

respondents will be available for public review at the Ely Field Office during regular business hours 7:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m., Monday through Friday, except holidays. Individual respondents may request confidentiality. If you wish to withhold your name and address from public review or disclosure under the Freedom of Information Act, you must state this prominently at the beginning of your comments. Such requests will be honored to the extent allowed by law. All submissions from organizations or businesses, and from individuals identifying themselves as representatives or officials of organizations or business, will be made available for public inspection in their entirety.

**FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:**

Penny Woods, BLM Nevada State Office, (775) 861-6466. You may also contact Ms Woods to have your name added to the EIS mailing list.

**SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:** The LCLA Groundwater Development Project is being proposed by the Lincoln County Water District (LCWD) and would be located in southeastern Lincoln County. The proposed project would develop and convey groundwater in the Tule Desert and Clover Valley hydrographic basins to land recently sold by the BLM that is approximately 2 miles north of Mesquite, Nevada. This private land comprises the LCLA development area and consists of approximately 13,000 acres. The volume of water to be transported through the proposed facilities would be approximately 23,824 acre-feet per year. The water would be used to support development in the LCLA development area.

The proposed facilities include approximately 8 groundwater production wells (16 inch diameter) located in the Tule Desert and Clover Valley hydrographic basins, a 23-mile long water transmission pipeline (24 inch diameter), and lateral pipelines (12 inch diameter) to connect the transmission pipeline to the productions wells. The proposed width of the right-of-way for the transmission pipeline would be 30 feet with a temporary width of 60 feet during construction. The proposed width of the right-of-way for the lateral pipelines would be 20 feet with a temporary width of 60 feet during construction. The productions well site rights-of-way would be 100 feet x 100 feet with a temporary construction area of 100 feet x 200 feet. Access roads approximately 12 feet in width would be needed from existing roads in the Tule Desert area to each well site.

The proposed production wells would be located in the well field area authorized for the Toquop Energy Project, which is a 1100 MW gas-fired power plant. The proposed transmission pipeline would follow the same alignment as the approved water pipeline for the power plant. From the power plant, the transmission pipeline would proceed to the LCLA development area.

Electric lines, communication lines, and a natural gas pipeline would be located within the proposed transmission pipeline right-of-way. A pipeline bringing reclaimed water from the LCLA development area to the already authorized Toquop Energy Project site would also be in the proposed right-of-way.

The facilities would be located within and/or across the following public lands north of Mesquite, Nevada:

**Mount Diablo Meridian**

Tps. 6 to 12 S., Rgs. 69 and 71 E., various sections.

A map of the proposed project is available for viewing at the Bureau of Land Management, Ely Field Office, 702 North Industrial Way, Ely NV 89301.

Dated: March 21, 2006.

**Amy Lueders,**

*Associate State Director, Nevada.*

[FR Doc. 06-2932 Filed 3-30-06; 8:45 am]

**BILLING CODE 4310-HC-P**

**DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR**

**National Park Service**

**Notice of Proposed National Natural Landmark Designation for the Irvine Ranch Land Reserve, CA**

**AGENCY:** National Park Service, Interior.

**ACTION:** Notice of proposed National Natural Landmark designation.

**SUMMARY:** The National Park Service has evaluated and determined that the Irvine Ranch Land Reserve, located forty-five miles south of downtown Los Angeles, in Orange County, California appears to meet the criteria for national significance and proposes to recommend the site for designation as a National Natural Landmark. The public is invited to comment on this recommendation. The proposal will be considered by the National Park System Advisory Board at a meeting to be held on June 8, 2006 at Zion National Park, in the Majestic View Lodge, 2400 Zion Park Blvd., Springdale, Utah.

**DATES:** Written comments will be accepted until May 30, 2006.

**ADDRESSES:** Written comments should be sent to Steve Gibbons, National Natural Landmarks Coordinator, North Cascades National Park, 810 State Route 20, Sedro Woolley, Washington 98284, or to his Internet address: [Steve\\_Gibbons@nps.gov](mailto:Steve_Gibbons@nps.gov).

**FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:**

Steve Gibbons at 360-856-5700, extension 306.

**SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:** The Irvine Ranch Land Reserve represents significant biological resources of Mediterranean shrublands, including extensive areas of chaparral and coastal sage scrub associations. These chaparral and coastal sage scrub areas present one of the largest extant areas of this association remaining in the South Pacific Border Province. It is the presence of these large and relative undisturbed ecosystems and their inherent biological diversity that provide the uniqueness of this area. In commensurate with its biological significance the Irvine Ranch Land Reserve geologically represents a remarkably unique, long time-range stratigraphic succession that shows the linkage between tectonic framework, provenances, sedimentology, paleoenvironments, paleontology, paleoclimate, landscape evolution and geologic history. In this regard it is not only outstanding, but represents one of the most critical time intervals and locations in the evolution of the South Pacific Border Province.

Information on the National Natural Landmarks Program can be found in 36 CFR Part 62 or on the Internet at <http://www.nature.nps.gov/nnl>.

Dated: March 28, 2006.

**Fran Mainella,**

*Director, National Park Service.*

[FR Doc. 06-3161 Filed 3-30-06; 8:45 am]

**BILLING CODE 4312-HJ-P**

**DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR**

**Bureau of Reclamation**

**Colorado River Reservoir Operations: Development of Lower Basin Shortage Guidelines and Coordinated Management Strategies for Lake Powell and Lake Mead, Particularly Under Low Reservoir Conditions**

**AGENCY:** Bureau of Reclamation, Interior.

**ACTION:** Notice of public availability of a Scoping Summary Report on the development of Lower Basin shortage guidelines and coordinated management strategies for the operation of Lake

Powell and Lake Mead, particularly under low reservoir conditions.

**SUMMARY:** Pursuant to the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) of 1969, as amended, and the Council on Environmental Quality's Regulations for Implementing the Procedural Provisions of NEPA, the Department of the Interior (Department) has issued a Scoping Summary Report on the development of Lower Basin shortage guidelines and coordinated management strategies for the operation of Lake Powell and Lake Mead, particularly under low reservoir conditions. The Scoping Summary Report provides a summary of the issues raised during the scoping process and describes the Department's current assessment of the proposed scope of the environmental analysis to be included in the draft environmental impact statement (EIS). The Department anticipates that the Draft EIS will be published in December 2006. The report also includes a summary of the issues raised and comments received during the scoping process. Among other things, the report identifies how the Department anticipates addressing these issues.

*Dates and Addresses:* The Department will accept, review, and incorporate, as appropriate, any additional public comments on the information contained in the Scoping Summary Report as part of the development of the Draft EIS, which the Department anticipates will be published in December 2006. The Department would prefer that any such comments be received by May 1, 2006, in order to allow full consideration during the development of the Draft EIS. Send written comments to: Regional Director, Bureau of Reclamation, Lower Colorado Region, Attention: BCOO-1000, P.O. Box 61470, Boulder City, Nevada 89006-1470; faxogram at (702) 293-8156; or e-mail at [strategies@lc.usbr.gov](mailto:strategies@lc.usbr.gov).

The Scoping Summary Report is available on the Bureau of Reclamation's Web site at <http://www.usbr.gov/lc/region/g4000/strategies/index.html>. If you would like a printed copy of the report, please contact Nan Yoder at telephone (702) 293-8500; facsimile (702) 293-8156; e-mail: [strategies@lc.usbr.gov](mailto:strategies@lc.usbr.gov).

**FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:** Terrance J. Fulp, Ph.D., at (702) 293-8500 or e-mail at [strategies@lc.usbr.gov](mailto:strategies@lc.usbr.gov); and/or Randall Peterson at (801) 524-3633 or e-mail at [strategies@lc.usbr.gov](mailto:strategies@lc.usbr.gov).

**SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:** The Department is publishing the Scoping Summary Report as a voluntary effort to assist in public understanding of this important process. Based upon

information presented in the report and all information submitted to the Department as part of this process, the Department is now undertaking preparation of a Draft EIS.

#### Proposed Federal Action

The Bureau of Reclamation, acting on behalf of the Secretary of the Interior (Secretary), proposes to take action to adopt specific Colorado River Lower Basin shortage guidelines and coordinated reservoir management strategies to address operations of Lake Powell and Lake Mead, particularly under low reservoir conditions. This action will provide a greater degree of certainty to all water users and managers in the Colorado River Basin by providing more detailed objective guidelines for the operation of Lake Powell and Lake Mead and by allowing water users in the Lower Basin to know when, and by how much, water deliveries will be reduced in drought and other low reservoir conditions. In addition, this action is designed to delay the onset and magnitude of shortages and maximize the protection afforded to water supply, hydropower production, recreation, and environmental benefits by water storage in Lakes Powell and Mead. As a result of analysis of comments and public input received to date, the Department anticipates that the elements of the proposed action will include:

(1) Adoption of guidelines that will identify those circumstances under which the Secretary would reduce the annual amount of water available for consumptive use from Lake Mead to the Lower Division states (Arizona, California, and Nevada) below 7.5 million acre-feet (maf) (a "Shortage") pursuant to Article II(B)(3) of the Supreme Court Decree in *Arizona v. California*;<sup>1</sup>

(2) adoption of guidelines for the coordinated operation of Lake Powell and Lake Mead that are designed to provide improved operation of the two reservoirs, particularly under low reservoir conditions;

(3) adoption of guidelines for the storage and delivery of water in Lake Mead to increase the flexibility to meet water use needs from Lake Mead, particularly under low reservoir conditions. These guidelines are anticipated to address the storage and delivery of non-system water,

exchanges, and water conserved by extraordinary measures; and

(4) modification of the substance and term of the existing Interim Surplus Guidelines, published in the **Federal Register** on January 25, 2001 (66 FR 7772-7782), from 2016 to coincide with the proposed new guidelines described above.

The Secretary proposes that these guidelines will be interim in nature and will extend through 2025. Adoption of new guidelines along with modification of existing operational guidelines for a consistent interim period will provide the opportunity to gain valuable experience for operating the reservoirs under the modified operations and should improve the basis for making additional future operational decisions, whether during the interim period or thereafter.

It is the intent of the Department to adopt and implement the above proposed action in a manner that is consistent with applicable Federal law,<sup>2</sup> and further, in a manner that does not require any additional statutory authorization. In this regard, Reclamation proposes to implement the proposed action consistent with the Colorado River Compact of 1922, the Decree entered by the United States Supreme Court in the case of *Arizona v. California*, and other provisions of applicable Federal law. It is the intent of the Department that the proposed action will be consistent with and provide implementing guidance that would be used each year by the Department in implementing the Criteria for Coordinated Long-Range Operation of Colorado River Reservoirs Pursuant to the Colorado River Basin Project Act of September 30, 1968 (Long-Range Operating Criteria or LROC).

#### Purpose and Need for the Proposed Federal Action

The purpose of the proposed action is to adopt additional operational strategies to improve the Department's annual management and operation of key Colorado River reservoirs while also providing mainstream users of Colorado River water, particularly those in the Lower Division states of Arizona, California, and Nevada, a greater degree

<sup>2</sup> The treaties, compacts, decrees, statutes, regulations, contracts, and other legal documents and agreements applicable to the allocation, appropriation, development, exportation, and management of the waters of the Colorado River Basin are often referred to as the "Law of the River." There is no single, universally-agreed upon definition of the "Law of the River," but it is useful as a shorthand reference to describe this longstanding and complex body of legal agreements governing the Colorado River.

