

Release Number: 2000-90
For Release: September 29, 2000

BLM INVESTIGATING BLACK ROCK INCIDENT

The Bureau of Land Management (BLM) Winnemucca Field Office has initiated an inquiry into the incident last weekend in which two individuals were seriously scalded during an attempt to save two dogs that had jumped into Double Hot Springs north of Gerlach. We are attempting to contact the people who were involved and gather information so we can determine if there is anything more we should do to avoid this sort of accident.

Field Manager Terry Reed said AWe did not learn of the incident until a day or two after it happened, when we heard about it through the news media. All of us in BLM who work with the Black Rock Desert, and its users, want to express our deepest sympathy to the injured people, their friends and families.@

Reed said the hot springs, where water temperatures hover near 200 degrees Fahrenheit, are on public land, and had been posted with warning signs which were in place earlier this summer. It had not come to BLM=s attention that the signs had been removed. AThis is a common problem on public lands, especially in remote areas like this. We get signs installed, and they are often removed or damaged beyond legibility soon afterwards.@

He said new warning signs have been ordered and will be erected as soon as the sign shop delivers them.

AThere are many dangers on the public lands of Nevada,@ Reed said. AGeothermal hot springs can be one of the most dangerous because both people and dogs are attracted to them. Signing and informational brochures are about the only way to warn visitors and avoid tragic accidents such as this.@

-BLM-

For More Information Contact: Les Boni or Terry Reed, Winnemucca Field Office at 775-623-1500 or Bob Stewart, Nevada State Office at 775-861-6586

Release Number: 2000-89
For Release: September 25, 2000

Secretary Babbitt Announces New Appointments to BLM Resource Advisory Councils in Nevada

Secretary of the Interior Bruce Babbitt announced today the appointment and reappointment of members for three Bureau of Land Management (BLM) Resource Advisory Councils (RACs) in

Nevada. The RACs are citizen-based advisory councils which advise the BLM on public land issues.

Nominations for positions where the term appointment was ending were received by the BLM in Nevada during May and June. All applicants were well qualified to represent their respective interest group, commented Babbitt. Each appointment was a tough decision to make, he added. All appointments are for a three-year term and take effect October 1.

Appointments to the Sierra Front-Northwestern Great Basin RAC include William Roullier from Reno who will be representing transportation/rights of way. Roullier is employed by Sierra Pacific Resources and was key in implementing a BLM liaison to focus on enhancing relationships with BLM. Robert Kautz, a reappointment, represents archaeology and lives in Verdi. Kautz is owner of Kautz Environmental Consultants which conducts archaeological and environmental compliance. Larimore Trippet II, from Incline Village is a professional financial advisor, who is newly appointed to the public-at-large position. Another newly appointed member, Karen Boeger, lives in Reno and is the Education Director for Friends of Nevada Wilderness. She is representing recreation.

The Northeastern Great Basin RAC appointments include Donald King who has 34 years experience as a wildlife biologist with state and federal agencies and lives in Jiggs. King was appointed as the wildlife representative. The three other positions on the Northeastern Great Basin RAC are reappointments that include Bill Upton representing mining, Dr. Kathryn Ataman, representing archaeology and history, and Vince Garcia, representative for Native Americans.

New appointments to the Mojave-Southern Great Basin RAC include Patrick Chicas from Las Vegas representing permitted recreation. Chicas is President and CEO of Rubicon Media Group, Inc. Another new appointment, Mark Ioli, is Environmental Manager of Round Mountain Gold Corp. who will represent mineral development. William Mull, a rancher from Panaca is representing permitted livestock, and Billie-Gayle Young, Vice-President of the National Wild Horse Association from Las Vegas is representing wild horse and burro interests. Two members reappointed to the RAC include Dr. Colleen Beck representing archaeology and history, and Maurice Frank-Churchill who is representing Indian Tribes.

These councils are taking on hard issues such as fire rehabilitation, urban development, and off-highway vehicle regulations on public lands, said BLM Director Tom Fry. We are lucky to have so many dedicated people who are willing to help advise us on administering our nation's public lands.

Resource Advisory Councils were created by the Department of the Interior in 1995 across the West in connection with Secretary Babbitt's Healthy Rangelands initiative. Many of these councils took the lead in developing grazing-related Standards and Guidelines aimed at improving the health and productivity of the public rangelands.

The Nevada Resource Advisory Councils will meet together at a statewide meeting at the Casa Blanca in Mesquite on October 26-27. BLM, Nevada State Director Bob Abbey stated, All of the out-going members served the public interests very well, and we will miss their dedication. I am confident our new RAC members will take their appointments to the RAC very seriously. I look forward to meeting each and every one of them at the statewide RAC meeting in October.

The BLM, an agency under the U.S. Department of the Interior is responsible for managing 264 million acres of public land, mostly in the Western United States and more than 560 million acres of sub-surface mineral estate throughout the nation. The BLM is responsible for managing these public lands

for multiple uses such as recreation, livestock grazing, mining, and wild horses and burros. The BLM also manages the nation=s public lands to preserve its cultural, historical and natural resources.

