

to obtain a copy of the prospectus. This describes the requirements of the proposed contract to be awarded for a period of 10 years (from approximately January 1, 1999, through December 31, 2008).

**SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:** This contract has been determined to be categorically excluded from the procedural provisions of the National Environmental Policy Act and no environmental document will be prepared. No right of preference in renewal is being exercised with this prospectus. The Secretary of the Interior will consider and evaluate all proposals received in response to this notice. Any proposal to be considered and evaluated must be received by the Superintendent, Hot Springs National Park, at the address given above, not later than close of business, CST (Central Standard Time) by November 17, 1998.

**FOR ADDITIONAL INFORMATION CONTACT:** George R. Frederick, Chief, Concessions Management, National Park Service, 1709 Jackson Street, Omaha, Nebraska 68102, or at 402-221-3612.

Dated: September 3, 1998.

**David N. Given,**

*Deputy Regional Director, Midwest Region.*

[FR Doc. 98-24533 Filed 9-11-98; 8:45 am]

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## DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR

### National Park Service

#### **Draft Environmental Impact Statement/General Management Plan; Death Valley National Park; Inyo and San Bernardino Counties, CA; Nye and Esmeralda Counties, Nevada; Notice of Availability**

#### **Summary**

Pursuant to § 102(2)(C) of the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969 (Pub. L. 91-190, as amended), the National Park Service (NPS), Department of the Interior, has prepared a Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS) identifying and evaluating potential impacts of a proposed General Management Plan (GMP) for Death Valley National Park. Death Valley is a unit of the National Park System, created by Congress on October 31, 1994, in the California Desert Protection Act (CDPA). The DEIS also includes a draft Land Protection Plan (LPP) that addresses management options for non-federal lands that exist inside the park boundary. This planning document and DEIS were initiated as a component of the Northern and Eastern Mojave Planning Project, a coordinated interagency effort involving the NPS, Bureau of Land Management, and U.S.

Fish and Wildlife Service. The DEIS identifies and evaluates the environmental consequences of a proposed action and two alternatives; appropriate mitigations are addressed. No significant adverse environmental impacts are anticipated. The GMP will serve as the overall management strategy for the next 10-15 years under which more detailed activity or implementation plans are prepared.

#### **Proposal**

This DEIS presents the proposed management approach and two alternatives for park management. The Proposed Action (Alternative 1) seeks to extend existing management strategies that are in place for the original smaller area (proclaimed a national monument on February 11, 1933), to the management of the resources within the new lands added to the unit in 1994. It also strives to incorporate the NPS mission and policies, and respond to the designation of 95% of the park as Wilderness. This alternative addresses the removal of feral burros and horses from the park in order to achieve the NPS mission of managing the unit for native desert species. It also recognizes the need to work cooperatively with the Bureau of Land Management on adjacent land, where their mandate from Congress is to maintain viable herds of wild horses and burros. Furthermore, this alternative strives to balance the preservation of resources mission with specific mandates from Congress for Death Valley, such as continuation of grazing on the new lands. This alternative addresses grazing as a component of the management. This alternative also identifies a number of activity-level or site-specific issues, such as management of the Saline Valley Warm Springs area and a Backcountry and Wilderness Management Plan. This alternative seeks funding for purchase of private property from willing sellers, and/or mineral interests where proposed uses conflict with the primary mission of preserving resources and providing for visitor enjoyment.

#### **Alternatives**

In addition to the proposal, the alternatives described and analyzed are existing management (no action) and an optional management approach. The Existing Management alternative (Alternative 2) describes outcomes of continuing current management strategies. It is commonly referred to as the no-action or status quo alternative. Under this alternative, existing visitor and administrative support services and facilities would be maintained in their current locations. There would be no

change in road maintenance, although some roads might be improved if funding became available. No changes in recreation use would occur. Land acquisition would focus on obtaining funds to acquire private property and mineral interests from willing sellers only where proposed uses conflict with the park mission. The Optional Management approach (Alternative 3) provides for approval of the use of airstrips at Saline Valley Warm Springs, designating campsites at the Warm Springs, specifies acquisition of private land or mineral interests only in sensitive habitats, and phases out the concession operation at Stovepipe Wells.

#### **Comments**

Printed or CD-ROM copies of the DEIS are available for public review at park headquarters, as well as at many public libraries and federal offices in southern California and southern Nevada. In addition, the document is posted on the internet at [www.nps.gov/deva](http://www.nps.gov/deva). Inquiries and comments on the DEIS should be directed to: Superintendent, Death Valley National Park, Furnace Creek, California 92328. The telephone number for the park is (760) 786-2331. All written comments must be postmarked not later than 90 days after publication of a notice of filing of the DEIS/GMP in the **Federal Register** by the Environmental Protection Agency.

#### **Public Meetings**

The NPS will host a series of open houses to provide interested individuals and organization representatives an opportunity to express concerns, ask questions, view large scale maps and engage in dialogue about the range or content of alternatives. Specific details will be available at the internet site identified above or by calling the park. This dialogue is intended to provide additional guidance to the NPS in preparing a final EIS and plan amending the GMP and LPP. Written comments will also be accepted at these workshops. All workshops are scheduled for 6:00-9:00 p.m., as follows:

Monday, Oct. 19, Doubletree Inn, 191 Los Robles, Pasadena, CA  
Tuesday, Oct. 20, Harvey House (Santa Fe Depot), 685 First St., Barstow, CA  
Wednesday, Oct. 21, Hilltop Hotel, 2000 Ostrems Way, San Bernardino, CA  
Thursday, Oct. 22, Needles Community Senior Center, 1699 Bailey Ave., Needles, CA  
Friday, Oct. 23, Enterprise Public Library, 25 E. Shelbourne Ave., Las Vegas, NV  
Saturday, Oct. 24, Baker Senior Center, 73730C Baker Blvd., Baker, CA

