

Secretary has delegated this authority to the Assistant Secretary—Indian Affairs pursuant to part 209 Departmental Manual, Chapter 8. 1A and Memorandum dated January 25, 1994, from Chief of Staff, Department of the Interior, to Assistant Secretaries, and Heads of Bureaus and Offices.

This notice is given in accordance with Section 171.1(e) of part 171, Subchapter H, Chapter 1, of Title 25 of the Code of Federal Regulations, which provides for the fixing and announcing the rates for annual operation and maintenance assessments and related information of the Flathead Irrigation Project for Calendar Year 1998 and subsequent years.

The purpose of this notice is to announce a proposed increase in the Flathead Irrigation Project assessment rates proportionate with actual operation and maintenance costs. The assessment rates for 1998 will amount to an increase of 8.1%.

Payments

The irrigation operation and maintenance assessments become due based on locally established payment requirements, but in no case later than May 30 of each irrigation season. No water shall be delivered to any of these lands until all irrigation charges have been paid.

Interest and Penalty Fees

Interest, penalty, and administrative fees will be assessed, where required by law, on all delinquent operation and maintenance assessment charges as prescribed in the Code of Federal Regulations, Title 4, part 102, Federal Claims Collection Standards; and 42 BIAM Supplement 3, part 3.8 Debt Collection Procedures. Beginning 30 days after the due date interest will be assessed at the rate of the current value of funds to the U.S. Treasury. An administrative fee of \$12.50 will be assessed each time an effort is made to collect a delinquent debt; a penalty charge of 6 percent per year will be charged on delinquent debts over 90 days old and will accrue from the date the debt became delinquent. No water shall be delivered to any farm unit until all irrigation charges have been paid. After 180 days a delinquent debt will be forwarded to the United States Treasury for further action in accordance with Debt Collection Improvement Act of 1996 (Public Law 104-134).

Dated: July 31, 1997.

Ada E. Deer,

Assistant Secretary—Indian Affairs.

[FR Doc. 97-21588 Filed 8-14-97; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 4310-02-P

DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR

Bureau of Land Management

[NV-030-1220-00; Closure Notice No. NV-030-97-005]

Emergency Closure of Federal Lands

SUMMARY: Notice is hereby given that certain public lands west of Red Rock Road, Washoe County, Nevada, are closed to all motorized vehicles. This closure is necessary due to unauthorized road construction and off-road vehicle use which is causing considerable adverse effects to soil, vegetation and wildlife habitat in the area.

DATES: This closure goes into effect on August 15, 1997, and will remain in effect until the Carson City District Manager determines it is no longer needed.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:

Clifford Ligons, Assistant District Manager, Division on Non-Renewable Resources, Carson City District, 1535 Hot Springs Road, Carson City, Nevada 89706. Telephone (702) 885-6000.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: The authorities for this closure are 43 CFR 8341.2, 43 CFR 8342.3 and 43 CFR 8364.1. Any person who fails to comply with a closure order is subject to arrest and fines in accordance with applicable provisions of 18 U.S.C 3571 and/or imprisonment not to exceed 12 months.

This closure applies to all motorized vehicles excluding (1) any emergency or law enforcement vehicle while being used for emergency purposes, and (2) any vehicle whose use is expressly authorized in writing by the Carson City District Manager.

The public lands affected by this closure are located north of Reno, Nevada, approximately one mile southwest of Red Rock Road, and include lands within:

Mt. Diablo Meridian

T.22N., R.18E.

Sec. 11, NE¹/₄ NW¹/₄.

A map of the area closed to motorized vehicles is posted in the Carson City District Office.

Dated: August 1, 1997.

John O. Singlaub,

Carson City District Manager.

[FR Doc. 97-21639 Filed 8-14-97; 8:45 am]

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DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR

Bureau of Land Management

[NV-033-1230-00-FR97009]

Temporary Closure of Public Lands; Nevada

AGENCY: Bureau of Land Management, Interior Department.

ACTION: Temporary closure of certain public lands, Carson City District, in Lyon, Mineral, Churchill, and Douglas Counties on and adjacent to two Off Highway Vehicle Race courses:

(1) Best in the Desert Racing—Permit Number NV-055-97-35: Las Vegas to Reno Off-highway Vehicle Race occurring September 19-20, 1997.

(2) High Sierra Motorcycle Club—Permit Number NV-030-97043: Silver State Hare 'N' Hound Off-highway Motorcycle Race occurring September 21, 1997.

PURPOSE: To provide for public safety and to protect adjacent resources.

EFFECTIVE DATES: September 19, 20, 21, 1997.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: A map of each closure may be obtained at the contact address. The permittees are required to clearly mark and monitor the event routes during each closure period. Spectators shall remain in safe locations as directed by event officials and BLM personnel. The public lands to be closed to public use include existing roads, jeep trails and dry washes identified on the ground by colorful flagging and paper arrows attached to wooden stakes designating the race route. Specific information pertaining to each event follows:

(1) The 'Vegas to Reno Race is a 550 mile point-to-point event beginning early Friday morning, September 19, in Las Vegas. Racing will end on the Old Como Road south of Dayton. Como Road to Rawe Peak will be closed to all public use. Vehicles include motorcycles and fourwheel drive trucks. The closed route crosses public lands within the following areas from 6 a.m. September 19 through noon, September 20, 1997:

Mineral County—R37E, T5N; R36E, T6N; R35E, T6-11N; R34E, T8-13N; R33-32E, T13N. Churchill County—R32E, T14N; R31E, T15N; R30E, T15-16N, R29-24E, T16N; R24E, T15N; R23-21E, T15N; R21E, T16N. Douglas County—R23E, T14N.

