of acid drainage within the identified waste rock and (3) modify the tailings disposal process by adding a pyrite reduction system to separate the residual pyrite from the tailings. The pyrite concentrate would be disposed of in a subagueous environment where oxidation and acid generation would be prevented. The proposal also discusses measures to be taken should mining operations terminate prior to the construction of the pyrite reduction system outlined above. In that circumstance, TCMC proposes to place a cap of inert material on the tailings embankment and impoundment to alleviate acid generation.

There are approximately 525 acres of patented land in the project area, including the open pit. The remainder, approximately 2,500 acres, is land administered by the Challis National Forest or the Salmon District of the Bureau of Land Management. The mine is located in Custer County, five miles north of the Salmon River and 30 miles southwest of Challis, Idaho.

The proposal to develop and implement measures to prevent, control and treat ARD represents both connected or cumulative actions as defined by the Council on Environmental Quality (40 CFR 1508.25). The purpose of the proposal is to continue the development of a mineral resource while minimizing or preventing adverse effects resulting from ARD that were not predicted in the 1980 Thompson Creek EIS or approved Plan of Operations. Forest Service policy is to facilitate the orderly exploration, development and production of mineral resources within the National Forest System on lands open to these activities. At the same time, the Forest Service is charged to ensure that these activities are conducted in an environmentally sound manner, and that once completed, reclamation of the land to a stable and usable condition is accomplished.

This supplement to the 1980 EIS will tier to the Challis National Forest Land and Resource Management Plan (Forest Plan) and Final EIS (June 1987) which provide overall guidance of all land management activities on the Challis National Forest, including mineral exploration and development. This document also tiers to the 1980 Environmental Impact Statement for the Thompson Creek Molybdenum Project. DATES: Written comments and suggestions must be submitted on or before March 13, 1995.

ADDRESSES AND FURTHER INFORMATION: Submit written comments and suggestions on the proposed activities to Liz McFarland, Project Coordinator, Salmon and Challis National Forests, Headquarters Building, P.O. Box 729, Salmon, Idaho, 83467, Phone (208) 756– 5139. To be placed on the project mailing list or for additional information, contact the Project Coordinator identified above.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: The Thompson Creek Mining Company submitted a Supplemental Plan of Operation for the Thompson Creek Molybdenum Mine to the Challis National Forest and the Salmon District of the Bureau of Land Management in February 1993. The Supplemental Plan was revised in February 1994. The Supplemental Plan was based on a sampling program initiated in 1990 to characterize ARD. The plan, as proposed by TCMC is summarized as follows:

1. Minimize the amount of water and air coming into contact with sulfide minerals by encapsulating waste rock (determined to have the potential to generate ARD) with compacted volcanic material within the existing waste dumps. Final reclamation of the waste dumps would consist of shaping and covering surfaces with materials designed to prevent upward diffusion of acidity, limit the infiltration of water, protect cover materials from freeze-thaw damage and support growth of a vegetative cover.

2. The existing milling process would be modified to remove a portion of the pyrite sufficient to produce an inert tailings. The pyrite removed would be disposed of in areas of the impoundment which will be saturated with water in order to limit exposure to oxygen. The inert tailings produced would be placed on the embankment, paddock and beach portion of the tailings facility. As proposed, this would result in approximately 140 feet of inert tailings, by close of mine. At final reclamation, the interior of the impoundment area would be regraded using inert material so that surface drainage is directed toward the west side of the embankment. This would produce a free water pond near the west side of the embankment and a minimum 10 foot layer of inert material over the interior of the impoundment. The remainder of the impoundment would be covered by 140 feet of inert tails or a low permeability soil cap or a layer of inert fill 15 to 30 feet thick.

3. Hydrologic investigations indicate that the pit would fill at least partially with water when mining ends. Hydrogeologic studies and geochemical analyses would be conducted prior to mine closure and appropriate measures to preserve in-pit water quality would be developed.

The Challis Forest Plan provides guidance for management activities within the potentially affected area through its goals, objectives, standards and guidelines, and management area direction. The proposal would occur within Management Areas 8 and 9. Management in these areas emphasize enhancement of fish and wildlife habitat, range administration, maintenance of water quality, timber production and dispersed recreation. It recognizes the potential for high-value, locatable mineral occurrence and probable development. It directs that exploration, location, leasing and development of energy and non-energy minerals resources be coordinated with other resources.

The decision to be made is what should be done in relation to the proposal submitted by TCMC: (a) Approve the project as proposed, (b) approve the project with mitigation measures to address the issues, (c) deny approval of the proposal. Under the United States mining Laws of May 10, 1872, as amended (30 U.S.C. 22), United States citizens and corporations have the right to search for and develop minerals upon public lands, including National Forest Systems lands, open to mineral entry. Forest Service regulations (36 CFR 228, Subpart A) require that the agency work with mineral operators to minimize or eliminate adverse environmental impacts from mineral activities on National Forest System lands.

The Supplement will analyze the direct, indirect, and cumulative environmental effects of the alternatives. Past, present, and projected activities on private Bureau of Land Management and National Forest lands will be considered. The Supplement will disclose the analysis of site-specific mitigation measures and their effectiveness.

Public participation is an important part of the analysis process (40 CFR 1501.7). Scoping activities, to date, have included the following: Letter and scoping document, dated 2/15/94, to interested individuals, groups and organizations; press release and legal narrative in the "Challis Messenger" and the Salmon "Recorder-Herald," 2/ 17/94. The public is encouraged to visit with Forest Service officials at any time during the analysis and prior to the decision. In addition, the Forest Service is seeking information, comments, and assistance from federal, state, and local agencies and other individuals or organizations who may be interested in or affected by the proposed action. No