

- Surface disturbance/reclamation: The extent of existing and proposed surface disturbance and its effect on all resources in the project area; and
- Wildlife habitat: The project's potential to further fragment wildlife habitats and diminish the value of those habitats for many species.

In response, the BLM developed five alternatives to the Proposed Action, which were analyzed in the Draft EIS:

- Alternative A, 100-Percent Vertical Drilling—This alternative assumes that all natural gas wells would be drilled from single-well pads, and that no directional drilling would occur;
- Alternative B, Enhanced Resource Protection—This alternative identifies those resources that may be most at risk from mineral development, defines areas within the CD-C project area where those resource risks are likely to occur, and describes the enhanced protection and mitigations that could diminish those risks;
- Alternative C, Surface Disturbance Cap, Core and Non-Core Areas—This alternative places a cap on unreclaimed surface disturbance caused by mineral development, a 60-acre cap in areas that have seen the greatest mineral development to date and a 30-acre cap in the rest of the project area. The cap is expressed in terms of acres per 640-acre section;
- Alternative D, Directional Drilling—This alternative requires that all future natural gas wells on Federal mineral estate be drilled from multi-well pads, one new multi-well pad per section; and
- Alternative E, No Action—NEPA regulations require that the EIS alternatives analysis “include the alternative of no action” (40 CFR 1502.14(d)). For the analysis in the Draft EIS, this means that the development activities on Federal lands proposed by the CD-C operators would not be approved or authorized. Lease rights on Federal lands or mineral estate granted by the BLM would remain in effect and other, additional or supplemental proposals to develop leased resources, such as oil and/or gas, could be received and would be considered by the BLM as appropriate.

The Draft EIS Notice of Availability was published on December 7, 2012 (77 FR 73049), opening a 90-day public comment period. A public meeting was held on January 15, 2013, and the public comment period closed on March 7, 2013. Over 8,000 individual comment letters were received and identified issues such as the lack of a preferred alternative and concerns associated with each of the alternatives, including feasibility, sufficiency of the analysis and impacts to specific resources as a

result of each alternative. Comments were considered and incorporated as appropriate into the Final EIS; however, the analysis of the alternatives and the identified impacts did not significantly change.

The Final EIS differs from the Draft EIS by:

- Dropping Alternative A, 100-Percent Vertical Drilling, from consideration due to public comments on feasibility and the magnitude of total disturbance;
- Amending Alternative D, 100-Percent Directional Drilling, to recognize the impact the restrictions in that alternative would have on well density; as a result, this alternative now analyzes a 20-percent decrease in total wells drilled;
- Redefining the No Action Alternative to include an analysis of impacts associated with development on state and private mineral estate in addition to potential development on Federal mineral estate; and
- Including Alternative F, Agency-Preferred Alternative—This alternative responds to Draft EIS scoping concerns and comments by limiting development to eight wellpads per square mile section, requiring that wellpads be placed in the most environmentally suited areas, and creating a CD-C consultation and coordination group to respond to evolving energy issues and concerns relating to the project. This alternative is a reconfiguration of elements of alternatives that were analyzed in the Draft EIS. The CD-C consultation and coordination group and protection measures of Alternative F were originally analyzed in the DEIS under Alternative B; and the emphasis on directional drilling was analyzed in Alternative D.

The Final EIS includes potential landscape scale mitigation strategies. Consistent with Secretarial Order No. 3330 and the BLM's obligations under the Federal Land Policy and Management Act, BLM Wyoming drafted a landscape-scale mitigation appendix, Appendix S, for inclusion in the Final EIS. The appendix has been reviewed by the Washington Office and the cooperating agencies.

Upon conclusion of the 30-day public availability period following the date the EPA publishes the NOA in the **Federal Register**, the BLM will prepare and sign the record of decision (ROD) to announce its final decision on the Continental Divide-Creston Natural Gas Development Project. Availability of the ROD will be announced to the local media and the project mailing list, and the ROD itself will be posted on the project Web page.

Authority: 40 CFR 1506.6, 40 CFR 1506.10.

Mary Jo Rugwell,

Acting BLM Wyoming State Director.

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DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR

National Park Service

[NPS-PWR-PWRO-17327; PPPWLAKER6/PPMRSNR1Z.Y00000]

Record of Decision for Development Concept Plans for Cottonwood Cove and Katherine Landing, Lake Mead National Recreation Area, Nevada and Arizona

AGENCY: National Park Service, Interior.

ACTION: Notice of availability.

SUMMARY: The National Park Service has prepared and approved a Record of Decision for the Final Environmental Impact Statement for the Development Concept Plans (DCP) for Katherine Landing and Cottonwood Cove. Approval of the DCP concludes an extensive conservation planning and environmental impact analysis effort that began during 2008.

ADDRESSES: Those wishing to review the Record of Decision may obtain a copy by request to the Superintendent, Lake Mead National Recreation Area, 601 Nevada Way, Boulder City, Nevada 89005 or via telephone request at (702) 293-8978.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Michael Boyles, Acting Chief, Resource Management and Visitor Services, (702) 293-8978.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: The National Park Service has prepared and approved a Record of Decision for the Final Environmental Impact Statement for the DCP for Cottonwood Cove and Katherine Land. This process was conducted pursuant to the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969 (42 U.S.C. 4321 *et seq.*) and the implementing regulations promulgated by the Council on Environmental Quality (40 CFR part 1505.2). The requisite no-action “wait period” was initiated on November 14, 2014, with the Environmental Protection Agency's **Federal Register** announcement of the filing of the Final EIS.

