

issuance of permits for import of giant panda will be reopened to obtain comments on new information that should be considered in determining the final policy.

**DATES:** Public comment received on or before September 29, 1997, will be considered by the Service.

**ADDRESSES:** Comments may be submitted to the Chief, Office of Management Authority, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, 4401 North Fairfax Drive, Room 430, Arlington, Virginia 22203.

**FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:** Kenneth Stansell, Chief, Office Management Authority, at the above address, or call (703) 358-2093; fax (703) 358-2280.

**SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:** The Service published a proposed policy on issuance of permits for giant panda imports on March 30, 1995 (60 FR 16487). The comment period was reopened in a notice published June 27, 1995 (123 FR 33224) in response to a request from the American Zoo and Aquarium Association. Subsequent to the closure of this comment period, two events took place in which new information was received that should be considered in finalizing this policy. The events and resulting information are as follows:

(1) During the 36th Meeting of the CITES Standing Committee Meeting, January 30–February 2, 1996, discussions of giant panda loans resulted in the CITES Secretariat issuing Notification No. 932 which recommended conditions under which giant panda loans should occur.

(2) Dr. U.S. Seal, of the Conservation Breeding Specialist Group (CBSG), Species Survival Commission, The World Conservation Union (IUCN), and others, conducted a Captive Management Planning Workshop in Chengdu, China, December 10–13, 1996. The workshop was organized by the Chinese Association of Zoological Gardens and the Ministry of Construction in collaboration with the CBSG. The Service received a copy of the report resulting from the workshop.

Copies of the CITES Notification and the report on the Captive Management Planning Workshop are available from the address listed above. Interested organizations and the public are invited to comment on the documents as they relate to the previously published proposed policy. In addition, comments submitted during the previous comment periods, including those from the Chinese Ministry of Forestry and the Ministry of Construction, are also available upon request. The Service will

consider all comments received during the previous two comment periods and this comment period in drafting a final policy.

**Authority:** This notice was prepared under the authority of the Endangered Species Act of 1973, as amended (16 U.S.C. 1531 *et seq.*).

Dated: June 23, 1997.

**Robert G. Streeter,**

*Director.*

[FR Doc. 97-17135 Filed 6-30-97; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 4310-55-P

## DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR

### Fish and Wildlife Service

#### Notice of Availability of a Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS) for Grizzly Bear Recovery in the Bitterroot Ecosystem

**AGENCY:** Fish and Wildlife Service, Interior.

**ACTION:** Notice of document availability.

**SUMMARY:** To further the recovery of the grizzly bear (*Ursus arctos horribilis*), the Fish and Wildlife Service announces the availability of the DEIS for Grizzly Bear Recovery in the Bitterroot Ecosystem (BE). The DEIS evaluates a proposal to establish an experimental population rule and reintroduce grizzly bears into the Bitterroot Ecosystem in east central Idaho and western Montana. The proposed rule to establish the nonessential experimental population is published elsewhere in this **Federal Register**. Four alternatives, including the No Action Alternative, are discussed in the DEIS.

The BE consists of approximately 44,400 square miles in 10 central Idaho and four western Montana counties, of which 76 percent is in Federal surface ownership. A Citizen Management Committee would be delegated management implementation responsibility for the experimental population. Reintroduction could result in grizzly bear recovery in the BE in a minimum of 50 years. A recovered grizzly bear population (approximately 280 bears) would kill about 6 cattle and 22 sheep and up to 504 wild ungulates per year. Nuisance bear incidents could average 59 per year. Economic analyses indicate grizzly bear recovery in the BE would lead to total net economic benefits of \$40.4 to \$60.6 million per year.

