

DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR**Bureau of Land Management**

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15XL1116AF. HAG15-0187]

Notice of Intent to Prepare a Resource Management Plan Amendment and Associated Environmental Assessment for the Brothers/La Pine Planning Area in the Prineville District Office, Oregon

AGENCY: Bureau of Land Management, Interior.

ACTION: Notice of Intent.

SUMMARY: In compliance 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) Prineville District Office, Prineville, Oregon, intends to prepare a Resource Management Plan (RMP) amendment with an associated Environmental Assessment (EA) in order to analyze the plan level decision to change the land tenure classification of approximately 18 acres. The legal description of the affected public lands includes the BLM lands listed below:

Willamette Meridian, Oregon

T. 16 S., R. 18 E., the N1/2 of the N1/2 of the NE1/4 of the SE1/4 of the NW 1/4 of section 8; the NW1/4 of the SE1/4 of the NW 1/4 of section 8; and the N1/2 of the SW1/4 of the SE1/4 of the NW1/4 of section 8, from Zone 1 (Retention) to Zone 3 (Suitable for Disposal), and by this notice is announcing the beginning of the scoping process to solicit public comments and identify issues. The BLM intends to concurrently analyze a trespass resolution strategy for an unintentional occupancy developed on a portion of the 18 acres in 1995. The trespass consists of a 2,500 square-foot log home, two barns, greenhouse, windmill, and a buried pipeline that transports water from a spring on private land to a water storage tank. The strategy will consider a range of alternatives including the direct sale of the entire 18 acres and issuance of a right-of-way via an existing driveway, to the removal of all structures and rehabilitation of any disturbed sites.

DATES: This notice initiates the public scoping process for the RMP amendment with associated EA. Comments on issues may be submitted in writing until September 14, 2015. The date(s) and location(s) of any scoping meetings will be announced at least 15 days in advance through local news media, newspapers and the BLM, Prineville District Web site at: <http://www.blm.gov/or/districts/prineville/index.php>. In order to be included in the analysis, all comments must be received prior to the close of the 30-day

scoping period or 15 days after the last public meeting, whichever is later. The District will provide additional opportunities for public participation as appropriate.

ADDRESSES: You may submit comments on issues and planning criteria related to the Direct Public Land Sale and Land Tenure Classification Plan Amendment EA by any of the following methods:

- Web site: <http://www.blm.gov/or/districts/prineville/index.php>
- Email: BLM_OR_PR_Front_Desk@blm.gov
- Fax: 1-541-416-6782
- Mail: Direct Public Land Sale and Land Tenure Classification Plan Amendment EA, 3050 NE. 3rd Street, Prineville, OR 97754

Documents pertinent to this proposal may be examined at the Prineville District Office, 3050 NE. 3rd Street, Prineville, OR 97754.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: For further information and/or to have your name added to our mailing list, contact Susie Manezes, Assistant Field Manager, telephone 1-541-416-6725; address Susie Manezes, 3050 NE. 3rd Street, Prineville, OR 97754; email smanezes@blm.gov. Persons who use a telecom-munications device for the deaf (TDD) may call the Federal Information Relay Service (FIRS) at 1-800-877-8339 to contact the above individual during normal business hours. The FIRS 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: This document provides notice that the BLM District Office, Prineville, Oregon, intends to prepare an RMP amendment with an associated EA for the Brothers/La Pine planning area, announces the beginning of the scoping process, and seeks public input on issues and planning criteria. The affected portion of the Brothers/La Pine planning area is an approximately 18-acre contiguous parcel of land located in Crook County in Oregon as follows:

Willamette Meridian, Oregon: T. 16 S., R. 18 E., the N1/2 of the N1/2 of the NE1/4 of the SE1/4 of the NW 1/4 of section 8; the NW1/4 of the SE1/4 of the NW 1/4 of section 8; and the N1/2 of the SW1/4 of the SE1/4 of the NW1/4 of section 8.

The purpose of the public scoping process is to determine relevant issues that will influence the scope of the environmental analysis, including alternatives, and guide the planning process. Preliminary issues for the plan amendment area have been identified by BLM personnel; Federal, state, and local agencies; and other stakeholders. The

issues include: how would the proposed change in land tenure classification and an associated direct sale of 18 acres of public land along with the issuance of a road use right-of-way affect sage-grouse; and, how would the proposed land tenure classification change affect Native American spiritual and traditional uses. Preliminary planning criteria include: the plan will be completed in compliance with FLPMA, NEPA, and all other relevant Federal law, Executive orders, and management policies of the BLM; where existing planning decisions are still valid, those decisions may remain unchanged and be incorporated into the new amendment; the plan will recognize valid existing rights; and Native American tribal consultations will be conducted in accordance with policy and tribal concerns will be given due consideration. The planning process will include the consideration of any impacts on Indian trust assets. You may submit comments on issues and planning criteria in writing to the BLM at any public scoping meeting, or you may submit them to the BLM using one of the methods listed in the **ADDRESSES** section above. To be most helpful, you should submit comments by the close of the 30-day scoping period or within 15 days after the last public meeting, whichever is later.

The BLM will use the NEPA public participation requirements to assist the agency in satisfying the public involvement requirements under section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act (NHPA) (16 U.S.C. 470(f)) pursuant to 36 CFR 800.2(d)(3). The BLM will consult with Indian tribes on a government-to-government basis in accordance with E. O. 13175 and other policies. Tribal concerns, including impacts on Indian trust assets and potential impacts to cultural resources, will be given due consideration. Federal, state, and local agencies, along with tribes and other stakeholders that may be interested in or affected by the proposed action that the BLM is evaluating, are invited to participate in the scoping process and, if eligible, may request or be requested by the BLM to participate in the development of the environmental analysis as a cooperating agency.

