



Bureau of Land Management

Anchorage Field Office
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<http://www.anchorage.ak.blm.gov>

**Categorical Exclusion
Red Top Closure Project**

**Applicant: BLM Anchorage Field Office
Case File Number: AA-6648 / AA-12608
AK-040-07-CX-021**



Location:

USS 12403, within Section 32, Township 10 South, Range 55 West, Seward Meridian.

Prepared By:

Larry Beck
Environmental Protection Specialist
23 March, 2007

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT
Anchorage Field Office
CATEGORICAL EXCLUSION (CX) FORM

CX No.: AK-040-07-CX-xxx

Lease/Serial/Case File No.: AA-6648 / AA-12608

Proposed Action Title/Types: Red Top Closure Project

Location of Proposed Action: Red Top Mill (Retort) Site, USS 12403, Section 32, Township 10 South, Range 55 West, Seward Meridian.

Description of Proposed Action:

The proposed action is to contract with a BLM hazmat response contractor to conduct a visual walk-around survey of the site; record GPS coordinates for certain features such as any cinnabar ore/burnt ore piles and the corners of a buried liner left in-place after previous cleanup actions, i.e. removal of the retort facility; and install/sample three groundwater monitoring wells along the bank of the Wood River between the liner and the river. Field personnel will travel to/from the site via boat or automobile. Field work will be conducted for 2-3 days. No vehicles or heavy equipment use on-site is anticipated, other than as transport to/from the site on existing roads.

- The liner is a geo-textile sheet about 100'x150' that is buried about 1' below ground surface; it serves as a cap over mercury impacted soils. Digging with hand tools to locate the corners will be conducted; the holes will be back-filled.
- The wells will be "micro-wells" which are 1½"-3" diameter slotted pipe (plastic/steel) and are to be pounded into the ground to an expected depth of 5-10 feet. Installation is anticipated to be done using powered hand tools (electric jackhammer for example). Several gallons of water will be flushed from the wells to "develop" them. A single water sample of less than 1 gallon will be drawn from each well to be lab analyzed for mercury. The wells will be then pulled-out and disposed off-site. The well holes will be tamped closed.

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PART I - PLAN CONFORMANCE REVIEW

This Proposed Action is subject to the following land use plan:

Management Framework Plan, Southwest Planning Area, Approved 25 Nov '81, and
DRAFT Bay Resource Management Plan & Environmental Impact Statement

The Proposed Action has been reviewed for conformance with this plan (43 CFR 1610.5-3(a)).

PART II - NEPA REVIEW

A. Categorical Exclusion Review.

This Proposed Action qualifies as a categorical exclusion under 516 DM 11.5 H(3):

Conducting preliminary hazardous materials assessments and site investigations, site characterization studies and environmental monitoring. Included are siting, construction, installation and/or operation of small monitoring devices such as wells, particulate dust counters and automatic air or water samples.

B. Departmental List of Extraordinary Circumstances Review.

The following Departmental List of Extraordinary Circumstances applies to individual actions. Departmental instructions mandate that environmental documents **MUST BE PREPARED** for actions which may: (Mark applicable answer for each item. If "yes", prepare an EA/EIS and append this form to it.)

		YES	NO
1.	Have significant adverse impacts on public health or safety.	_____	_____ X
2.	Have significant impacts on such natural resources and unique geographic characteristics as historic or cultural resources; park, recreation or refuge lands; wilderness areas; wild or scenic rivers; national natural landmarks; sole or principal drinking water aquifers; prime farmlands; wetlands (Executive Order 11990); floodplains (Executive Order 11988); national monuments; migratory birds; and other ecologically significant or critical areas.	_____	_____ X
3.	Have highly controversial environmental effects or involve unresolved conflicts concerning alternative uses of available resources [NEPA Section 102(2)(E)].	_____	_____ X
4.	Have highly uncertain and potentially significant environmental effects or involve unique or unknown environmental risks.	_____	_____ X
5.	Establish a precedent for future action or represent a decision in principle about future actions with potentially significant environmental effects.	_____	_____ X
6.	Have a direct relationship to other actions with individually insignificant but cumulatively significant environmental effects.	_____	_____ X

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| 7. | Have significant impacts on properties listed, or eligible for listing on the National Register of Historic Places as determined by either the bureau or office. | _____ | _____ <u>X</u> |
| 8. | Have significant impacts on species listed, or proposed to be listed, on the List of Endangered or Threatened Species, or have significant impacts on designated Critical Habitat for these species. | _____ | _____ <u>X</u> |
| 9. | Violate Federal law, or a State, local, or tribal law or requirement imposed for the protection of the environment. | _____ | _____ <u>X</u> |
| 10. | Have a disproportionately high and adverse effect on low income or minority populations (Executive Order 12898). | _____ | _____ <u>X</u> |
| 11. | Limit access to and ceremonial use of Indian sacred sites on Federal lands by Indian religious practitioners or significantly adversely affect the physical integrity of such sacred sites (Executive Order 13007). | _____ | _____ <u>X</u> |
| 12. | Contribute to the introduction, continued existence, or spread of weeds or non-native invasive species known to occur in the actions that may promote the introduction, growth, or expansion of the range of such species (Federal Noxious Weed Control Act and Executive Order 13112). | _____ | _____ <u>X</u> |

I certify that none of the Departmental Extraordinary Circumstances listed in the above Part B (516 DM 2, Appendix 2) apply to this action.

Preparer(s): Larry Beck, Environmental Protection Specialist Date: March 6, 2007

PART III – DECISION

The proposed action is in conformance with a management framework plan or a resource management plan, 43 C.F.R. § 1610.8(a)(3) (2006). The Department of the Interior has determined and found that the proposed action is within a category of actions that do not individually or cumulatively have a significant effect on the human environment and that neither an environmental assessment nor an environmental impact statement is required, 40 C.F.R. §1508.4 (2006).

It is therefore my decision to implement the action, as described, with appropriate mitigation measures or stipulations.

Authorized Official: Gary Reimer

Date: April 19, 2007