

# *Destiny Mine Frequently Asked Questions*

## **Why did the BLM complete an EA rather than an EIS?**

Both an environmental assessment (EA) and an environmental impact statement (EIS) are avenues for analysis in the NEPA process, and the BLM uses these documents to analyze proposed actions on federal lands. An EA is the first step in the NEPA process. A project may be approved if the BLM reaches a finding of no significant impact (FONSI) through an EA. An EIS is conducted if an action would have significant impacts. In terms of the Destiny Mine proposal, the BLM reached a FONSI. The RGFO conducted extensive analysis through an EA to determine what type of mitigation needs to be implemented so that the project does not significantly impact the human environment. If the RGFO had not reached a FONSI, then the project would have been analyzed through an EIS.

## **Would an EIS have changed or prevented this proposal from moving forward?**

An environmental impact statement (EIS) is required by NEPA for federal actions that have the potential to significantly affect the human environment. Conducting an EIS does not mean that the project will NOT move forward; however, it involves a more in-depth analysis if a FONSI is not reached. The gold placer portion of this project is governed by the 1872 mining law, which gives claimants the legal right to explore for and develop minerals such as gold. Under this law, the BLM has the responsibility to see that development occurs in an environmentally sound manner by preventing undue or unnecessary degradation.

## **What is an R&PP and how would it affect this project?**

A recreation and public purposes permit (R&PP) authorizes State and local governments and nonprofit organizations to lease BLM-managed lands for recreational or public purposes. An R&PP considers other existing uses of the land. In terms of the Destiny Mine proposal an R&PP would not prevent mining from occurring. The Destiny Mine proposal involves one of several mining claims that have existed on the parcel since 1993.

## **The mine proposal is for 5 acres. Could the operator expand this operation?**

The Destiny Mine is a small, short-term use of the land with a lifetime of 5-10 years. If the operator requested to increase the mine's size or extend its term, the BLM would begin another round of NEPA analysis before deciding whether or not to approve anything.

## **Why is mineral development important?**

People use mineral materials in their daily lives. The gold generated from the Destiny Mine could be used to create computer and cell phone circuitry as well as jewelry. The sand and gravel could be used in concrete for building, as filler for fertilizers or to treat icy highways. Park County may use the sand and gravel for local road maintenance. Last year in Colorado, mineral and energy development on public lands generated more than 22,900 jobs and contributed \$4.9 billion dollars to local economies.

