

BLM News

ELY FIELD OFFICE NO. 07-028

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BLM Seeks Public Input on Bald Mountain Mine – North Operations Area EIS

The Bureau of Land Management (BLM) Ely Field Office is asking for the public's input in preparing an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) for the consolidation and expansion of the Bald Mountain and Mooney Basin Mines in White Pine County, Nev. The two mines would be combined into one plan of operation called the North Operations Area and would include the proposed expansion of existing features.

The BLM has scheduled three public scoping meetings in Nevada, from 6 p.m. to 8 p.m. Dates and locations are: Monday, May 7, BLM Elko Field Office, 3900 East Idaho Street, Elko; Tuesday, May 8, Eureka Opera House, 31 South Main, Eureka; and Wednesday, May 9, BLM Ely Field Office, 702 North Industrial Way, Ely.

The EIS will evaluate the potential impacts that expanding mining operations may have on human, natural and cultural resources, as well as determine what measures would be necessary to mitigate or reduce the impacts.

The expansion would include the extension of existing open pits, expansion of existing rock disposal areas and heap leach facilities, and construction of a truck shop, as well as the continued operation, reclamation, and closure of the existing Bald Mountain and Mooney Basin mining operations, including mine offices, truck shops and warehouse, haul roads, ore stockpiles, access road, diversion ditches, power transmission lines, water wells and pipelines, process solution transmission pipelines and landfill.

Under the proposed action, there would be an additional disturbance of 3,808 acres. The proposed disturbance is on unpatented mining claims on BLM-administered public land. Project access will continue to be via existing public roads.

The BLM previously authorized Barrick Gold Corporation to disturb 3,418 acres within the Bald Mountain Mine Plan boundary and 742 acres within the Mooney Basin Mine Plan boundary for a total of approximately 4,160 acres associated with pits, rock disposal areas, heap leaching, roads, growth media stockpiles, exploration, and underground mining activities. The Mooney Basin Mine and the Bald Mountain Mine have been previously analyzed in environmental assessments from 1983 through 2006 as well as the 1995 Bald Mountain Mine Expansion Project Environmental Impact Statement. The size and scope of the new proposal, as well as length of time since the ROD was signed, requires that a new EIS be developed to analyze the proposed expansion.

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The formal public scoping process concludes at 5 p.m., Friday, May 25, 2007. Interested individuals should address all written comments to the BLM Ely Field Office, HC 33 Box 33500, Ely, Nev., 89301.

For more information, contact Project Manager Lynn Bjorklund, at (775) 289-1893 or at Lynn_Bjorklund@nv.blm.gov.

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