



United States Department of the Interior



BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT
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In Reply Refer To:
6840 (NV030.09)

Feb 25 2015

Dear Interested Public:

The Bureau of Land Management (BLM) is seeking public input as it initiates an Environmental Assessment (EA) for a Nevada Department of Wildlife (NDOW) proposed plan to construct an enclosure in Fly Canyon. The proposed project, located in Township 40 North, Range 24 East, section 35, Mud Meadows, is located on public lands administered by the BLM Winnemucca District, Black Rock Field Office. The project is located approximately 48 miles north-northeast of Gerlach, and approximately 1 mile south of Soldier Meadows Area of Critical Environmental Concern (ACEC) in Humboldt County, Nevada. The proposed project is also located within the High Rock Lake Wilderness (HRLW), designated with the passage of the Black Rock Desert-High Rock Canyon Emigrant Trails National Conservation Area Act in 2000, and amended 2001. A map of the proposed project is enclosed.

The proposed project is needed to protect a population of the Desert Dace (*Eremichthys acros*), a federally listed threatened species under the Endangered Species Act (ESA) in a geothermal spring in Fly Canyon. Desert Dace are known to occur in only a small number of locations and require specific type of spring environments. This population of dace is at immediate risk of irreparable harm from burro and wild horse use of the spring. Moving the population to another spring out of the wilderness would not be possible. NDOW and the United States Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) has stated that an enclosure to protect the spring is needed otherwise the population may not survive this year, particularly under the current drought conditions. Due to the sensitivity and urgency to protect a threatened species under the ESA, the proposed project schedule and required National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) analysis is expected to be accelerated compared to projects under normal conditions.

The proposed project could include the NDOW delivering enclosure fence materials into wilderness by helicopter in one trip, constructing the enclosure fence with hand tools, and maintaining the enclosure fence. The proposed enclosure fence dimensions are approximately 75 feet by 150 feet. The fence material and style could be metal pipe rail or wooden buck and rail.

The duration of construction is anticipated to be one day. The enclosure would remain on site indefinitely.

The public is invited to submit comments relative to the development of an EA within 15 days of the date of this letter. Please send written comments to Kathy Cadigan, project manager, at the above address, or e-mail wfoweb@blm.gov with Fly Canyon Exclosure (Cadigan) in the subject line. This is also the time at which the public can consult with the BLM under the National Historic Preservation Act. This letter and a map are also available on the webpage at <http://on.doi.gov/1zDq9nI>.

Public comments submitted for the proposed project, including names and addresses of commenters will be available for public review during regular business hours 7:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m., Monday through Friday, except holidays. Before including your address, phone number, e-mail address, or other personnel identifying information in your comment, be advised that your entire comment, including personal identifying information, may be made publicly available at any time. While individuals may request that the BLM withhold personal identifying information from public review, BLM cannot guarantee it will be able to do so. If you wish us to withhold your personal information, you must state this prominently at the beginning of your comment. We will make all submissions from organizations or businesses available for public disclosure in their entirety.

If you have any questions, please contact Kathy Cadigan at (775) 623-1500 or at the above address.

Sincerely,

/S/ William Mack, Jr.

William Mack, Jr.
Field Manager
Black Rock Field Office