The project entails new surface disturbance of approximately 6,633 acres, including 6,412 acres of public land administered by the BLM Battle Mountain District and 221 acres of private land owned by CGM. The Notice of Availability of the Final Cortez Hills Expansion Project EIS, Nevada, was published in the **Federal Register** on October 3, 2008 (73 FR 57647).

On December 3, 2009, the U.S. Court of Appeals for the Ninth Circuit partially reversed the U.S. District Court of Nevada's denial of preliminary injunctive relief with respect to the BLM's environmental analysis of air quality and water resource issues. The BLM subsequently elected to prepare a Supplemental EIS to refine the analysis of potential air quality effects and the dewatering mitigation effectiveness for the Cortez Hills Expansion Project. The Supplemental EIS includes these analyses.

Comments, including names and street addresses of respondents, will be available for public review at the above address during regular business hours 7:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m., Monday through Friday, except holidays, and will be published as part of the Final Supplemental 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:** 40 CFR 1506.6.

**Gerald M. Smith,**

*District Manager, Battle Mountain.*

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## DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR

### Bureau of Land Management

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

#### Notice of Availability of the Final Environmental Impact Statement for the Chevron Energy Solutions/Solar Millennium Blythe Solar Power Plant and Proposed 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 (NEPA), and the Federal Land Policy and Management Act of 1976, as amended (FLPMA), the Bureau of Land Management (BLM) has prepared a Proposed California Desert Conservation Area (CDCA) Plan Amendment/Final Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) for the Chevron Energy Solutions/Solar Millennium (CESSM), LLC's Blythe Solar Power Plant (BSPP) project and by this notice is announcing its availability.

**DATES:** The publication of the Environmental Protection Agency's (EPA) Notice of Availability (NOA) of this Final EIS in the **Federal Register** initiates a 30-day public comment period. In addition, the BLM's planning regulations state that any person who meets the conditions described in the regulations may protest the BLM's Proposed CDCA Plan Amendment/Final EIS. A person who meets the conditions and files a protest must file the protest within 30 days of the date that EPA publishes its NOA in the **Federal Register**. The protest procedures are described in the "Dear Reader" letter accompanying the Proposed Plan Amendment/Final EIS.

**ADDRESSES:** Copies of the Proposed CDCA Plan Amendment/Final EIS for

the BSPP Project have been sent to affected Federal, state, and local government agencies and to other stakeholders. Copies are available for public inspection at the Palm Springs South Coast Field Office, 1201 Bird Center Drive, Palm Springs, California 92262. Interested persons may also review the Proposed CDCA Plan Amendment/Final EIS at the following Web site: [http://www.blm.gov/ca/st/en/fo/palmsprings/Solar\\_Projects/Blythe\\_Solar\\_Power\\_Project.html](http://www.blm.gov/ca/st/en/fo/palmsprings/Solar_Projects/Blythe_Solar_Power_Project.html).

Submit comments on the Final EIS to Allison Shaffer, BLM Project Manager, Palm Springs South Coast Field Office, 1201 Bird Center Drive, Palm Springs, California 92262; or e-mail: [CAPSSolarBlythe@blm.gov](mailto:CAPSSolarBlythe@blm.gov).

All protests must be in writing and mailed to one of the following addresses:

*Regular Mail:* BLM Director (210), Attention: Brenda Williams, P.O. Box 66538, Washington, DC 20035.

*Overnight Mail:* BLM Director (210), Attention: Brenda Williams, 1620 L Street, NW., Suite 1075, Washington, DC 20036.

**FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:**

Allison Shaffer, BLM Project Manager, telephone (760) 833-7100; address (*see ADDRESSES* above).

**SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:** CESSM has submitted a right of way (ROW) application to the BLM for development of the proposed BSPP project, consisting of 4 parabolic trough solar thermal power plants. The project would be built in 4 phases which are designed to generate approximately 968 megawatts (MW) of electricity at full development. The project footprint is approximately 5,950 acres of BLM-managed lands, with a proposed ROW encompassing 9,400 acres. The project site is in Riverside County, California, approximately 8 miles west of Blythe, California, 3 miles north of Highway I-10, and 1 mile north of the Blythe Regional Airport.

The project includes the power generation facility, an electrical transmission line, natural gas pipeline, and an access road. A double circuit 230-kilovolt (kV) transmission line would be constructed to interconnect to the Devers-Palo Verde #2 500 kV line at the Colorado River substation. Approximately 6.5 miles of this new line would be outside the project area but is included in the analysis. The new line proposes to use a 175-foot wide ROW.

The BLM's purpose and need for the NEPA analysis of the BSPP project is to respond to CESSM's application under Title V of FLPMA (43 U.S.C. 1761) for a ROW grant to construct, operate, and