<sup>1</sup> The Department intends to meet any consultation requirements identified in Article II(B)(3) of the Supreme Court Decree in *Arizona v. California* through the ongoing NEPA process initiated by the **Federal Register** Notice of September 30, 2005 (70 FR 57322-57323).

of predictability with respect to the amount of annual water deliveries in future years, particularly under low reservoir conditions.

The need for the proposed action is based on a number of important considerations including the following reasons:

- The Colorado River flows through the driest portion of the continental United States and is the primary source of water to a region that has experienced continued population growth over recent decades.

- The Colorado River is of strategic importance in the southwestern United States for water supply, hydropower production, flood control, recreation, fish and wildlife habitat, and other benefits. In addition, the United States has a delivery obligation to the Republic of Mexico for certain waters of the Colorado River pursuant to the 1944 U.S.-Mexico Water Treaty.

- The Colorado River Basin experienced the worst five-year drought in recorded history in 2000 through 2004. This drought has impacted system storage, while demands for Colorado River water supplies have continued to increase. During the period from October 1, 1999, to October 1, 2004, storage in Lakes Powell and Mead fell from 47.6 maf (approximately 95% of capacity) to 23.1 maf (approximately 46% of capacity). This drought was also the worst sustained drought experienced in the Colorado River Basin at a time when all major storage facilities were in place, and when use by the Lower Division states met or exceeded the annual "normal" apportionment of 7.5 maf pursuant to Article II(B)(1) of the Decree. Moreover, entering the five year drought period with Lake Powell and Lake Mead reservoir storage capacity at 95% fortuitously provided for sufficient water supplies to meet basin demands. This may not be the case in the future. Among other factors, these conditions led the Department to conclude that additional management guidelines are necessary and desirable for the efficient, and coordinated, management of the major mainstem Colorado River reservoirs.

- In the future, low reservoir conditions will likely not be limited to drought periods because of anticipated future demands on Colorado River water supplies. Projected future increases in Colorado River water demands are expected to increase the frequency and magnitude that Colorado River reservoirs are drawn down to low reservoir conditions.

- As a result of actual operating experience and through reviews of the

LROC and preparation of Annual Operating Plans, particularly during recent drought years, the Secretary has determined a need for more specific guidelines, consistent with the Decree and other applicable provisions of Federal law, to assist in the Secretary's determination of annual water supply conditions in the Lower Basin. The increased level of predictability is needed by the entities that receive Colorado River water to better plan for and manage available water supplies, and to allow such entities to better integrate the use of Colorado River water with other water supplies that they rely on. To date, storage of water and flows in the Colorado River Basin have been sufficient so that it has not been necessary to reduce Lake Mead annual releases below 7.5 maf; nor has the Department yet identified when water supplies would be reduced, by how much, or who would experience specified reductions.

- After public consultation meetings held in the summer of 2005, the Secretary has also determined the desirability of developing additional operational guidelines that will provide for releases greater than or less than 8.23 maf from Lake Powell.

- To further enhance this coordinated reservoir approach, the Secretary has also determined a need for guidelines that provide water users with the opportunity to conserve, store, and take delivery of water in and from Lake Mead for the purposes of enhancing existing water supplies, particularly under low reservoir conditions.

- Lastly, the Secretary has determined the need to modify and extend the Interim Surplus Guidelines to coincide with the duration of the proposed new guidelines. This will provide an integrated approach for reservoir management and more predictability for future Colorado River Basin water supplies.

