

United States Department of the Interior  
BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT  
Wenatchee Field Office  
915 North Walla Walla Avenue  
Wenatchee, Washington 98801

**SCOPING/INFORMATION NOTICE**  
**Crown Resources Corporation Water Pipeline Right-of-Way Application**

**Introduction**

This information package provides details on an application for a right-of-way to install a pipeline, filed with the Bureau of Land Management (BLM) by Crown Resources Corporation (Crown).

This notice was prepared to inform interested and potentially affected parties of the proposed right-of-way, and to solicit comments to assist BLM's analysis of the proposal consistent with the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA). We anticipate documenting our review of the proposal through an environmental assessment (EA), unless a categorical exclusion is found to be applicable. Public comments received in response to this notice will be used to identify potential environmental issues related to the proposed action, and to identify feasible alternatives that would still fulfill the purpose and need for the project.

**Project Area Description**

The proposed pipeline would cross BLM public land described as follows:

- T.40N., R.30E., Willamette Meridian, Okanogan County
- Section 13: Portions of Lots 3, 5, 19, 20 and 21
  - Section 24: Portions of Lot 15, E $\frac{1}{2}$ NW $\frac{1}{4}$ NE $\frac{1}{4}$ , NW $\frac{1}{4}$ NW $\frac{1}{4}$ NE $\frac{1}{4}$ , E $\frac{1}{2}$ SW $\frac{1}{4}$ NE $\frac{1}{4}$ , E $\frac{1}{2}$ NW $\frac{1}{4}$ SW $\frac{1}{4}$ NE $\frac{1}{4}$  and SW $\frac{1}{4}$ SW $\frac{1}{4}$ NE $\frac{1}{4}$

The subject public lands are directly north of Crown's Buckhorn Mountain Mine, and comprise the north facing side of Buckhorn Mountain, in Okanogan County, Washington. The attached project area map shows the proposed route of the pipeline.

**Proposed Action**

Crown filed an application with the BLM to obtain a right-of-way (r/w) to emplace a 2" diameter polyethylene water pipeline that would be approximately 6,000 feet long and laid over the surface of the ground. Except for the beginning portion, which is located on Crown owned land surrounding the mine, the proposed pipeline route exclusively crosses BLM administered public land. The pipeline would begin at the water treatment plant at the Buckhorn Mountain Mine, traveling in a northerly direction and traversing around the east side of Buckhorn Mountain to reach the upper portion of the Gold Creek drainage. The terminus and discharge point for the pipeline would be situated just downhill of the point where the pipeline crosses under National Forest Road #3575-100 (a culvert would be installed for this crossing, and also for a crossing a

short distance away, underneath National Forest Road #3575-140). The pipeline elevation drops approximately 400 feet from the water treatment plant to the outfall location. A dissipater device would be attached to the outfall end of the pipe to temper the energy of the discharge to limit erosion and scouring of the stream channel. Crown states that installation of the two culverts for the road crossings would be the only surface disturbance caused by the project. The culvert installations would occur within the roadbeds of the two existing Forest Service roads.

Crown originally requested permission to discharge up to 220 gallons per minute (gpm) of water at the outfall point. However, by letter dated January 21, 2012, they decreased the requested amount to 140 gpm. This quantity is more consistent with a report completed by Crown's consultant, Golder Associates. Golder previously recommended that only discharges up to 130 gpm be contemplated, dependent upon the level of natural background flow at any one time, so that total flow down the drainage would never exceed 140 gpm. The 140 gpm figure represents natural bankfull flows measured by Golder at the peak of runoff in June, 2011.

The need for Crown to discharge treated mine water in this particular drainage comes from a mitigation plan previously agreed to by Crown and the Okanogan Highlands Alliance (OHA). The intent of the mitigation is for treated mine water to augment flow in certain drainages near the mine that apparently have been impacted from water depletion caused by underground mining operations. According to item 5.4 of the settlement agreement between Crown and OHA:

“Subject to whatever regulatory approvals may be required, Crown will use available water from the Water Treatment Plan to seasonally augment Bolster and Gold Creek. Crown will only provide augmentation if water is available from the Water Treatment Plant in the normal course of operations and after other mitigation commitments are satisfied. In no circumstances will Crown be required to provide augmentation in excess of seasonal baseline flow in Bolster and Gold Creek.”