- BLM -

For More Information Contact: Jo Simpson at (775) 861-6586

Release Number: 2000-88
For Release: September 20, 2000

NEVADA RECEIVES \$7.6 MILLION IN PILT PAYMENTS

Counties in the State of Nevada will receive \$7,604,840 this year as provided for in the Payments in Lieu of Taxes (PILT) Act.

This is an increase over the 1999 payment which was \$7,180,805.

The Bureau of Land Management (BLM) will send the payments on September 21 for the year 2000 totaling \$134 million to approximately 1,977 local government units across the United States in accordance with the PILT Act. Secretary of the Interior Bruce Babbitt said this year=s payment is nearly \$9 million more than last year=s total, which was \$125 million.

The BLM, an agency of the Interior Department, distributes the PILT payments to eligible units of local governments each year. The payments are intended to offset the loss of tax revenue to States and localities caused by the presence of tax-exempt Federal land within their jurisdictions.

BLM Director Tom Fry said that PILT carries out an especially important role for the BLM, which manages more land than any other Federal agency. AThrough PILT payments, local governments carry out such vital services as firefighting and police protection, and construction of public schools and roads,@ Fry said.

The annual PILT payments are made for tax-exempt Federal lands administered by the BLM, the National Park Service, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (all agencies of the Interior Department), the U.S. Forest Service (part of the U.S. Department of Agriculture), and for Federal water projects and some military installations.

Congress appropriates PILT payments each year. The BLM allocates according to a formula in the PILT Act that includes population and the amount of Federal land within an affected county. These payments are in addition to other Federal revenues (such as, livestock grazing and timber harvesting) that the Federal Government transfers to the counties. The BLM has distributed more than two billion dollars in PILT payments to local governments since these payments began in 1977.

A Nevada list by county follows.

Payments in Lieu of Taxes

**Fiscal Year 2000
NEVADA**

Local Unit	FY 1999	FY 2000
Carson City	34,463	36,358
Churchill County	615,182	649,397
Clark County	991,677	1,048,261
Douglas County	204,028	215,318
Elko County	953,285	1,006,421
Esmeralda County	58,098	59,745
Eureka County	92,658	104,962
Humboldt County	491,801	541,073
Lander County	307,820	324,916
Lincoln County	221,171	222,136
Lyon County	645,344	680,934
Mineral County	271,971	255,680
Nye County	685,535	763,264
Pershing County	249,348	263,194
Storey County	9,586	10,095
Washoe County	999,774	1,054,639
White Pine County	<u>349,064</u>	<u>368,447</u>
State Total	\$7,180,805	7,604,840

For More Information Contact: Maxine Shane, (775) 861-6586

Release Number: 2000-87
For Release: September 15, 2000

COMMENT SOUGHT ON MINE PLAN

Public comment is being sought by the Elko Field Office of the Bureau of Land Management (BLM) on the Draft Supplemental Environmental Impact Statement (DSEIS) for the Barrick Goldstrike Inc. Betze-Post Project on the Carlin Trend. The DSEIS serves two purposes: 1) to reanalyze the effect of dewatering for the mine since the dewatering rates and total volume dewatered are greater than predicted in the original 1991 EIS for the project and, 2) to analyze the impacts of a proposed additional water pipeline intended to increase the flexibility of Barrick=s water management operations. The Betze-Post project is North America=s largest open-pit gold mine, located approximately 25 miles northwest of Carlin, Nevada.

The DSEIS addresses the main issues identified by BLM or raised during the public scoping period held from August 31, 1994 through February 16, 1998. By analyzing the impacts of Barrick=s dewatering operations and proposed water pipeline, the BLM, in conjunction with all interested parties, will propose mitigation measures to address predicted dewatering and pipeline impacts. The proposed pipeline is the only proposed action analyzed in this DSEIS since water management activities are regulated by the State of Nevada.

Copies of the DSEIS are available for review at the BLM, Nevada State Office (Reno); BLM, Elko Field Office (Elko); Elko, Eureka, Lander, and White Pine County Libraries; the University of Nevada libraries in Reno and Las Vegas; the Great Basin College Library and the Salt Lake City Public Library. A limited number of copies are available at the Elko Field Office on 3900 E. Idaho Street. The DSEIS is also available on the BLM Elko Field Office internet site at www.nv.blm.gov/Elko/Default.htm.

Following the 60-day public review and comment period, a Final SEIS will be prepared considering information developed from public comments. The Final SEIS will include mitigation measures to address both predicted direct impacts from the Barrick dewatering operations and predicted cumulative impacts from the Barrick dewatering operations and other proposed dewatering operations on the Carlin Trend, to include the Newmont operations at Gold Quarry and the proposed Leeville underground mine.

The BLM would appreciate your comments on the adequacy and accuracy of this document.

