



**United States Department of
the Interior**

BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT
Idaho Falls District
1405 Hollipark Drive
Idaho Falls, Idaho 83401

**United States Department of
Agriculture**

FOREST SERVICE
Salmon-Challis National Forest
Forest Supervisor's Office
1206 S. Challis Street
Salmon, Idaho 83467

In Reply Refer To:

BLM: 2200/3809/8120/IDI-33145/IDI-35728 (IDI030)

FS: 1950/2800

August 3, 2010

SCOPING LETTER

**Thompson Creek Mine Expansion and Land Exchange
Environmental Impact Statement**

Dear Interested or Potentially Interested Party:

The Bureau of Land Management (BLM), Idaho Falls District, Challis Field Office and the U.S. Forest Service, Salmon-Challis National Forest (Forest Service) solicit your written comments, including resource information, regarding a proposed 1) Amended Plan of Operations (APOO) that would allow an extension of the life of the Thompson Creek Molybdenum mine, and 2) exchange of public land administered by the BLM for private land owned by Thompson Creek Mining Company (TCMC). The BLM is preparing an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) to analyze the impacts of the proposed Federal actions in response to the two proposals. The EIS will be prepared in cooperation with the Forest Service, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, Idaho Department of Environmental Quality, and Idaho Department of Lands. Other cooperating agencies may be identified through the scoping process. Your comments will guide the development of the EIS, including the identification of relevant issues and possible alternatives. You are receiving this letter because either you have indicated you are interested in one or both of the proposals or you have been interested in the past in Federal actions in Custer County, Idaho.

The mine is 7 miles northwest of Clayton and 21 miles southwest of Challis in Custer County, Idaho. The APOO proposes new surface disturbance on approximately 85 acres of private land and 360 acres of Federal lands administered by the BLM and Forest Service. The proposed land exchange involves approximately 5,000 acres of public land administered by the BLM and approximately 900 acres of private land owned by TCMC, which possesses resource qualities considered to be of significant value to the public. The public land contains the southern portion of the mine and adjacent area, including access roads and utility corridors. The private land consists of the Broken Wing Ranch, 6 miles northeast of Clayton in Custer County, Idaho, and the Garden Creek property, 16 miles south of Pocatello in Bannock County, Idaho.

Details of the two proposals are provided in the enclosed project description and maps. Implementation of the APOO would require approval of portions of the APOO by the BLM and Forest Service, and a permit to discharge fill materials into waters of the United States from the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers under section 404 of the Clean Water Act. Implementation of the land exchange would require approval by the BLM, as well as the amendment of the 1999 Challis Resource Management Plan to identify the public land involved in the land exchange as suitable for exchange pursuant to section 206 of the Federal Land Policy Management Act.

In addition to analyzing the impacts of the proposed Federal actions, the EIS will also analyze the No Action Alternative and other alternatives that may be developed during scoping. To be most useful, your scoping comments should be as specific as possible and provided to the BLM by 1 September 2010. If you wish to remain on the project mailing list, please complete the relevant parts of the enclosed comment form and return it to the address indicated. You will be notified when the Draft EIS, Final EIS, and Records of Decision are available if you remain on the EIS mailing list.

The comment form also contains instructions for additional methods of providing your comments to the BLM. The public may examine information about the project at the BLM Challis Field Office at the address in the letterhead during 7:45 a.m. to 4:30 p.m., Mountain Time, Monday through Friday, except holidays. Project information will also be available on the BLM website at **<http://www.blm.gov/id/st/en/prog/0.html>**. You are also invited to attend one of the public open house meetings to view information on the project, ask questions about the project, and provide written scoping comments:

August 23, 2010: 6 PM to 8 PM, BLM Boise District Office, 3948 S. Development Ave., Boise, ID 83705

August 24, 2010: 6 PM to 8 PM, Challis Middle School, 700 Main Street, Challis, ID 83226

For further project information contact Ken Gardner, Project Lead, BLM Challis Field Office, 1151 Blue Mountain Road, Challis, Idaho 83226, (208) 879-6210.

Sincerely,



Joe Kraayenbrink
Idaho Falls District Manager,
Bureau of Land Management,
Department of the Interior



For

Frank Guzman
Salmon-Challis Forest Supervisor,
Forest Service,
Department of Agriculture

Enclosures:

Project Description
Comment Form
(2) Maps