



United States Department of the Interior



BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT

Winnemucca District Office

Humboldt River Field Office

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In Reply Refer To:

NVN-098582

NVN-098586

DOI-BLM-NV-W010-2020-0012-EIS

3809/1793 (NV-010.04)

Dear Interested Public:

The Bureau of Land Management (BLM), Winnemucca District, Humboldt River Field Office is seeking public input as it initiates an Environmental Impact Statement to analyze the *Thacker Pass Plan of Operations and Reclamation Plan* (BLM Casefile NVN-098586) and the *Thacker North-South Exploration Plan of Operations and Reclamation Plan* (NVN-098582) submitted by Lithium Nevada Corp. (LNC), a wholly owned subsidiary of Lithium Americas Corp., and collectively referred to as the proposed Thacker Pass Lithium Mine Project (project). An amendment to the *Winnemucca District Resource Management Plan* (approved May 15, 2015) for Visual Resource Management classification standards may also be considered by BLM under the NEPA analysis for the proposed project.

The proposed project consists of an open pit lithium mine, processing facilities, and continued exploration of adjacent lands located in northern Humboldt County, Nevada, approximately 17 miles northwest of Orovada, 53 miles north-northwest of Winnemucca, and 20 miles south of the Oregon state border. The proposed project will have a life expectancy of approximately 41 years, and includes the following:

- Development of an open pit mine to recover approximately 230.0 million cubic yards (M CY) of ore. Pit dewatering is not expected to be required as part of the Project until 2055;
- Concurrent backfill of the open pit using approximately 144.3 M CY of waste rock and 75.2 M CY of coarse gangue material;
- Construction of two Waste Rock Storage Facilities (WRSFs) to accommodate permanent storage of approximately 45.9 M CY of excavated mine waste rock material;
- Construction and operation of mine facilities to support mining operations;
- Construction of a 494 thousand cubic yard Run-of-Mine (ROM) stockpile;
- Construction and operation of an attrition scrubbing process to separate the lithium-rich fine clay from the coarse low-grade material (coarse gangue);
- Construction of a coarse gangue stockpile designed with a storage capacity of approximately 48.4 M CY;
- Construction and operation of lithium processing facilities designed to produce lithium carbonate, lithium hydroxide monohydrate, lithium sulfide, lithium metal, and solid-state lithium batteries;
- Construction of a sulfuric acid plant that will generate sulfuric acid for use in a leaching process and will also generate steam for energy that will provide power to support the Project;

- Construction and operation of a Clay Tailings Filter Stack (CTFS) to permanently store clay tailings, neutralization solids, and various salts generated during lithium processing.
- Construction and maintenance of haul and secondary roads;
- Construction and maintenance of stormwater management infrastructures including diversions and sediment ponds;
- Construction of three growth media stockpiles with material salvaged within the footprint of proposed disturbances;
- Construction of raw water supply facilities including two supply wells, two booster pump stations, a water pump tank station, and underground water pipeline to the process plant;
- Construction of a seven mile 25-kilovolt (kV) power transmission line from a new substation installed in the process plant area to the raw water supply facilities to the east, and a two-mile power transmission line to the new mine area substations to the west;
- Continued exploration with up to 150 acres of exploration-related disturbance over the life of the mine. Exploration activities would include surface sampling, trenching, bulk sampling, and drilling. Exploration activities may also include geotechnical investigations, geophysical surveys, water exploration, and monitoring well installation, as necessary during the life of the Project.

The public is invited to submit comments in writing on the proposed project and to attend one of the two public open-house meetings. The BLM will hold public meetings from 5 to 7 p.m. on Wednesday, February 5, 2020, at the Winnemucca Convention Center, located at 50 West Winnemucca Boulevard, Suite 1, Winnemucca, Nevada, and on Thursday, February 6, 2020, at the Orovada Community Center, located at East Kings River Highway, Orovada, Nevada. A project introduction and a slide presentation will be given at the beginning of each meeting, followed by open-house topical discussions.

Your participation is encouraged, and comment forms will be available for your input at these meetings. Comments or comment forms may be submitted at the public meetings; on-line through the BLM ePlanning website; by email at wfoweb@blm.gov with “Thacker Pass EIS (Loda)” in the subject line; or by mail to Mr. Ken Loda, project lead, at the above address. Comments must be received by February 20, 2020. This letter and additional information, including project maps, are available through the links available on our ePlanning webpage at <https://bit.ly/2S7rRRt>.

Public comments submitted for this project, including names and addresses of commenters will be available for public review at the Winnemucca District Office 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 Mr. Ken Loda (775) 632-1539 or at the address above.

Sincerely,

/s/ Kathleen Rehberg acting for

David Kampwerth
Field Manager
Humboldt River Field Office