### Results of Scoping Input

The description of the Proposed Federal Action and the Purpose and Need for the Proposed Federal Action described in this Notice and in the Scoping Summary Report available at Reclamation's Web site noted above, was refined to reflect information and comments received during the scoping meetings and in written and oral scoping comments submitted to the Department.<sup>3</sup> The Proposed Federal Action has been crafted to reflect,

<sup>3</sup> The Scoping Summary Report also addresses in Section 5.0 those issues raised during scoping that have been determined to be beyond the proposed scope of the EIS.

among others, three important considerations that were identified by commentors:

(1) *Importance of Encouraging Conservation of Water*: Many comments submitted to the Department focused on the importance of encouraging and utilizing water conservation as an important tool to better manage limited water supplies and therefore minimize the likelihood and severity of potential future shortages. *See e.g.*, comment G-0003, "Conservation Before Shortage" proposal submitted to the Department on July 18, 2005, which is available in its entirety in Appendix W of the Scoping Summary Report. Water conservation can occur through a number of approaches that will be identified in the Draft EIS, including: Extraordinary conservation, forbearance, financial incentives to maximize conservation, dry-year options, and associated storage and recovery methodologies and procedures to address conservation actions by particular parties.

(2) *Importance of Consideration of Reservoir Operations at all Operational Levels*: Comments submitted to the Department urged the Department to consider and analyze management and operational guidelines for the full range of operational levels at Lake Powell and Lake Mead. *See e.g.*, comment S-2006, "Basin States' Preliminary Proposal Regarding Colorado River Interim Operations" submitted to the Department on February 3, 2006, which is available in its entirety in Appendix Q of the Scoping Summary Report. It was suggested that this approach is integral to the prudent development of new low-reservoir operational guidelines, as the approach and management of these reservoirs at higher elevations has a direct impact on available storage, thereby affecting the likelihood and severity of potential future shortages.

(3) *Term of Operational Guidelines*: Comments submitted to the Department urged the Department to consider interim, rather than permanent, additional operational guidelines. *See e.g.*, comment letters L-2002 through 2006 submitted to the Department by several Arizona municipalities which are available in their entirety in Appendix W of the Scoping Summary Report. In this manner, the Department would have the ability to use actual operating experience for a period of years, thereby facilitating a better understanding of the operational effects of the new guidelines; modifications would then be made, if necessary, during or preferably at the end of the interim period. In particular, the

Department was also urged to consider adopting additional operational guidelines for both low and higher reservoir elevations for a consistent period of years. At this time, it is important to note, the Department has detailed operational guidelines for declaration of surplus conditions at higher elevations of Lake Mead through 2016, but does not have similar detailed operational guidelines for either Lake Powell or the lower operational levels of Lake Mead.

#### Public Disclosure

Written comments, including names and home addresses of respondents, will be made available for public review. Individual respondents may request that their home address be withheld from public disclosure, which will be honored to the extent allowable by law. There may be circumstances in which respondents' identity may also be withheld from public disclosure, as allowable by law. If you wish to have your name and/or address withheld, you must state this prominently at the beginning of your comment. All submissions from organizations, business, and from individuals identifying themselves as representatives or officials of organizations or businesses, will be made available for public disclosure in their entirety.

Dated: March 18, 2006.

#### Robert W. Johnson,

Regional Director, Lower Colorado Region,  
Bureau of Reclamation.

Dated: March 16, 2006.

#### Rick L. Gold,

Regional Director, Upper Colorado Region,  
Bureau of Reclamation.

[FR Doc. E6-4713 Filed 3-30-06; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 4310-MN-P

## DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR

### Office of Surface Mining Reclamation and Enforcement

#### Notice of Proposed Information Collection for 1029-0025, 1029-0040 and 1029-0104

**AGENCY:** Office of Surface Mining Reclamation and Enforcement.

**ACTION:** Notice and request for comments.

**SUMMARY:** In compliance with the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995, the Office of Surface Mining Reclamation and Enforcement (OSM) is announcing its intention to request renewed approval for the collections of information for 30 CFR 733,

Maintenance of state programs and procedures for substituting federal enforcement of state programs and withdrawing approval of state programs; 785, Requirements for permits for special categories of mining; and 876, Acid mine drainage treatment and abatement program.

