Forest Service. During the past clearance cycle the BLM conducted 17 customer surveys and the Forest Service conducted 9 surveys by telephone and mail. (Examples of previously conducted customer surveys are available upon request.) Our planned activities in the next three fiscal years reflect our increased emphasis on and expansion of these activities.

III. Methodology

The BLM and Forest Service survey customers in the following general categories: (1) Use requiring authorization; (2) state and private forestry; (3) timber sales; (4) wild horse and burro; (5) research; (6) law enforcement; (7) fire and aviation; (8) wildlife and fisheries; (9) recreation; (10) information [general, land, title, and technology-based]; (11) pilot programs; (12) stakeholders and partners; and (13) state and local governments.

A stratified sampling technique is employed for categories 1 through 8; categories 9 and 10 use intercept surveys; and a general sampling technique is employed for categories 11 through 13. The randomized sample pulled from the databases will include an estimated 1200 persons unless the population is less than 1200, at which point the entire user population will be surveyed. An 80% response rate goal has been set; for this reason, whenever possible telephone surveys are chosen over mail surveys.

Parallel to this effort, comment cards will be solicited from all of the above groups on an intercept basis—accompanying transaction performed with the agencies.

The questionnaires are developed with the help of focus groups from around the country. We ask questions in the following general areas: (1) Program specific (i.e., processing permits, recordation of mining claims, facilities and access to public land for recreation); (2) service delivery; (3) management practices; (4) resource protection; (5) rules, regulations, and policies; (6) communication with the public; (7) overall satisfaction; and (8) general demographics.

IV. Requests for Comments

Prospective respondents and other interested parties should comment on the actions discussed in items II & III. The following guidelines are provided to assist you in responding.

General Issues

A. Is the proposed collection of information necessary, taking into account its accuracy, adequacy, and reliability, and the agency's ability to process the information it collects in a useful and timely fashion?

B. What enhancements can the BLM and Forest Service make to the quality, utility, and clarity of the information to be collected?

As a Potential Respondent

A. The average public reporting burden for a customer survey is estimated to be .25 hours per response (13,000 respondents per year ×15 minutes per response =3250 hours annually). For comment cards, the average public reporting burden is estimated to be 3 minutes per response (30,000 respondents per year × 3 minutes per response =1500 hours annually). Burden includes the total time, effort, or financial resources expended to generate, maintain, retain, or disclose or provide the information including: (1) Reviewing instructions; (2) developing, acquiring, installing, and utilizing technology and systems for purposes of collecting, validating, verifying, processing, maintaining, disclosing, and providing information; (3) adjusting the existing ways to comply with any previously applicable instructions and requirements; (4) training personnel to respond to a collection of information; (5) searching data sources; (6) completing and reviewing the collection of information; and (7) transmitting or otherwise disclosing the information.

Please comment on (1) the accuracy of our estimate and (2) how the agencies could minimize the burden of the collection information, including the use of automated collection techniques.

B. The BLM and Forest Service estimate that respondents will incur no additional costs for reporting other than the time required to complete the collection. What is the estimated (1) total dollar amount annualized for capital and start-up costs and (2) recurring annual dollar amount of operation and maintenance and purchase of services costs associated with this data collection? The estimates should take into account the costs associated with generating, maintaining, and disclosing or providing information.

C. Do you know of any other Federal, State, or local agency that collects similar data? If you do, specify the agency, collection element (s), and the methods of collection.

As a Potential User

Are there any alternative sources of data and do you use them? If so, what are their deficiencies and/or strengths?

Comments submitted in response to this notice will be summarized and/or included in the request for OMB approval of the survey. They also will become a matter of public record.

Dated: January 15, 1998.

Carole Smith,

Bureau of Land Management, Information Collection Officer.

Dated: January 8, 1998.

William Delaney,

U.S. Forest Service, Management Improvement.

[FR Doc. 98–1458 Filed 1–21–98; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 4310–84–M

DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR

Bureau of Land Management

[NV–010–1990–09]

Notice of Intent; Nevada

AGENCY: Bureau of Land Management, Interior.

ACTION: Notice of intent to prepare a supplemental Environmental Impact Statement for the Barrick Goldstrike Mines Inc. Betze Project in the Elko and Eureka Counties, Nevada.

SUMMARY: On August 31, 1994 pursuant to Section 102(2)(c) of the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969, as amended, the Bureau of Land Management, Elko Field Office published a Notice of Intent to prepare a supplemental environmental impact statement (EIS) with respect to Barrick Goldstrike Mines Inc.'s (Barrick) Betze Project. At that time, the Bureau had determined the need to prepare the Supplemental EIS to assess the environmental impacts of the pumping and water management operations associated with Barrick's mining operations. Since the Notice of Intent was published, Barrick has begun discharging water produced by groundwater pumping operations to the Humboldt River under a permit from the Nevada Division of Environmental Protection. In addition, Barrick and Elko Land and Livestock Company (ELLCO) submitted an application to amend an existing water pipeline right-of-way from 40 feet to 80 feet in width to accommodate installation of approximately 4,000 linear feet of buried 48-inch steel pipeline. The additional pipeline would be used to increase the operational efficiency of discharging water to either the Humboldt River or to irrigation and infiltration. The Bureau of Land Management is publishing this supplemental Notice of Intent to advise the public of the application to amend the right-of-way and to seek any

additional comments or concerns to be addressed in preparation of the Supplemental EIS.