Written comments on the DSEIS must be submitted before close of business on Tuesday, Nov. 14, 2000, and should be sent to: **Bureau of Land Management, Elko Field Office, Attn: Kirk Laird, SEIS Coordinator, 3900 E. Idaho St., Elko, Nevada 89801.**

In addition, a public meeting to accept verbal and/or written comments on the Draft SEIS has been scheduled for **September 26, 2000, at the BLM Elko Field Office, 3900 Idaho Street at 7:00 pm.**

-BLM-

For More Information Contact: Kirk Laird at (775) 753-0200

Release Number: 2000-84
For Release: Sept. 12, 2000

BLM Nevada Proposes Use of Weed-Free Hay on Public Lands

Reno, Nev.-In an effort to slow the spread of noxious weeds in Nevada, the Bureau of Land Management (BLM), is proposing to require the exclusive use of certified noxious weed-seed free hay, straw or mulch when visiting or conducting authorized activities on BLM-administered lands in Nevada. The proposed rule is expected to go into effect next fall. Comments on the proposal will be accepted until Oct. 10, 2000.

Noxious weeds are a serious problem in the western United States. The spread of noxious weeds is estimated at 2,300 acres per day on BLM-administered public lands and 4,600 acres per day on all western public lands. Species like tall whitetop, yellow starthistle, leafy spurge and many others displace native vegetation, destroying wildlife habitat and reducing grazing capacity.

To slow the spread of noxious weeds, many western states have jointly developed noxious weed-free forage certification standards, and in cooperation with various federal, state and county agencies,

passed weed management laws. The State of Nevada recently started a state hay inspection-certification program and participates in a regional inspection, certification and identification process. Nevada forage producers grow noxious weed free products on a voluntary basis.

The weed-seed free hay proposal will be a standard regulation for all users of BLM public lands in Nevada, and will result in coordinated management with National Forest lands in the state. The Forest Service began a weed-seed free hay policy in Nevada this year.

A ban on hay, straw or mulch that has not been certified as weed-seed free would include information on where BLM visitors and land users can buy state-certified hay. Persons impacted by the proposed rule include recreationists using pack and saddle stock, ranchers with grazing permits, outfitters, and contractors and operators who use straw or other mulch for re-seeding or reclamation purposes.

Send written comments concerning the proposal to: Deputy State Director (NV-930), Bureau of Land Management, P.O. Box 12000, Reno, NV 89520-0006 on or before Oct. 10, 2000. Copies of the *Federal Register* notice, published Sept. 8, are available from the same address or online at <<http://www.gpo.gov/>>. Call Brian Amme at (775) 861-6645 for more information or to receive a copy of the proposal.

- BLM -

For More Information Contact: JoLynn Worley, (775) 861-6586

Release Number: 2000-83
For Release: September 8, 2000

Burning Man Ends, Cleanup Begins

Reno, Nev. **B**As Black Rock City empties, the cleanup on the Black Rock playa is taking center stage. Burning Man Event organizers have until Oct. 3 to complete a disappearing act that rivals the best magicians Reno or Las Vegas casinos offer **B** a city with a population of 26,000 is gone with hardly a trace a month later.

AExcept for some rough weather, the event ran smoothly and we expect the same of the cleanup effort, **@** said Terry Reed, Bureau of Land Management (BLM) Field Manager for the Winnemucca Office. **A**Improved coordination among law enforcement agencies and other partners, including the event organizers, created an atmosphere of cooperation that gave us the flexibility to address any potential snags as the event progressed. **@**

A closure of the three-mile entrance and southern portion of the playa was one change made to improve safety and security at the event. The closure was lifted on Monday at midnight. The event location and the closure resulted in no problems with the railroad tracks. An access directly to the

event location, signing and trained traffic control flaggers improved safety and traffic flow in and out of the event.

The BLM is charging the Burning Man organization \$4 per person per day for the seven day event. The peak attendance was on Friday, with 25,453 participants. The daily attendance is being calculated and BLM will prepare the final billing the week of Sept. 11. Final payment is due to the BLM by Sept. 20.

Law enforcement officers actively enforced state and federal laws pertaining to illegal activity. BLM rangers issued 116 citations. About one-third were for drug related offenses, with the majority of the balance issued for violations of the closure. Pershing County Sheriff=s Officers issued 21 drug related citations and made eight arrests.

The Washoe County Sheriff=s Office and the National Guard RAID unit provided a Medivac UH-60 Blackhawk helicopter to transport patients to a hospital.

The Regional Emergency Medical Services Authority (REMSA) treated nearly 1,000 patients during the week-long event. The majority of treatments were for cuts and scrapes and dehydration. There were about 20 overdose or drug related cases. About 20 patients were transported to Reno for additional medical care for head injuries or broken bones.

One of the concerns of an event this size are impacts to other recreational users in the area, but there was very little conflict during the event.

Cooperators for the event include REMSA, North Tree Fire International, Gerlach Volunteer Fire Department, Washoe County Road Division, Gerlach Justice Court, Nevada Division of Investigation, Nevada Highway Patrol, Nevada Department of Transportation, Pershing County District Attorney=s Office, Washoe County Sheriff=s Office, Nevada Bureau of Health Protection Services, Washoe County District Health, Gerlach Improvement District, Black Rock City LLC, Pershing County Sheriff=s Office and Bureau of Land Management.

- BLM -

For More Information Contact: JoLynn Worley at (775) 861-6515.