(2) The Silver State Hare 'N' Hound is a one-lap, motorcycle race along 60 to 90 miles of dirt roads and dry wash trails located in the Wassuk foothills east of Yerington, Nevada in Lyon and Mineral Counties within T12N R26-

27E; T13N, R26-27E; T14N R27E. This closure will be in effect from 6:00 a.m. through 4:00 p.m. on Sunday, September 21, 1997.

EXCLUSIONS: The above restrictions do not apply to agency, race officials, law enforcement, or emergency response personnel during the conduct of their official duties in relation to the race event.

Authority: 43 CFR 8364 and 43 CFR 8372.

PENALTY: Any person failing to comply with the closure order may be subject to imprisonment for not more than 12 months, or a fine in accordance with the applicable provisions of 18 U.S.C. 3571, or both.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Fran Hull, Outdoor Recreation Planner, Carson City District, Bureau of Land Management, 1535 Hot Springs Road, Carson City, Nevada 89706. Telephone: (702) 885-6000.

Dated: August 4, 1997.

Clifford D. Ligons,

Assistant District Manager, Non-Renewable Resources.

[FR Doc. 97-21641 Filed 8-14-97; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 4310-HC-M

DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR

Bureau of Land Management

[WY-985-0777-66]

Supplementary Rule Requiring the Use of Certified Noxious Weed-Free Forage on Public Lands in the Bighorn Basin, Wyoming and the Availability of the Environmental Assessment, Decision Record, and Finding of No Significant Impact for Implementation of Requirements for Weed-Free Forage on Public Lands in the Bureau of Land Management's Worland District, Wyoming

AGENCY: Bureau of Land Management, Interior.

ACTION: Notices.

SUMMARY: The Worland District of the Bureau of Land Management (BLM) recently prepared an environmental assessment (EA) documenting the analysis of two alternatives for managing noxious weeds on public lands in the Bighorn Basin of Wyoming. The EA's proposed action consisted of a supplementary rule under 43 CFR 8365.1-6 to require the use of certified noxious weed-free forage on those public lands. Forage subject to this rule would include hay, cubes, straw, and mulch. The District Manager of the BLM's Worland District has issued a

decision record that the EA's proposed action and supplemental rule will not have any significant impact on the human environment and that an environmental impact statement is not required. Therefore, the District Manager is requiring that public land users, including permittees and local, state, or federal government agents conducting administrative activities, use certified noxious weed-free forage on BLM-administered public lands in the Worland District, Wyoming. In addition to certified weed-free forage, the use of pelletized feeds and grain products is authorized.

The Worland District encompasses approximately 3,089,600 acres of public land in Big Horn, Hot Springs, Park, and Washakie counties in Northwestern Wyoming. This rule will affect public land users who use hay or other forage products on the BLM-administered public lands in the Worland District such as recreationists using pack and saddle stock, ranchers with grazing permits, outfitters, and contractors who use straw or other mulch for reclamation purposes. These individuals or groups would be required to use only certified noxious weed-free forage products, while on BLM-administered public lands in the Worland District, Wyoming.

EFFECTIVE DATES: The rule will become effective September 1, 1997 and will remain in effect until modified or rescinded by the Authorized Officer.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Bureau of Land Management, Worland District Office, Roger Inman, Resource Advisor, P. O. Box 119, 101 South 23rd Street, Worland, Wyoming 82401-0119, or telephone (307) 347-5292.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: The environmental assessment (EA) is consistent with the land-use plans for the Worland District.

Noxious and undesirable weeds are a serious problem in the western United States. Estimates of the rapid spread of weeds in the west include 2,300 acres per day on BLM-administered public lands and 4,600 acres per day on all federally-administered land in the west. Species such as leafy spurge, spotted knapweed, Russian knapweed, musk thistle, dalmatian toadflax, purple loosestrife, houndstongue, and other non-native noxious and undesirable weeds have no natural controls to keep their populations in balance. Consequently, these weeds invade healthy ecosystems, displace native vegetation, reduce species diversity, and damage wildlife habitat. Widespread infestations lead to soil erosion and stream sedimentation. Furthermore,

noxious weed invasions weaken revegetation efforts, reduce livestock and wildlife grazing capacity, occasionally affect the health of public land users by aggravating allergies and other ailments, and threaten federally-protected or native plants and animals.

To help reduce the spread of noxious weeds, a number of 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. Because hay and other forage products containing noxious weed seed are part of the infestation problem, Wyoming has developed a state crop inspection; a certification-identification process; participates in a regional inspection certification-identification process; and encourages forage producers in Wyoming to grow noxious weed-free products and have them certified.

Region II of the United States Forest Service, Department of Agriculture, implemented a similar policy for all National Forest lands in Wyoming in 1996. The Wyoming BLM implemented a standard stipulation on all Special Recreation Permits in 1994, requiring permit holders who use livestock to use certified noxious weed-free products. This proposal will provide a standard regulation for all users of BLM-administered public lands in the Worland District and will provide for coordinated and consistent management with the U.S. Forest Service.

In cooperation with the State of Wyoming and the U.S. Forest Service, the Worland District is implementing a ban of the use of forage that has not been certified, on all BLM-administered lands within the Worland District. This proposal includes public information to insure that: (1) This ban is well publicized and understood, and (2) visitors to and land users of public lands administered by the Worland District BLM will know where they can purchase state-certified hay and other forage products.

These supplementary rules will not appear in the Code of Federal Regulations. The principal author of these supplementary rules is Roger Inman, Resource Advisor, of the Worland District, Wyoming BLM.

For the reasons stated above, under the authority of 43 Code of Federal Regulations 8365.1-6, the Worland District Manager issues supplementary rules to read:

Supplementary Rules to Require the Use of Certified Noxious Weed-Free Forage on Bureau of Land Management-