EFFECTIVE DATES: This notice re-initiates public scoping for the supplemental Betze EIS. A scoping meeting will be held on February 5, 1998, at the Bureau of Land Management, Elko Field Office, 3900 E. Idaho, Elko, Nevada. The public is invited to attend the meeting scheduled from 4:30 pm until 6:30 pm to review the project and identify issues and concerns which need to be addressed in the Supplemental EIS. Representatives from the Bureau of Land Management and Barrick will be available during the meeting to answer questions. Written comments on the scope of the EIS will also be accepted until February 16, 1998. A draft supplemental environmental impact statement (DSEIS) is expected to be completed by the summer of 1998 and made available for public review and comment. At that time a Notice of Availability of the DSEIS will be published in the **Federal Register**. The comment period on the DSEIS will be 60 days from the date the Notice of Availability is published.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Scoping comments may be sent to: District Manager, Bureau of Land Management, 3900 E. Idaho St., Elko, NV 89801. ATTN: Supplemental Betze EIS Coordinator. For additional information, write to the above address or call Nick Rieger at (702) 753–0200.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: In response to a Plan of Operations submitted in April 1989, the Bureau of Land Management, Elko Field Office prepared an environmental impact statement (EIS) with respect to Barrick's Betze Project. The Final EIS and Record of Decision for the Betze Project were issued on June 10, 1991. The Final EIS included a description of the environmental impacts projected to result from groundwater pumping conducted by Barrick to lower the local groundwater elevations below the proposed Betze mining operations. Since the Betze EIS was issued, Barrick's implementation of the pumping operations and its monitoring of groundwater elevations have provided new information regarding the pumping requirements and potential environmental impacts of pumping operations. This new information indicates that the highly transmissive area from which the groundwater is to be pumped is more extensive than projected at the time the Betze EIS was prepared. As a result, Barrick has been pumping groundwater at higher rates than projected in the Betze EIS, and a greater volume of water has been produced. In addition to delivering water to a local rancher for irrigation uses as described in the Betze EIS, Barrick has implemented reinjection and infiltration programs to return more water to the groundwater system, and has obtained approval to discharge water to the Humboldt River from the state of Nevada. Barrick and ELLCO are now proposing to install approximately 4,000 linear feet of buried 48-inch steel pipeline next to an existing pipeline they are using to discharge water to improve operational flexibility of the existing Boulder Valley water management system. The second pipeline would allow Barrick to by-pass a water treatment plant when the water is discharged for irrigation and infiltration.

In the Notice of Intent published on August 31, 1994, the Bureau proposed preparation of a supplement to the Betze EIS that would describe the new information gathered since the Betze EIS was prepared and would describe any changes in the projected environmental impacts as a result of the new information. In addition, the Bureau stated that the supplemental EIS would assess the cumulative impacts of groundwater pumping to lower elevations and for longer periods of time than is associated with mining of other deposits situated on lands within the area in which groundwater levels are being lowered. By this notice, the Bureau is proposing to expand the original scope to evaluate the environmental impacts of installing the proposed pipeline and to determine whether there may be any adverse environmental impacts that were not specifically identified in the Betze EIS that may be mitigated under the terms of the Betze Record of Decision.

In response to the initial Notice of Intent and a Dear Interested Party letter dated September 2, 1994, the Bureau received eleven written and nine oral comments. Based on these comments and the BLM's internal review, five issues of concern were identified and are currently the focus of the supplemental EIS:

Potential impacts to surface and ground water resources, including the Humboldt River;

Potential impacts to livestock operations;

Potential impacts to threatened and endangered species;

Potential impacts to riparian and wetland vegetation; and

Potential impacts to wildlife and fisheries resources.

Through this supplemental Notice, the Bureau is soliciting any additional comments on the scope of the supplemental EIS to assist the Bureau in identifying and considering additional issues and concerns to be analyzed in the supplemental EIS. Comments submitted in response to this supplemental Notice of Intent should be directed to the attention of Nick Rieger, Project Manager at the Bureau of Land Management, Elko Field Office, 3900 East Idaho Street, Elko, Nevada 89801. Comments must be received by the close of business on February 16, 1998.

Dated: January 7, 1998.

Helen Hankins,

District Manager.

[FR Doc. 98–1517 Filed 1–21–98; 8:45 am]

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DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR

Bureau of Land Management

[WY–930–1060–04]

Notice of Public Hearing and Intent to Remove Wild Horses

AGENCY: Bureau of Land Management, Interior.

SUMMARY: A public meeting is scheduled for February 25, 1998 at the White Mountain Library, Rock Springs, Wyoming. A formal hearing will be conducted to receive statements from the public concerning the use of helicopters and motor vehicles in wild horse management operations within Wyoming for calendar year 1998. Prior to the hearing, planned removal operations for the year will be discussed. Periodic removals are necessary in order to maintain the populations within the AML (Appropriate Management Levels) established through the planning process as a result of monitoring and analysis of that data in accordance with the National Environmental Policy Act and BLM Policies. This document serves as a Notice of Intent to remove excess wild horses from the following Herd Management Areas (HMA):

Great Divide Resource Area

Cyclone Rim HMA—remove 260 horses from an estimated 330. AML is 70 and this action would reduce the population to AML. Begin approximately March 1, end April 10. Decision Record EA# WY–037–EA4–121/122 dated July 11, 1994.

Stewart Creek HMA—remove 100 horses from an estimated 250. AML is 150 and this action would reduce the population to AML. Begin approximately August 1. Decision