Tuesday, Oct. 27, Death Valley Natl Park, Visitor Center Auditorium, Furnace Creek, CA

Wednesday, Oct. 28, Eastern Sierra Fairgrounds, Sierra St. & Fair Dr., Bishop, CA

Thursday, Oct. 29, Boulder Creek RV Park, Hwy 395 (5mi s. of Lone Pine), Lone Pine, CA

Friday, Oct. 30, Ridgecrest Public Library, 131 E. Las Flores, Ridgecrest, CA

#### Decision

Following the formal DEIS review period all written comments received will be considered in preparing a final plan. Currently the Final EIS and GMP/LPP are anticipated to be completed during spring 1999. Their availability will be similarly announced in the **Federal Register**. Subsequently a Record of Decision would be approved by the Regional Director, Pacific West Region, no sooner than 30 (thirty) days after release of the Final EIS. The responsible officials are the Regional Director, Pacific West Region, and the Superintendent, Death Valley National Park.

Dated: August 31, 1998.

**John J. Reynolds,**

*Regional Director, Pacific West Region.*

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#### DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR

##### **National Park Service Draft Environmental Impact Statement General Management Plan; Mojave National Preserve, San Bernardino County, CA; Notice of Availability**

#### Summary

Pursuant to Section 102(2)(C) of the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969 (P.L. 91-190, as amended), the National Park Service (NPS), Department of the Interior, has prepared a Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS) identifying and evaluating potential impacts of a proposed General Management Plan (GMP) for Mojave National Preserve. Mojave is a new unit of the National Park System, established by Congress on October 31, 1994, by the California Desert Protection Act. The DEIS also includes a draft Land Protection Plan (LPP) that addresses management options for non-federal lands that exist inside the preserve boundary. This planning document and DEIS were initiated as a component of the Northern and Eastern Mojave Planning Effort, a coordinated interagency project involving the NPS,

Bureau of Land Management, and U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service. The DEIS identifies and evaluates potential environmental consequences of a proposed action and two alternatives; appropriate mitigations are addressed. No significant adverse environmental impacts are anticipated. The GMP will serve as the initial overall management strategy for the next 10-15 years under which more detailed activity or implementation plans are prepared.

#### Proposal

This DEIS presents the proposed management approach and two alternatives for the management of the 1.6 million-acre Mojave National Preserve (Preserve) in the northeastern Mojave Desert in California. The proposed action (Alternative 1) envisions the Preserve as a natural environment and a cultural landscape, where the protection of native desert ecosystems and processes is assured for future generations. The protection and perpetuation of native species in a self-sustaining environment is a primary long-term goal. The proposal seeks to manage the Preserve to perpetuate the sense of discovery and adventure that currently exists. This includes minimizing development inside the Preserve (including proliferation of signs, new campgrounds, and interpretive exhibits) and fulfilling wilderness stewardship obligations. The NPS would look to adjacent communities to provide most support services (food, gas, and lodging) for visitors. The proposal seeks to provide the public, consistent with the NPS mission, with maximum opportunities for roadside camping, backcountry camping and appropriate access via existing roads. The proposal would seek funding for the complete historic restoration of the Kelso Depot and its use as a museum and interpretive facility. A balance is struck between the NPS mission of resource preservation and other mandates from Congress, such as maintaining grazing, hunting, and mining under NPS regulations and continuing the existence of major utility corridors. The proposal would maintain the ability of private landowners inside the boundary of the Preserve to maintain their current way of life, while seeking funding to purchase property from willing sellers where proposed uses conflict with the primary mission of preserving resources. Nearly 230,000 acres within the Preserve are in nonfederal ownership.

#### Alternatives

In addition to the proposal, the two alternatives described and analyzed are

existing management (no action) and an optional management approach. The existing management alternative (Alternative 2) describes the continuation of current management strategies. It is commonly referred to as the no-action or status quo alternative. Under this alternative, existing visitor and administrative support services and facilities would be maintained in their current locations. There would be few improvements in existing structures and there would be no change in road maintenance, although some roads might be improved if funding became available. No significant change in current accommodations to recreation use would occur. Protection of Kelso Depot from fire, earthquakes and vandalism would be provided if funding could be obtained, but it would not be restored. Land acquisition would focus on obtaining minimum funds to acquire property from willing sellers and properties where uses conflict with the Preserve mission. The optional approach (Alternative 3) provides for an increase in the facilities and services provided for public enjoyment. A small visitor contact building might be built at Kelso to provide information. Land would be acquired in sensitive areas and wilderness.

#### Comments

Printed or CD-ROM copies of the DEIS are available for public review at park headquarters, as well as at many public libraries in southern California and southern Nevada. In addition, the document is posted on the internet at [www.nps.gov/moja](http://www.nps.gov/moja). Inquiries and comments on the DEIS should be directed to: Superintendent, Mojave National Preserve, 222 E. Main St., Suite 202, Barstow, California 92311. The telephone number for the preserve is (760) 255-8800. All written comments must be postmarked not later than 90 days after publication of a notice of filing of the DEIS in the **Federal Register** by the Environmental Protection Agency.

#### Public Meetings

The NPS will host a series of open houses to provide interested individuals and organization representatives an opportunity to express concerns, ask questions, view large scale maps and engage in dialogue about the range or content of alternatives. Specific details will be available at the internet site identified above or by calling the Preserve. This dialogue is intended to provide additional guidance to the NPS in preparing the Final EIS and GMP/LPP. Written comments will also be accepted at these workshops. All