



United States Department of the Interior



BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT
Winnemucca District Office
Humboldt River Field Office
5100 East Winnemucca Boulevard
Winnemucca, Nevada 89445
Phone: (775) 623-1500 Fax: (775) 623-1503
Email: wfoweb@blm.gov
www.blm.gov/nv/st/en/fo/wfo.html

In Reply Refer To:
NVN -090649
3809/1792 (NVW0100.31)

MAY 15 2013

Dear Interested Public:

The Bureau of Land Management (BLM), Winnemucca District (WD), Humboldt River Field Office (HRFO) has completed Snowstorm Exploration LLC's (SEL) Snowstorm Exploration Project preliminary Environmental Assessment (EA). The EA analyzes the impacts associated with SEL's proposal to expand their existing notice-level activities in the Snowstorm Mountains and Kelly Creek areas located northwest of Midas and southeast of Chimney Reservoir on the Little Humboldt River. The project area is located approximately 40 miles north-northeast of Winnemucca in Humboldt County, Nevada (T. 41 N., R. 43 E., portions of secs 1, 9 - 12, 14 - 16, and 20 - 36; T.40 N., R. 43 E., portions of sections 1 - 5, 8 - 13, 16, and 17; and T. 40 N., R. 44 E., portions of sections 4 - 8) as shown on the enclosed map.

Exploration for gold on private and public land in the Snowstorm Mountains and Kelly Creek areas located northwest of Midas and southeast of Chimney Reservoir on the Little Humboldt River has been on-going under several successive companies since 1999. SEL is currently exploring on private land and on public land in accordance with seven notices. Notice exploration activities consist of overland travel, constructed access roads, and drill sites.

SEL is proposing to combine exploration activities presently existing on four mining notices into a plan. The project boundary would encompass about 19,801 acres located entirely in Humboldt County. Overland travel, constructed access roads, and drill sites are proposed for the plan with up to 200 acres of disturbance on public and private land proposed to be completed over the next 10 years in multiple phases. Phase 1 will consist of 149.55 acres of disturbance that includes the existing disturbance (21.73 acres of public land and 3.29 acres on private land) and 124.53 acres of new disturbance. The plan also includes a couple of staging areas and may include monitoring wells and a meteorological station. Reclamation would include recontouring the surface disturbances and revegetation.

In accordance with the Council on Environmental Quality regulations at 40 CFR 1500, for implementing the procedural provisions of the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA), the BLM HRFO prepared an environmental analysis of the proposed project. The preliminary EA evaluates, analyzes and discloses to the public the direct, indirect and cumulative environmental

impacts that would result from the implementation of this project and identifies resource protection measures that could be implemented to reduce the level of expected impacts.

The public is invited to submit comments on the preliminary EA for the next 30 days from the date of this letter. A copy of the preliminary EA is available on our National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) webpage at www.blm.gov/nv/st/en/fo/wfo/blm_information/nepa0.html. Please send written comments to Mr. Mark E. Hall, project manager, at the above address or e-mail to wfoweb@blm.gov with "Snowstorm Exploration Project (Hall)" in the subject line. In addition, a hardcopy of the document will be provided upon request, or is available for review at the Winnemucca District during the comment period.

Public comments submitted for this project, including names and addresses of commenters, will be available for public review at the WD during regular business hours 7:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m., Monday through Friday, except federal holidays. 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 personal identifying information -- may be made publicly available at any time. While you can ask us in your comment to withhold personal identifying information from public review, we cannot guarantee that we will be able to do so.

If you have any questions, please contact Mark Hall at (775) 623-1529 or at the above address.

Sincerely,



Vern Graham
Field Manager
Humboldt River Field Office

Enclosure