**DATES:** Comments on the proposed information collection activities must be received by May 30, 2006, to be assured of consideration.

**ADDRESSES:** Comments may be mailed to John A. Trelease, Office of Surface Mining Reclamation and Enforcement, 1951 Constitution Ave., NW., Room 202—SIB, Washington, DC 20240. Comments may also be submitted electronically to [jtreleas@osmre.gov](mailto:jtreleas@osmre.gov).

**FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:** To request a copy of the information collection request, explanatory information and related forms, contact John A. Trelease, at (202) 208-2783 or via e-mail at the address listed above.

**SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:** The Office of Management and Budget (OMB) regulations at 5 CFR 1320, which implement provisions of the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995 (Pub. L. 104-13), require that interested members of the public and affected agencies have an opportunity to comment on information collection and recordkeeping activities [see 5 CFR 1320.8(d)]. This notice identifies information collections that OSM will be submitting to OMB for approval. These collections are contained in (1) 30 CFR 733, Maintenance of state programs and procedures for substituting federal enforcement of state programs and withdrawing approval of state programs; (2) 30 CFR 785, Requirements for permits for special categories of mining; and (3) 30 CFR 876, Acid mine drainage treatment and abatement program. OSM will request a 3-year term of approval for each information collection activity.

Comments are invited on: (1) The need for the collection of information for the performance of the functions of the agency; (2) the accuracy of the agency's burden estimates; (3) ways to enhance the quality, utility and clarity of the information collection; and (4) ways to minimize the information collection burden on respondents, such as use of automated means of collection of the information. A summary of the public comments will accompany OSM's submission of the information collection request to OMB.

The following information is provided for the information collection: (1) Title of the information collection; (2) OMB control number; (3) summary of the information collection activity; and (4)

frequency of collection, description of the respondents, estimated total annual responses, and the total annual reporting and recordkeeping burden for the collection of information.

**Title:** Maintenance of state programs and procedures for substituting federal enforcement of state programs and withdrawing approval of state programs, 30 CFR 733.

**OMB Control Number:** 1029-0025.

**Summary:** This part provides that any interested person may request the Director of OSM to evaluate a State program by setting forth in the request a concise statement of facts that the person believes establishes the need for the evaluation.

**Bureau Form Number:** None.

**Frequency of Collection:** Once.

**Description of Respondents:** Any interested person (individuals, businesses, institutions, organizations).

**Total Annual Responses:** 1.

**Total Annual Burden Hours:** 100.

**Title:** Requirements for permits for special categories of mining, 30 CFR 785.

**OMB Control Number:** 1029-0040.

**Summary:** The information is being collected to meet the requirements of section 507, 508, 510, 515, 701 and 711 of Public Law 95-87, which requires applicants for special types of mining activities to provide descriptions, maps, plans and data of the proposed activity. This information will be used by the regulatory authority in determining if the applicant can meet the applicable performance standards for the special type of mining activity.

**Bureau Form Number:** None.

**Frequency of Collection:** Once.

**Description of Respondents:** Applicants for coalmine permits and State Regulatory Authorities.

**Total Annual Responses:** 228.

**Total Annual Burden Hours:** 16,146.

**Title:** Acid mine drainage treatment and abatement program, 30 CFR 876.

**OMB Control Number:** 1029-0104.

**Summary:** This part establishes the requirements and procedures allowing states and Indian tribes to establish acid mine drainage abatement and treatment programs under the Abandoned Mine Land fund as directed through Public Law 101-508.

**Bureau Form Number:** None.

**Frequency of Collection:** Once.

**Description of Respondents:** State governments and Indian tribes.

**Total Annual Responses:** 1.

**Total Annual Burden Hours:** 350.

Dated: March 27, 2006.

#### Kathryn S. O'Toole,

Acting Chief, Division of Regulatory Support.

[FR Doc. 06-3130 Filed 3-30-06; 8:45 am]

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