

BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT OR-08-10
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BLM Rejects Hardrock Lease Application near Mount St. Helens

PORTLAND – The Bureau of Land Management (BLM) Oregon State Office announced today that it has decided to move forward with the “No Action” alternative in the March 2007 Environmental Assessment (EA), and reject the hardrock lease application. After careful consideration of the application, findings of the EA, and public comments, BLM concluded that it is not possible at this time to determine if leasing, even with a contingent right stipulation, would, over the long term, result in mineral development activities that would be compatible with the purpose for which the lands were re-acquired by the Federal Government.

General Moly (formerly Idaho General Mines, Inc.), a Lakewood, Colorado-based firm, applied for a fractional interest hardrock mining lease for 217.3 acres, in March 2005, and a fringe acreage lease for the adjoining 682.2 acres in the vicinity of Goat Mountain and the headwaters of the Green River, approximately 12 miles northeast of the Mount St. Helens volcanic crater. The lease application area was outside the legislated National Volcanic Monument boundaries. Even without the lease, GMI will continue to own an undivided 50 percent interest in the mineral estate within the 217.3 acre parcel.

“It is important to remember that the leasing action proposed in the Administrative Alternative would have only constituted “permission to ask permission,” said Oregon/Washington BLM State Director Ed Shepard. “Although this lease application is rejected, GMI may apply for an exploration permit at any time and the Federal government still retains discretion to approve or deny actual exploration based on the NEPA review process,” continued Shepard.

A copy of the Decision Record is available online at: <http://www.blm.gov/or/news/index.php>

About the BLM

The BLM manages more land – 258 million surface acres – than any other Federal agency. Most of this public land is located in 12 Western States, including Alaska. The Bureau, with a budget of about \$1.8 billion, also administers 700 million acres of sub-surface mineral estate throughout the nation. The BLM’s multiple-use mission is to sustain the health and productivity of the public lands for the use and enjoyment of present and future generations. The Bureau accomplishes this by managing such activities as outdoor recreation, livestock grazing, mineral development, and energy production, and by conserving natural, historical, and cultural resources on the public lands.

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