

Conversation Contents

Skull Valley Area Mine, Fw: a few things!

Attachments:

/144. Skull Valley Area Mine, Fw: a few things!/3.1 q2&3.docx

"Hawes, David" <rhawes@blm.gov>

From: "Hawes, David" <rhawes@blm.gov>
Sent: Sun May 31 2015 21:02:07 GMT-0600 (MDT)
To: Codey Carter <cdcarter@blm.gov>, David Eddy <deddy@blm.gov>
CC: Amanda James <ajames@blm.gov>
Subject: Skull Valley Area Mine, Fw: a few things!

I'd like to provide brief answers to Ms. Dixon's questions. I expect whatever I provide her will wind up on their website.

Codey: Will you please draft brief responses to #s 1 & 5?

Dave: Will you please draft responses to #s 2 & 3?

Thanks.

--Rem

----- Forwarded message -----

From: <allison@jakesrun.com>
Date: Sunday, May 31, 2015
Subject: a few things!
To: Rem Hawes <rhawes@blm.gov>

Hi Rem,

Perhaps I will see you at the Board of Supervisors meeting tomorrow morning.

I have several questions:

1. What is the mechanism for classifying the area as riparian? I understand the difference between casual reference and official classification. Is this being pursued? If not, why not?
2. It seems very odd to me that the company themselves get to decide whether the minerals are "locatable" or "saleable". Do I have this right? Can you explain?
3. At what point could this mining application be denied by the BLM due to air quality issues? Has this EVER been done to your knowledge?

4. How will the public be noticed as the process moves forward with the various agencies?
Please note: the Daily Courier newspaper is NOT delivered in this area.....

5. Finally, please find below a cut-and-pasted text of an email composed by Bob Pearson, who will probably talk at the meeting tomorrow morning.

I am wading through LOTS of stuff in an effort to update and expand the website.

Best regards,
Allison Dixon

"My records of both the Bald and Golden Eagle habitat use in this area of Western Yavapai County are scattered over a number of years. I lived here starting 1940, when I was 5 years old. I attended local schools; joined the Navy in 1953 & became a member of a flight crew and saw & served in much of the Pacific, including Japan, Hong Kong, Sea of China, Phillipines, Guam, Midway, Johnson Island, Okinawa, Hawaii and the California & Washington military bases serving in VP-40. I attended the University of Arizona following my 4 years in the Navy. I studied Electrical Engineering & then Wildlife Management, received BS in W/L Mgt plus some Graduate work at Utah State Univ. in Wildlife Management. My career was with the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service, primarily in land management & public relations. I had law enforcement responsibilities for the protection & conservation of all Migratory Bird species, including the Endangered American Bald Eagle and the Threatened Golden Eagle. I retired as Refuge Manager of Benton Lake National Wildlife Refuge and The associated Wetland Management District (WMD). The WMD covered a variety of habitats in North Central Montana, the District boundary included about 30% of the State.

Migratory birds, including the Eagles only occupy specific habitat sites for brief periods of time. They have a moving Home Range. Site usage by Eagles is dependent upon their food habits, the availability of that food source and the presence of Roost sites and or Nesting sites. Predator pressure & or Human Disturbance factors also have great influence on site usage or avoidance. Changing weather conditions affects the availability of food resources & sheltered roost sites and is probably what triggered the Migratory tradition in birds. Most migratory birds thus have 1.) a wintering Range 2.) a Summer Range . and then 3) the necessary essential Food & rest stops in between , twice a year (Migratory lanes). Some birds use different routes going South than when going North.

The 320 acre BLM tract provides food & shelter & roost & or nest sites appropriate for the Golden Eagle. Bald Eagles on the other hand are primarily dependent on Waterfowl & or Fish as a standard food source. It is conceivable that Bald Eagles might perch & rest at some time on the BLM tract. My observations would for Bald Eagles here are associated with small wetlands & preferably standing dead Cottonwood trees in the Skull Valley & Kirkland Areas.

In the early 1990's, I teamed up with 2 men from the Prescott Audubon Society and established a Nationally recognized "Christmas Bird Count" census area (circular) including parts of Skull Valley & Kirkland. It was operated for several years. I also have personal observational records of bird occurrence in this area, since 1989.

PS: The Yellow-billed Cuckoo, and the Spotted Owl (photo record) also endangered species, occur in this area. I have records of these two birds also. I hear the Yellow-billed Cuckoo every year in this area, and the small wetland habitat on and near the BLM tract would qualify for it's habitat. I first got acquainted with it in Oklahoma & seven years later, I was able to immediately recognized it's call in the Refuge near Great Falls, Montana, without seeing it. I heard it from the office and went out into the shelter belt and got visual confirmation. I have more immediate concern for these latter two birds than I do for the former two.

This small rural community & it surrounding neighborhoods don't need our local & State habitat spoiled by the economically insignificant production and marketing of this purportedly carcinogenic toxic material. I am not so sure but that the 42,000 tons of stored "minerals" should be declared a Toxic Super Fund Site candidate. What were the conditions & causes of

the shut down of the former "KittyLiter" Mine operation at this site in the 1980's? I am aware of a " Kittyliter " Plant having been shut down about that same time just North of Black Eagle, Montana due to toxic air particulates pollution."

Sincerely,
Robert L. Pearson

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— Rem Hawes
Hassayampa Field Manager
BLM Phoenix District
21605 N 7th Ave • Phoenix, AZ 85027 • 623-580-5530

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"Carter, Codey" <cdcarter@blm.gov>

From: "Carter, Codey" <cdcarter@blm.gov>
Sent: Mon Jun 01 2015 12:15:36 GMT-0600 (MDT)
To: "Hawes, David" <rhawes@blm.gov>
Subject: Re: Skull Valley Area Mine, Fw: a few things!

Rem,

Here is how I would address the question and comment:

1. An area is considered riparian if the plant community is composed of species that are dependent upon permanent water in the soil (riparian obligate plants). In our Field Office these plant species include, but are not limited to, Fremont cottonwood, Gooding's willow, velvet ash, Arizona sycamore, seep willow, bulrush, spikerush and a variety of other sedges and rushes. I believe the designation that you are referring to is the Phoenix District riparian inventory that took place in the late 1980's and early 1990's. The interdisciplinary team at that time focused the inventory on riparian areas that were 1/4 mile in length or longer. There are numerous smaller springs, seeps and short riparian reaches along otherwise ephemeral streams that were not included in the initial inventory, but these smaller areas are still addressed in NEPA for any proposed action that may affect them. These smaller riparian areas also have a high value for wildlife. The inventory doesn't change the management of riparian habitat. It just puts the riparian area on the map. If new riparian areas that meet the criteria are identified, there is no official designation process. We can just add them to the GIS layer and do a riparian assessment.

5. Thank you for the observations of birds in the vicinity of the project area. The environmental assessment will analyze the impacts of the proposed action on special status species and migratory birds. If adverse impacts to these species are expected, BLM will take measures to avoid, minimize or mitigate these impacts. If the proposed action may affect yellow-billed cuckoo, the BLM will consult with the US Fish and Wildlife Service as mandated by the Endangered Species Act.

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Codey Carter
Wildlife Biologist
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Phoenix, AZ 85027
(623)580-5678
cdcarter@blm.gov

"Eddy, David" <deddy@blm.gov>

From: "Eddy, David" <deddy@blm.gov>
Sent: Tue Jun 02 2015 12:33:49 GMT-0600 (MDT)
To: "Hawes, David" <rhawes@blm.gov>
Subject: Re: Skull Valley Area Mine, Fw: a few things!
Attachments: q2&3.docx

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