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. The minutes and list of attendees for each scoping meeting will be available to the public and open for 30 days after the meeting to any participant who wishes to clarify the views he or she expressed. The BLM will evaluate identified issues to be addressed in the plan, and will place them into one of three categories:

1. Issues to be resolved in the plan amendment;
2. Issues to be resolved through policy or administrative action; or
3. Issues beyond the scope of this plan amendment.

The BLM will provide an explanation in the EA as to why an issue was placed in category two or three. The public is also encouraged to help identify any management questions and concerns that should be addressed in the plan. The BLM will work collaboratively with interested parties to identify the management decisions that are best suited to local, regional, and national needs and concerns.

The BLM will use an interdisciplinary approach to develop the plan amendment in order to consider the variety of resource issues and concerns identified. Specialists with expertise in the following disciplines will be involved in the planning process: rangeland management, minerals and geology, outdoor recreation, visual resource management, archeology, paleontology, wildlife, botany, lands and realty, hydrology, soils, sociology and economics.

Authority: 40 CFR 1501.7 and 43 CFR 1610.2.

Carol Benkosky,
Prineville District Manager.

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DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR

Bureau of Land Management

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Notice of Availability of the Draft Environmental Impact Statement for the Proposed Bald Mountain Mine North and South Operations Area Projects, White Pine County, NV

AGENCY: Bureau of Land Management, Department of Interior.

ACTION: Notice.

SUMMARY: In compliance with the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) of 1969, as amended, and the Federal Land Policy and Management

Act (FLPMA) of 1976, as amended, the Bureau of Land Management (BLM) Egan Field Office, Ely, Nevada has prepared a Draft Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) for the proposed Bald Mountain Mine North and South Operations Area Projects (Project) and by this notice is announcing the opening of the comment period.

DATES: To ensure comments will be considered, the BLM must receive written comments on the Bald Mountain Mine North and South Operations Area Projects Draft EIS within 45 days following the date the Environmental Protection Agency publishes their Notice of Availability in the **Federal Register**. The BLM will announce any public meetings or 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 Bald Mountain Mine North and South Operations Area Projects Draft EIS by any of the following methods:

- Email: BLM_NV_EYDO_Barrick_Bald_EIS@blm.gov.
- Fax: 775-289-1910.
- Mail: BLM Ely District, Egan Field Office, HC 33 Box 33500, Ely, NV 89301.

Copies of the Bald Mountain Mine North and South Operations Area Projects Draft EIS are available in the Ely District Office at the above address and on the Ely District's Web page at http://www.blm.gov/nv/st/en/fo/ely_field_office/blm_programs/minerals/mining_projects/bald_mountain_mine0.html.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: For further information contact Miles Kreidler, Project Lead, telephone: 509-536-1222; address: 702 North Industrial Way, Ely, NV 89301; email: mkreidler@blm.gov. Persons who use a telecommunications device for the deaf (TDD) may call the Federal Information Relay Service (FIRS) at 1-800-877-8339 to contact the above individual during normal business hours. The FIRS 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: Barrick Gold U.S. Inc. (Barrick) proposes to expand, construct, and operate an open-pit gold mining operation located in the Bald Mountain Mining District in White Pine County, Nevada, approximately 65 miles northwest of the Town of Ely. The proposed development and expansion would create an additional 6,891 acres of disturbance, which would be located primarily on public land managed by

the BLM. The projected mining period is 21 years, but the life of the mine would extend for 80 years, including construction, operation, reclamation, closure, reclamation monitoring, and post-closure monitoring.

The Draft EIS describes and analyzes the proposed project site-specific impacts (including cumulative) on all affected resources. The DEIS describes four alternatives: approval of the project as proposed by Barrick (the Proposed Action), the North and South Operations Area Facilities Reconfiguration Alternative, the Western Redbird Modification Alternative, and the No Action Alternative. The North and South Operations Area Facilities Reconfiguration Alternative was developed to address potential impacts to mule deer migration; greater sage-grouse leks and associated Preliminary Priority Habitat (PPH) and Preliminary General Habitat (PGH); visual impacts affecting the cultural setting of the Pony Express National Historic Trail, Ruby Valley Pony Express Station, and Fort Ruby National Historic Landmark; and visual impacts affecting visitor aesthetics at the Ruby Lake National Wildlife Refuge. The North and South Operations Area Facilities Reconfiguration Alternative would result in a decrease of 3703 acres (-54 percent) of disturbance compared to the Proposed Action. The Western Redbird Modification Alternative was developed to further address potential impacts to mule deer migration and would result in a decrease of 4,339 acres (-63 percent) of disturbance compared to the Proposed Action. Several other alternatives were considered but eliminated from further analysis. These alternatives eliminated from further consideration are discussed in Chapter 2 of the Draft EIS. Mitigation measures are considered to minimize environmental impacts and to assure the Proposed Action does not result in unnecessary or undue degradation of public lands.

On April 16, 2012, a Notice of Intent was published in the **Federal Register** inviting scoping comments on the Proposed Action. A legal notice was prepared by the BLM and published in the *Elko Daily Free Press*, *Ely Times*, *Eureka Sentinel*, and *Reno Gazette-Journal* informing the public of the BLM's intention to prepare the Bald Mountain Mine North and South Operations Area Projects EIS. Public scoping meetings were held May 7-10 in Ely, Eureka, Elko, and Reno, Nevada. A total of 25 comment submittals containing 180 individual comments were received. The comments are