**DATES:** Copies of the DEIS will be mailed to interested parties on the mailing list on July 1, 1997, and the proposed rule to establish the nonessential experimental population is published elsewhere in this **Federal**

**Register**. Those interested persons not on the DEIS mailing list may request a copy from the project leader at the address below. It is anticipated that the Environmental Protection Agency will publish a notice on this DEIS in the **Federal Register** on July 11, 1997, which will start a 90-day review period. Public comment on the DEIS is solicited pursuant to the National Environmental Policy Act regulations (40 CFR 1503.1). All agencies and individuals are urged to provide comments and suggestions for improving the DEIS and the proposed experimental population rule. All comments received by October 9, 1997, will be considered in preparation of the Final EIS and rule.

Public hearings on the DEIS will be scheduled at a later date for the cities of Boise, Lewiston, and Salmon, Idaho; and Helena, Missoula, and Hamilton, Montana. The location, dates and times of these hearings will be announced in the **Federal Register** at least 15 days prior to the first hearing, and in local newspapers.

**ADDRESSES:** Written comments should be addressed to Dr. Christopher Servheen, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service Project Leader, Bitterroot Grizzly Bear EIS, P.O. Box 5127, Missoula, Montana 59806.

**FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:** Dr. Christopher Servheen, Grizzly Bear Recovery Coordinator (see **ADDRESSES** above), at telephone (406) 243-4903.

The authority for this action is section 4(f) of the Endangered Species Act, 16 U.S.C. 1533(f).

Dated: June 25, 1997.

**Terry T. Terrell,**

*Deputy Regional Director, Denver Colorado.*

[FR Doc. 97-17260 Filed 6-30-97; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 4310-55-M

## DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR

### Bureau of Land Management

[NV-020-1990-01]

#### Florida Canyon Mine Proposed Expansion and Comprehensive Reclamation Plan, Draft Environmental Impact Statement

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

**ACTION:** Notice of availability of the Draft Environmental Impact Statement and the initiation of a 60-day comment period.

**SUMMARY:** Pursuant to section 102(2)(c) of the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969, notice is given that the Winnemucca Field Office of the Bureau

of Land Management (BLM) has prepared, by third party contractor, a Draft Environmental Impact Statement on Florida Canyon Mining Incorporated's Florida Canyon Mine Expansion and Comprehensive Reclamation Plan. This document became available June 20, 1997, and public comment will be accepted for a 60 day period beginning then.

**DATES AND ADDRESSES:** Written comments on the Draft Environmental Impact Statement must be received by the close of business August 18, 1997, to ensure consideration. Public meetings to receive oral and written comments have been scheduled for the following dates, times, and places: July 15, 1997, 7 pm, at the Pershing County Community Center, 820 6th St., Lovelock, Nevada; July 16, 1997, 7 pm, at the Winnemucca Field Office, 5100 E. Winnemucca Blvd., Winnemucca, Nevada.

A copy of the Draft Environmental Impact Statement can be obtained from: Bureau of Land Management, Winnemucca Filed Office, ATTN: Ken Loda, Project NEPA Coordinator, 5100 E. Winnemucca Boulevard, Winnemucca, Nevada 89445.

The Draft Environmental Impact Statement is also available for inspection at the following additional locations: Bureau of Land Management, Nevada State Office, 850 Harvard Way, Reno, Nevada; Humboldt County Library, Winnemucca, Nevada; Pershing County Library, Lovelock, Nevada; Lander County Library, Battle Mountain, Nevada; and the University of Nevada Library in Reno, Nevada.

**FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:** Ken Loda, Project NEPA Coordination at the above Winnemucca Filed Office address or telephone (702) 623-1500.

**SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:** The Draft Environmental Impact Statement analyzes the potential environmental impact that could result from the implementation of the proposed mine expansion and comprehensive reclamation plan. Alternatives analyzed are the north extension of the heap leach pad alternative and the no action alternative.

The mine is located on public and private lands adjacent to Interstate Highway 80, approximately 35 miles northeast of Lovelock, Nevada and 38 miles southwest of Winnemucca, Nevada. Approximately 860 acres would be disturbed by the proposed mine expansion, of which 447 are public and 413 private. The proposed project would include expansion of the open pit and north and south waste rock storage areas; development of the new

south heap leach pad; haul road; solution ponds; solution corridor/road; plant; monitoring wells/road; crusher site; diversion channels and sediment ponds; growth media stockpiles; exploration roads and drill sites; water supply pipelines; realignment of the Johnson Canyon access road; and a revised comprehensive reclamation plan for the mine. Approval would extend the life of the mine five years.