Crown has stated that the pipeline is desired for a 10-15 year period, after which it would be removed. A total right-of-way width of 6 feet has been requested. The pipeline would be secured to the ground surface using steel stakes where needed. Crown proposes installing the pipe either by a hand crew, or by using a winch and cable situated at the north end of the route to drag the pipe overland. Minor incidental vegetation removal is anticipated during the installation process.

### **Preliminary Purpose and Need**

The purpose of BLM's action is to respond to Crown's application for use of BLM-administered lands for a ROW to construct, operate, maintain, and terminate a water pipeline. Specifically, BLM will decide whether to grant, grant with conditions, or deny the application for a new ROW. Pursuant to 43 CFR § 2805.10, if BLM issues a grant, the BLM decision maker may include terms, conditions, and stipulations which she or he determines to be in the public interest. This includes modifying the proposed use or changing the route or location of the facilities on public land. The BLM's need for action, to respond to Crown's ROW application, arises from the Federal Land Policy and Management Act of 1976, as amended (FLPMA) which establishes a multiple use mandate for management of Federal lands.

The FLPMA, as amended, is the BLM's principal authority for land management activities. According to FLPMA Section 102(a)(7) and the definition of multiple use in Section 103(c), public lands are to be managed for multiple use and sustained yield, taking into account the long-term needs of future generations for renewable and non-renewable resources. In Section 102(a)(8), the law further states that public lands are to be managed in a manner that protects the quality of the resources and values present, and to provide food and habitat for fish and wildlife, among other objectives. Section 501(a) (1) of FLMPA authorizes the Secretary of the Interior (i.e., BLM) to grant rights-of-way on public lands for systems that allow transportation and distribution of water.

Pursuant to 43 C.F.R. § 2801.2, it is BLM's objective to grant rights-of-way and to control the use of rights-of-way on public lands in a manner that:

- (a) Protects the natural resources associated with public lands and adjacent lands, whether private or administered by a government entity;
- (b) Prevents unnecessary or undue degradation to public lands;
- (c) Promotes the use of rights-of-way in common considering engineering and technological compatibility, national security, and land use plans; and
- (d) Coordinates, to the fullest extent possible, all BLM actions under the regulations in this part with state and local governments, interested individuals, and appropriate quasi-public entities.

### **Preliminary Issues**

- *Potential scouring and erosion of Gold Creek streambank*
- *Water quality of discharged wastewater*
- *Potential impacts to BLM lands and other downstream landowners from increased year-round flow*
- *Potential impacts of treated wastewater upon fisheries*
- *Potential impacts to historic period mining sites from pipeline installation*

### **Public Input Needed**

The BLM is seeking comments about this proposal. Please submit your comments regarding your concerns about the proposed action to the address noted below by June 29, 2012. Comments will be most useful if they provide additional information about the preliminary issues identified above, identify new issues or concerns, or propose alternative actions to accomplish the purpose and need and/or to resolve issues. Public comments may be submitted electronically or by U.S. Mail to the addresses noted below.

Please send electronic comments to:

[BLM\\_OR\\_WN\\_Mail@blm.gov](mailto:BLM_OR_WN_Mail@blm.gov) with "Crown Resources Water Pipeline – WAOR 66933" in the subject line.

Please send U.S. mail comments to:

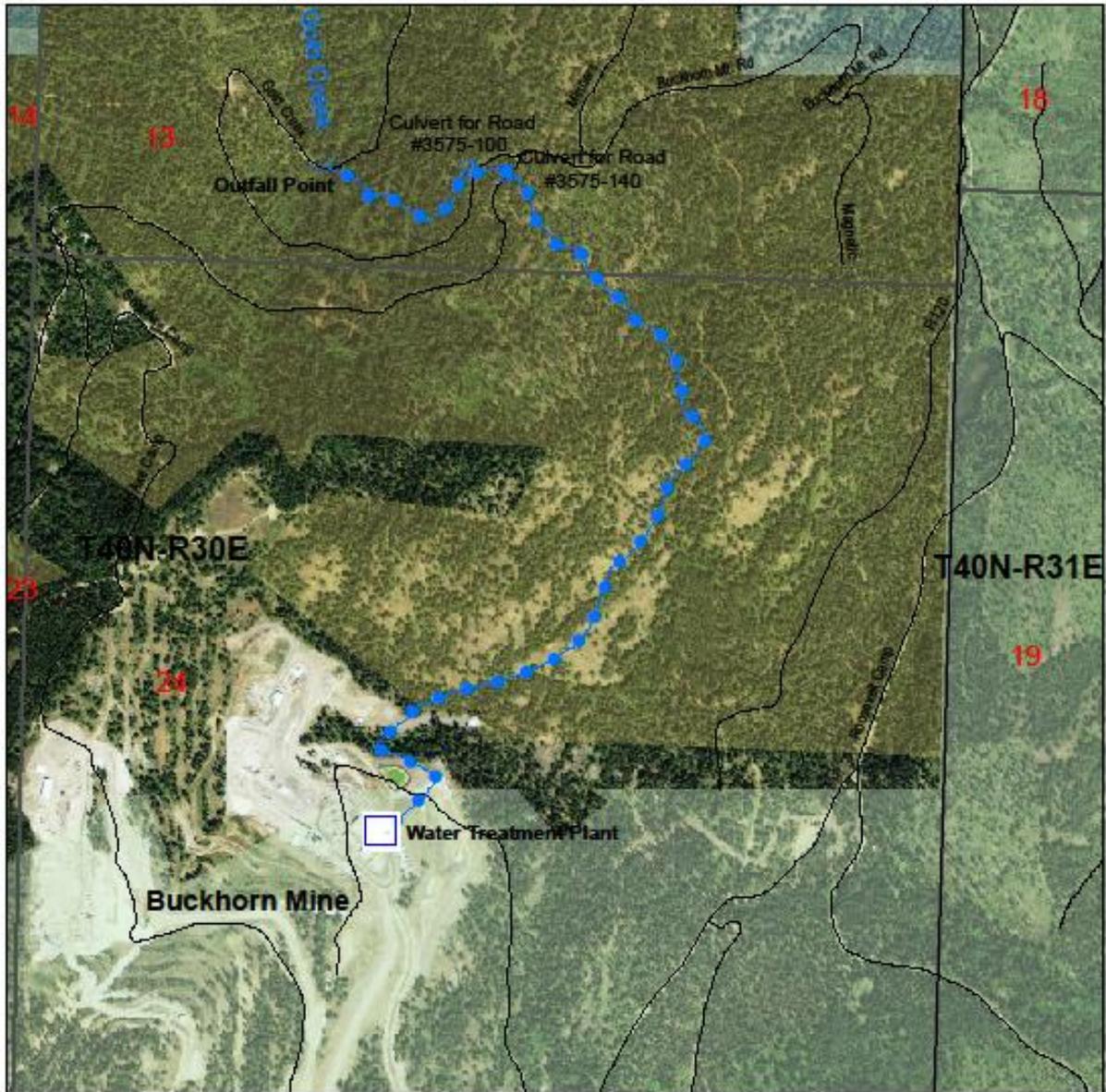
BLM-Wenatchee Field Office  
Attn: Crown Resources Water Pipeline – WAOR 66933  
915 Walla Walla Ave  
Wenatchee, WA 98801

For all comments submitted, please identify whether you are submitting comments as an individual or as the designated spokesperson on behalf of an organization.

*Before including your address, phone number, e-mail address, or personal identifying information in your comment, be advised that your entire comment - including your personal identifying information – may be made publicly available at any time. While you can ask us in your comments to withhold from public review your personal identifying information, we cannot guarantee that we will be able to do so.*

The primary contact for questions and comments for this analysis is William Schurger, BLM, at 509-665-2100

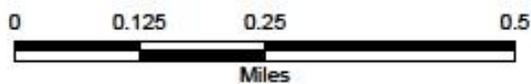
1 Enclosure: Project Area Map



**Exhibit A: Crown Resources Corp.  
Proposed Water Pipeline Right-of-Way  
(Serial No. WAOR 66933)**

**Legend**

-  Approximate Route of Water Pipeline
-  Bureau of Land Management
-  WA Dept. of Natural Resources
-  Forest Service
-  Private Lands



Map created 4-17-2012 using 2011 NAIP Imagery; wcs