



**OHMVR COMMISSION MEETING
Palmdale, CA 93551**

March 13, 2015

STAFF REPORT: BLM West Mojave (WEMO) Plan
STAFF: Dan Canfield, Planning Manager
SUBJECT: WEMO Draft Supplemental Environmental Impact Statement

Summary

The Bureau of Land Management (BLM) has prepared a West Mojave (WEMO) Plan Amendment Draft Supplemental Environmental Impact Statement (SEIS).

The Draft SEIS has the potential to affect Off-Highway Vehicle (OHV) recreation opportunities in the BLM Ridgecrest, Barstow and Needles Field Offices. Additionally, the OHV recreation currently accommodated by the Eastern Kern County State Vehicular Recreation Area lands could be affected.

As of the publication of this report, the Draft SEIS has not yet been published. The Federal Register publication date and public review and comment period is to be determined.

Discussion

The WEMO Plan is a federal land use plan amendment adopted in 2006, that (1) presents a comprehensive strategy to conserve and protect the desert tortoise, the Mohave ground squirrel and over 100 other sensitive plants and animals and the natural communities of which they are a part, and (2) provides a streamlined program for complying with the requirements of the California and federal Endangered Species Acts (CESA and FESA, respectively).

The planning area covers 9.3 million acres in the western portion of the Mojave Desert in southern California covering parts of San Bernardino, Los Angeles, Kern, and Inyo Counties. The Plan applies to the 3.2 million acres of public lands.

The Record of Decision for the WEMO Plan Amendment to the California Desert Conservation Area Plan was signed in March 2006. Other agencies did not adopt the habitat conservation plan proposed in the WEMO Plan to cover their jurisdictions; therefore, the adopted plan only applies to public lands.

In September 2009, the U.S. District Court issued a summary judgment remanding the route designations made in the WEMO Plan, but keeping other parts of the Plan, primarily related to the conservation of species, in place. A remedy order based on this judgment was issued in January 2011. The remedy order identified the WEMO route network, with few changes, would be in place until the remedy order is satisfied.

To satisfy the remedy order, new route designations consistent with the court's order must be completed. This is the basis for the WEMO Draft SEIS and specific travel management plans now available for review (BLM, 2014).

Commission Action

The Commission may:

1. Submit a comment letter to the BLM on the WEMO Draft SEIS
2. Take no action.

Attachments

None