

## **CARLSBAD FIELD OFFICE PLANNING UPDATE AUGUST 2014**

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### **Carlsbad Resource Management Plan (RMP) Revision**

The following milestones have been achieved:

- The BLM published a Notice of Intent (NOI) in the Federal Register on June 10, 2010, to prepare a revised RMP and an associated environmental impact statement (EIS). The NOI began the scoping process to solicit public comments and to identify issues.
- Formal scoping meetings were held in five cities, twice a day, over a two-week period; 30 comment letters were received with 345 specific comments.
- A scoping report was completed and published on the Carlsbad Field Office (CFO) webpage. Currently, the CFO is preparing the Analysis of the Management Situation, evaluating nominated Areas of Critical Environmental Concern (ACECs), and preparing the eligibility study for Wild and Scenic Rivers.
- In August, SWCA Consultants was hired to assist the CFO in revising the RMP. SWCA work on various aspects of the RMP revision, including facilitating alternative development; editing and publishing all documents; and preparing ancillary reports such as the Visual Resource Inventory, Wild and Scenic Rivers Suitability Study, Regional Class I Overview of Cultural Resources.
- Kick-off meetings with SWCA was held on September 19<sup>th</sup> through September 30<sup>th</sup>, 2011, to familiarize SWCA staff with the planning area and planning issues.
- Socioeconomics Strategies Workshop was completed on November 15 and 16, 2011
- Visual, Travel & Special Designations workshop was conducted on February 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> 2012
- Alternative development was completed in March 2013
- Draft Chapter 1, Chapter 2 and Chapter three have been finalized
- 4-workshops on Lands with Wilderness Characteristics were conducted on July 8<sup>th</sup> and 9<sup>th</sup> 2014

Planned milestones:

- Completion of the RMP Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS)
- Notice of availability of Draft Environmental Impact Statement planned for November 2014
- Draft RMP/EIS to be published in first quarter of 2015.
- RMP/ ROD March 2016

## **Ochoa Mine EIS and Record of Decision (ROD) completed**

Intercontinental Potash (ICP) proposed to extract polyhalite approximately 1,500 feet underground in the Rustler Formation.

- The U.S. Department of the Interior, Bureau of Land Management (BLM) prepared the Final EIS to address the effects of allowing Intercontinental Potash Corporation USA (ICP) to develop and operate mining and processing operations partly on BLM-managed public land and minerals and partly on state and private lands. The proposed new mine in southern Lea County, New Mexico, approximately 40 miles southeast of Carlsbad, would extract polyhalite ore for the production of the sulfate of potash and sulfate of potash magnesia. The project area as proposed by ICP encompasses 31,134 acres of which approximately 2,400 acres would be disturbed. The new surface disturbance would include construction and operation of mining, office, and processing facilities, development of up to 8 brackish water wells, an 11-mile new water pipeline, and a railroad loadout facility near Jal, New Mexico. Processing would require pumping a maximum of 4,000 gallons per minute of groundwater from the Capitan Reef Aquifer. The surface land ownership consists of approximately 22 percent public lands managed by the BLM, 53 percent owned by the State of New Mexico, and 25 percent privately owned.
- The Record of Decision was signed and published on April 10<sup>th</sup> 2014.

## **Major Right-of-Way Actions - Third Party Environmental Assessments Completed:**

DCP Midstream's Zia II Gas Processing Plant and Pipeline: SWCA  
Potash Junction to Roadrunner 345KV Transmission Line: TRC

## **Major Right-of-Way Actions Requiring Third Party Environmental Assessments (On-going)**

Western Refinery: SWCA/Sarah

Enterprise Delaware Basin Pecos to Lynch: SWCA

Enterprise Gaucho-Thistle Pipeline EA: SWCA

Frontier Energy Services: Alfa Crude Connector: Tretatech

Red lake EA: Now Lea County Lateral DCP: SWCA

Navitas Gas Processing Plant and Pipeline: EXP

## NEPA Compliance Actions Completed for FY 2013

<b>Compliance Document Type</b>	<b>Number</b>
Environmental Impact Statements (EIS)	1
Environmental Assessments	1098
Categorical Exclusions (CX) Total	446
Decisions for NEPA Adequacy (DNA)	140
<b>Total Number of Actions requiring NEPA compliance</b>	<b>1680</b>

## RMP Cooperating Agencies with BLM CFO

The following is the list of current cooperating agencies

Carlsbad Soil and Water Conservation District;

Carlsbad Irrigation District;

Chaves County Commission;

City of Eunice;

City of Jal;

Eddy County Commission;

Lea County Water Users Association;

Natural Resources Conservation Service;

New Mexico Department of Game and Fish;

US Department of Energy, Carlsbad Field Office;

New Mexico Department of Environment;

US Department of Energy.

## Planning Team and Contacts at CFO

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