

**United States Department of the Interior  
Bureau of Land Management  
Tuscarora Field Office**

**RAILROAD EXPLORATION PROJECT  
Gold Standard Ventures Corporation**

**DECISION RECORD**

DOI/BLM/NV/E000-2011-0500-EA  
3809, NVN-089543

Gold Standard Ventures Corporation (GSV) submitted a Plan of Operations No. NVN-089543 for mineral exploration activities in the Railroad Mining District. GSV's existing notice level exploration activities include access road maintenance, road building including water bars, drill pad construction, exploration drilling, and reclamation. The 2011 Plan of Operations proposal defines a project boundary that encompasses 3,169 acres of public and private lands. The Project (Proposed Action) will increase the amount of surface disturbance associated with exploration activities from notice level (< 5 acres) to up to 200 acres within the Project Area boundary over a period of ten or more years.

**Decision**

It is my decision to authorize the 2011 Plan of Operations for the Railroad Exploration Project, as described in the Proposed Action in the attached EA and to authorize/require the following stipulations and monitoring requirements.

**Stipulations**

1. GSV shall adhere to the Environmental Protection Measures outlined in Section 2.1.7 of the EA and Section 3 of the Plan of Operations.
2. GSV shall adhere to the terms of the Memorandum of Agreement (MOA) developed for the Railroad Exploration Project for the cultural resources.
3. *Special Status Species* -Should any special status species be detected within the Project area, limitations on the amount of surface disturbing activities, type and scale of operations, location of disturbance, and timing of operations will be developed annually in consultation with the BLM by assessing on-the-ground conditions in the Project area.
4. GSV shall contain all drill cuttings, fluids, and water in the on-site sumps, which will be designed to contain the expected volume of drill cuttings, fluids, and water that will be generated by exploration activities. In the event that there is an excess volume of water that cannot be contained in the sumps, a temporary groundwater discharge permit will be obtained from the Nevada Division of Environmental Protection's Water Pollution Control Bureau, prior to discharging any water from the sumps.

**Monitoring**

Per 43CFR 3809.600, the BLM will conduct inspections a minimum of once a year throughout the life of the operation and reclamation activities. Included, are reviews of the annual NDEP Reclamation Report submitted by GSV that will summarize exploration and reclamation activities of the previous year with a reclamation cost estimate. Field compliance inspections will extend through monitoring of the reclamation and release of the bond. The results of the field compliance inspections will be documented in the project file at the BLM Tuscarora Field Office.

### **Rationale**

The General Mining Law of 1872 gives the claimant the right to explore, discover, and diligently develop the mineral deposit(s) on their claims in a prudent manner. The BLM's responsibility is to review the operation and reclamation plan submitted by the claimant in accordance with mining regulations found at 43 CFR 3809. As a result of the BLM's review of the exploration and reclamation plan, no unnecessary or undue degradation will occur to public lands during the exploration of locatable mineral deposit(s).

As a result of the analysis in the Railroad Exploration Project EA, the BLM determined that the Proposed Action is consistent with the objectives of the Elko Resource Management Plan and complies with federal, state, and local laws and regulations to the maximum extent possible.

The implementation of the Proposed Action will allow GSV to continue their exploration drilling program on public lands within the Project area. As discussed in the EA, the Environmental Protection Measures proposed as part of the operation and reclamation plan would help GSV avoid or reduce potential impacts from the Proposed Action. The commitment to the mitigation and monitoring activities from this decision would minimize the risk of adverse impacts and unnecessary or undue degradation to public lands.

The No Action Alternative was not selected because it would not allow GSV to explore for minerals as provided for in the General Mining Law of 1872.

Public, agency, and tribal involvement included posting the Plan of Operations and EA document for comment, coordination with tribal representatives, and input and review of the EA by the Nevada Department of Wildlife. The EA, together with the Finding of No Significant Impact (FONSI) is available for inspection upon request to the Elko District Office, and will be posted on the BLM, Elko District Office webpage during a 30-day appeal period.

### **Appeals**

If you are adversely affected by this decision, you may request that the Nevada BLM State Director review this decision. If you request State Director Review, the request must be received in the Nevada BLM State Office at 1340 Financial Blvd. Reno, NV 89502, no later than 30 calendar days after you receive or have been notified of this decision. The request for State Director Review must be filed in accordance with the provisions in 43 CFR 3809.805. This decision will remain in effect while the State Director Review is pending, unless you request and obtain a stay from the State Director. If you request a stay, you have the burden of proof to demonstrate that a stay should be granted using the standards and procedures for obtaining a stay from the Interior Board of Land Appeals (IBLA).

If the State Director does not make a decision on your request for review of this decision within 21 days of receipt of the request, you should consider the request declined and you may appeal this decision to the IBLA. You may contact the Nevada BLM State Office to determine when the BLM received the request for State Director Review. You have 30 days from the end of the 21-day period in which to file your Notice of Appeal with this office at 3900 East Idaho St., Elko, NV 89801 which we will forward to IBLA.

Under 43 CFR 3809.801(a)(1), if you wish to bypass a State Director Review, this decision may be appealed directly to the IBLA in accordance with the regulations at 43 CFR part 4. Your Notice of Appeal must be filed in this office at 3900 East Idaho St., Elko, NV 89801 within 30 days from receipt of this decision. As the appellant you have the burden of showing that the decision appealed from is in error. This decision will remain in effect while the IBLA's decision is pending, unless you request and obtain a stay under 43 CFR 4.21. If you request a stay, you have the burden of proof to demonstrate that a stay should be granted under the criteria in 43 CFR 4.21.

If you wish to file a petition pursuant to regulations 43 CFR 4.21 for a stay of the effectiveness of this decision during the time that your appeal is being reviewed by IBLA, the petition for a stay must accompany your notice of appeal. A petition for a stay is required to show sufficient justification based on the standards listed below. Copies of this notice of appeal and petition for a stay must also be submitted to each party named in the decision, to the IBLA, and to the appropriate Office of the Solicitor (see 43 CFR 4.413) at the same time the original documents are filed with this office. If you request a stay, you have the burden of proof to demonstrate that a stay should be granted.

Standards for Obtaining a Stay

Except as otherwise provided by law or other pertinent regulation, a petition for a stay of a decision pending appeal shall show sufficient justification based on the following standards:

1. The relative harm to parties if the stay is granted or denied.
2. The likelihood of the appellant's success on the merits.
3. The likelihood of immediate and irreparable harm if the stay is not granted.
4. Whether the public interest favors granting the stay.

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**Richard E. Adams, Field Manager**  
**Tuscarora Field Office**

**10/18/12**

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**Date**