Dated June 24, 1997.

**Ron Wenker,**

*District Manager.*

[FR Doc. 97-17074 Filed 6-30-97; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 4310-HC-M

## DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR

### Bureau of Land Management

[CO-070-5101-CO12]

#### Notice of Availability of the Draft Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) on the Plateau Creek Pipeline Replacement Project

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

**ACTION:** Notice of Availability of the Draft Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) on the Plateau Creek Pipeline Replacement Project.

**SUMMARY:** Pursuant to section 102 (2) (C) of the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969 (NEPA), the Grand Junction Resource Area office, Grand Junction District, had an Environmental Impact Statement prepared to address impacts of the Plateau Creek Pipeline Replacement project proposed by the Ute Water Conservancy District (Ute Water). The project is a raw water conveyance system proposed on private and public lands in Mesa County, Colorado to replace a deteriorated and under sized pipeline currently approved under BLM ROW grant C 081282.

Copies of the EIS and the Technical Memoranda will be available at the Mesa County Public Library in Grand Junction, Colorado, at the Grand Junction Resource Area, 2815 H Road, Grand Junction, Colorado 81506 at the BLM, Colorado State Office, 2850 Youngfield Street, Lakewood, Colorado 80215 and at the Ute Water Conservancy District, 560 25 Road, Grand Junction, Colorado.

**DATES:** Written comments will be accepted until 4:00 PM, MST, on August 29, 1997. A public meeting will be held from 5:00-8:00 p.m. on August 12, 1997, at the Two Rivers Convention Center, 159 Main Street, Grand Junction, Colorado.

**ADDRESS:** Comments should be sent to the Grand Junction Area Manager, Bureau of Land Management, 2815 H Road, Grand Junction, CO 81506, ATTN: Plateau Creek Pipeline Replacement Project.

**FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:** Dave Stevens, (970) 244-3009.

**SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:** The existing Plateau Creek Pipeline is an essential part of the Ute Water system which provides water to more than 60,000 Grand Valley residents. The Ute Water service area includes most of the Grand Valley area surrounding the City of Grand Junction, Colorado, and extends from east of the Town of Palisade to within 5 miles of the Colorado-Utah stateline. Ute Water is a political subdivision of the State of Colorado formed under the Water Conservancy Act of 1937, and is considered to be a quasi-municipal entity. In order for Ute Water to meet its commitment of providing a reliable, cost effective, high quality water source, replacement of the pipeline is necessary. Water is conveyed via a 24-inch-diameter pipeline approximately 14 miles along Plateau Creek Canyon and adjacent to Interstate Highway 70 to Ute Water's treatment plant located on Rapid Creek, near the Town of Palisade. As of 1994, the pipeline was no longer able to provide an adequate flow rate to meet the peak day customer demands. The pipeline is presently subject to frequent breaks due to deteriorated pipe condition, and is unreliable due to its location within geologic hazards and stream erosion areas.

The Bureau of Land Management and Ute Water had performed scoping to: (1) identify interested stakeholders and agencies, (2) define key issues, and (3) identify initial project alternatives for preparation of an Environmental Assessment. The initial filing of the Notice of Intent was on March 14, 1995. On the basis of subsequent information and comments provided to the BLM it was determined that issues and concerns would best be analyzed in an EIS.

During the initial scoping, 16 alternatives were developed. These include seven alternatives along the Plateau Creek corridor, three different alternatives involving use of water from nearby utilities, a Colorado River pump station alternative, two alternatives for supplying water from the Kannah Creek watershed, two alternatives for supplying water from the Whitewater Creek watershed, and a No Action alternative. Groundwater alternatives and conservation actions are also addressed in the EIS. Four of the