Three alternatives, all including mitigation measures, were evaluated during the DCP process. The “agency preferred” Alternative 3 *Enhance Visitor Experience and Park Operations* has been selected as the approved DCP. All primary project components of the selected alternative will be

implemented as staffing and funding allow. Key actions include the following:

Cottonwood Cove

- Develop new day-use areas (picnic and no-boat areas) in Ski Cove, and designate trail to Cottontail Cove; existing day-use areas in Cottonwood Cove remain.
- Phase out trailer village near the end of the next concession contract pending an economic feasibility analysis. Redevelop site for RV use or concession operated overnight accommodations.
- Expand motel as needed; additional structures double capacity and include meeting space (for hosting meetings and other events).
- Maintain character of Mission 66 structures while responding to changing needs to the extent possible.
- Construct engineered system of diversion dikes and concrete channels to convey the 500 year flood to better protect visitor areas. Maintain the Early Warning Detection System, install flood warning signs, and develop evacuation plan.

Katherine Landing

- Remove motel; redevelop site for expanded visitor parking near lake. Provide other forms of overnight accommodations (e.g., RV park with pull-through parking).
- Phase out trailer village near the end of the next concession contract pending an economic feasibility analysis. The site would be redeveloped as part of an expanded, accessible campground that would be concessioner-run and would accommodate larger vehicles (larger sites with pull-through parking and hookups, etc.). Some portion of the campground would retain its current configuration for tent/car camping. Cabins may be part of the mix (exact mix of accommodations to be determined).
- Develop new paved loop serving both north and south areas of the development (housing/administration area to campground loop D).
- Consolidate NPS offices and operations (law enforcement/emergency, interpretation offices, etc.) in the vicinity of the NPS maintenance area; retain NPS maintenance area in same location.
- Construct engineered system of diversion dikes, channels, and detention basin to convey predicted maximum flood flows through North and South Katherine Washes.
- Install Early Warning Detection System for Katherine Landing; place

flood warning signs and develop an evacuation plan for Katherine Landing and North and South Arizona Telephone Coves.

Princess Cove, Cabinsite Point, and North and South Arizona Telephone Cove

- Develop new picnic facilities at Cabinsite Point and provide additional parking and allow backcountry camping at some of the former cabin sites.
 - Develop picnic area at North Arizona Telephone Cove and design access roads to eliminate or greatly reduce exposure to flood hazards at both North and South Arizona Telephone Coves.
 - If launch capacity at Katherine Landing is reduced due to flood control, the park may consider paving and formalizing more of the overflow parking area at Princess Cove and improving the launch at North Arizona Telephone Cove or at Cabinsite Point, to align with established capacity levels set by the Lake Management Plan.
- The approved development concept plan/environmental impact statement is a programmatic document covering both Cottonwood Cove and Katherine Landing areas. More detailed information will be developed during the individual project design stage. Based on this further design information, additional natural and cultural resource surveys and further Section 106 and NEPA compliance will be tiered from this document.

Dated: March 25, 2016.

Patricia L. Neubacher,

Acting Regional Director, Pacific West Region.

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DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR

National Park Service

**[NPS-PWR-PWRO-19326;
XPXD004214G001]**

Record of Decision for the Channel Islands National Park General Management Plan/Wilderness Study, Santa Barbara County, California

AGENCY: National Park Service, Interior.

ACTION: Notice of availability.

SUMMARY: The National Park Service (NPS) has prepared and approved a Record of Decision for the Final Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) and General Management Plan/Wilderness Study (GMP/WS) for Channel Islands National Park. Approval of the GMP/WS culminates an extensive public engagement and

environmental impact analysis effort that began in 2001.

ADDRESSES: Those wishing to review the Record of Decision may obtain a copy by submitting their request to the Superintendent, Channel Islands National Park, 1901 Spinnaker Drive, Ventura, CA 93001.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Russell Galipeau, Superintendent, telephone (805) 508-5702 or email *chis_superintendent@nps.gov*.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: This process was conducted pursuant to the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969 (42 U.S.C. 4321 *et seq.*) and the regulations promulgated by the Council on Environmental Quality (40 CFR part 1505.2). The original Notice of Intent (NOI) initiating the conservation planning and environmental impact analysis process appeared in the **Federal Register** on November 8, 2001 (66 FR 56575, column 1)—a revised NOI expanding GMP scope to include a wilderness study was published April 8, 2009 (74 FR 16006, column 2). Based on information obtained from extensive public outreach, three alternatives were developed. The NPS consulted with park partners; traditionally associated American Indian tribes and groups; the State Historic Preservation Officer; and other federal and state agencies. The Draft EIS was released on November 14, 2013 (78 FR 68469, column 2), for an extended 90-day review and comment period. Two public meetings were conducted to share information and gather feedback, one of which also included a public hearing on the wilderness study. Overall 1,620 pieces of correspondence were received during the public review period. The Final EIS was released on April 17, 2015. The legally required 30-day “wait period” was initiated on April 17, 2015, with the Environmental Protection Agency’s **Federal Register** publication of filing of the Final EIS.

The NPS evaluated the environmental consequences of two action alternatives and a no-action alternative. These alternatives described varying means to provide appropriate types and levels of access for visitors and authorized users, preserve wilderness character, protect cultural and natural resources, and adhere to legally required management and preservation objectives. *Alternative 3* (agency-preferred) has been selected for implementation. This is also the environmentally-preferred course of action, which emphasizes resource stewardship and preservation while also placing more attention on expanding education and recreational opportunities and accommodations to