



United States Department of the Interior



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June 25, 2013

In Reply Refer to:
9210 (NV024)

Dear Interested Public,

The Bureau of Land Management's (BLM) Winnemucca District (WD), Division of Fire and Aviation Management are planning to relocate and/or construct fire station facilities in the Rye Patch area. This proposed relocation is to enhance wildland fire suppression capabilities and improve response time to identified critical resource areas within the WD, which include high fire frequency areas along the I-80 corridor. The current proposed location would be adjacent to the intersection of Stampede Road and Pyramid Lake Road in Rye Patch.

The current fire station facilities, located in Lovelock, are inadequate for the needs of the District as they are leased, dispersed, temporary in nature, with portions of the facilities collocated with the Lovelock Volunteer Fire Department. Additionally, the current station sits nearly 30 minutes from historically active areas of fire occurrence along the I-80 corridor.

The BLM would coordinate with the Nevada Department of Transportation (NDOT) to relinquish the proposed fire station location (5 -10 acres) from their current 160-acre Materials Site Right-of-Way (R/W) Case # NEV 056627, is located in T.30 N, R.33 E, Sec.16, SW ¼ of the NE ¼. The proposed location is designated on the attached map. The proposed action would only continue upon the successful relinquishment of the identified 5 -8 acre plot.

For the proposed fire station to be built, the WD would request an easement to use Stampede Trail, a private road within Humboldt River Ranch Estates, in order to provide access to the BLM land in section 16. Access to the proposed site is preferred from the west. If the requested easement would be granted by the Humboldt River Ranch Association, the proposed Federal action would read as follows.

Proposed Action

The BLM requests an easement for the construction of a BLM fire station on public lands located within T.30N, R.33E, MDM, Section 16, SW ¼ of the NE ¼ within the county of Pershing, Nevada (see location maps). The proposed action encompasses 5 acres within the 160 acre parcel in public ownership described above. The location would be adjacent to the intersection of Stampede Road and Pyramid Lake Road. The BLM would obtain an easement to use Stampede Trail, a private road within the Humboldt River Ranch Association in Rye Patch, to access the proposed fire station site. Approximately 2.5 acres would be needed to enclose a crew barracks, an office, covered or enclosed engine bays with shop area, and associated infrastructure / utilities to include; a well, well house, septic

tank and leach field, propane storage tank(s) 250 – 500 gallons, concrete pads in front of shop and engine bays, concrete walkways, paved or graveled drive and parking, lighting, landscaping and perimeter fencing. An additional 2.5 acres would be reserved and fenced for future expansion of facilities if needed (ie. helipad, additional bays, etc). A steel tower (not to exceed 100') would be installed to support one or more radio antennas. The station would be occupied on a seasonal basis (usually May – September), as needed, housing a minimum of 2 BLM wildland fire engines, and a Battalion Chief with command vehicle and up to 8 firefighters.

The project implementation would likely be phased over 3 years. Heavy equipment would likely need to be used for site preparation. Construction would take place during any time of the year, weather permitting. A right-of-way reservation would encumber 5 -8 acres and be issued by the BLM in perpetuity pending any future administrative withdrawal of the site by the BLM.

Currently Identified Mitigation Measures / Design Features

In order to minimize any potential effects to resources, an existing disturbed area was chosen for the site. Existing disturbance (part of NDOW Gravel Pit) and access to residential power was the basis for site location. The site chosen has a low potential for encountering cultural resources.

Cultural Resources: Respect for all cultural resources would be maintained. Any BLM personnel or contractors working on all aspects of the project would be informed about the need to protect cultural resources and the penalties involved in the collection or deliberate destruction of historic and prehistoric artifacts and features. Any cultural resource discovered on public or private lands that are part of the federal undertaking by any employee, contractor, sub-contractors or any person working on their behalf would be left in place and immediately reported to the BLM. In the case of human remains that might be inadvertently discovered in the process of conducting the proposed project, all appropriate Federal laws would be followed. If discovered human remains were encountered, construction near the location of the finds would be halted and consultation with Native American tribes in the area would be initiated. The contractor would suspend all operations in the immediate area of such discovery of human remains or cultural resources until written authorization to proceed were issued by the BLM. An evaluation of the discovery would be made by the BLM to determine appropriate actions to prevent the loss of significant cultural values.

Invasive Species: All construction vehicles would be required to be fully washed, including the undercarriages, prior to entry into the project area to remove seeds of undesirable plants. The station site would be inspected on a regular basis for the presence of noxious weeds and/or invasive non-native species. Approved control and eradication methods would be used if any are found.

Soils: Suitable topsoil removed in conjunction with clearing and stripping would be conserved in stockpiles at appropriate locations within the right-of-way reservation. Topsoil would be uniformly spread over unoccupied disturbed areas, particularly in areas of landscaping. Dust abatement techniques such as watering would be employed during construction.

Wildlife – Migratory Birds: Appropriate surveys would be conducted before ground-disturbing activities as appropriate. The gravel pit R/W area is sparsely vegetated.

Coordination and Comment

As this project is purely in the conceptual and planning stages at this time, there is no sure timeline or guarantee on when the station would be built. Construction would be purely funding-dependent.

However, it is important the BLM have a plan “on the shelf” for when funding does become available. The WD intends to have the required NEPA completed this fiscal year to meet this need. Advanced planning, communication, collaboration and cooperation with stakeholders are paramount in this early stage of planning.

The Winnemucca District Office (WDO) would like to receive your input and comments on this proposal by the close of business July 29, 2013. Comments can be sent to the BLM WDO, referencing “Rye Patch Fire Station Proposal” (Attn: Donovan Walker) at the following address: 5100 E. Winnemucca Blvd. Winnemucca, NV 89445. Comments may also be received by FAX at 775-623-1503.

Public comments submitted for this project, including names and addresses of commenters, will be available for public review at the WDO during regular business hours 7:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m., Monday through Friday, except for 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 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.

If you have any questions, you can contact Donovan Walker, Assistant Fire Management Officer for the WD and Project Lead for the Rye Patch Fire Station Project, at (775) 623-1526.

Sincerely,

MIKE R. FETTIC

Mike R. Feticc
Fire Management Officer

Enclosures