

# Project Description

## North Operations Area EIS

### Barrick Gold Corporation

Barrick Gold Corporation has submitted a proposal to expand and consolidate their existing Bald Mountain and Mooney Basin Mines, which are located approximately 65 air miles northwest of the town of Ely, Nevada. The project (consolidating the existing Bald Mountain Mine N-68193 and Mooney Basin Mine N-46-94-010P into one unified operation called the North Operations Area) would consist of extending existing open pits, expanding existing rock disposal areas and heap leach facilities, construction of a truck shop, and continuing the operation, reclamation, and closure of the existing Bald Mountain Mine and Mooney Basin Mine operations (to include mine offices, truck shops/warehouse, haul roads, ore stockpiles, access roads, diversion ditches, power transmission lines, water wells and pipelines, process solution transmission pipelines and a landfill). This proposed expansion is entirely on unpatented mining claims on BLM-administered public land. Project access would continue to be via existing public roads. The projected life of the existing mine operation would increase approximately 10 years under this proposed project.

Under the proposed action, there would be an additional disturbance of 3,808 acres. 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 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 Proposed North Operations Area would include the 4,160 acres of previously permitted disturbance and 3,808 acres of new disturbance, for a final disturbance footprint of 7,968 acres. The North Operations Area EIS would incorporate existing analysis that includes several environmental assessments and the 1995 Bald Mountain Mine Expansion EIS.

Combining the Mooney Basin Mine and the Bald Mountain Mine into one project area would result in the new North Operations Area project boundary expanding to include an additional 3,738 acres of public land. The original boundaries of the two mines encompassed 12,737 acres of public land. The proposed project boundary for the North Operations Area would encompass 16,475 acres. These project boundaries define an area of potential operations although not all of the acreage within these boundaries would be disturbed.

The purpose of the public scoping process is to determine relevant issues that will influence the scope of the environmental analysis and EIS alternatives. Federal, state, and local agencies, and other individuals or organizations that may be interested in or affected by the BLM's decision on this Plan of Operations amendment are invited to participate in the scoping process. You should submit formal scoping comments by May 25, 2007

Potentially significant direct, indirect, residual, and cumulative impacts from the proposed action will be analyzed in the EIS and will include wildlife, BLM sensitive species, socioeconomics, and cultural resources. Additional issues to be addressed may arise during the scoping process

## **Preliminary Resources Issues**

The BLM will prepare an environmental Impact Statement (EIS) for this proposal. The EIS will address Project –induced impacts related to the following natural and human resources (not necessarily in order of importance):

Aesthetics (visual and noise);  
Air quality;  
Cultural resources  
Native American concerns;  
Environmental justice;  
Geology and minerals;  
Hazardous materials;  
Invasive, nonnative species;  
Land use and access;  
Paleontological resources;  
Range resources;  
Recreation;  
Social and economic values;  
Soils;  
Special status plant and animal species;  
Vegetation resources;  
Water quality and quantity;  
Wetland/Riparian Zones and Waters of the United States (U.S.);  
Wild horses; and  
Wildlife (including Migratory Birds).

## **Staying Informed and Involved**

Information notices will be printed in the local newspapers and released to other news media informing the public of comment periods associated with scoping this Project and the release of the Draft EIS and Final EIS. Date, time, and location of these public meetings/open houses will be published in area newspapers.

The BLM will also develop a mailing list for this Project. Those persons and agencies on the mailing list will be contacted from time to time during the Project to provide status updates on the Project and distribute copies of the EIS. Persons wishing to be included in the mailing list may contact the Project contact shown below.

## **How to Comment**

Persons wishing to comment on this proposal may do so by sending comments to the following address:

Lynn Bjorklund  
Bureau of Land Management, Ely Field Office  
HC 33 Box 33500  
Ely, Nevada 89301  
Tel (774) 289-1893 Email: [Lynn\\_Bjorklund@nv.blm.gov](mailto:Lynn_Bjorklund@nv.blm.gov)

# BLM SCOPING COMMENT SHEET

**Informed decisions are better decisions:** The Bureau of Land Management (BLM) believes that extensive public involvement will serve to improve communication, develop enhanced understanding of different perspectives, and identify solutions to issues and problems. We look forward to hearing from you!

**Where to provide comments:** You can hand this form in at a public scoping meeting or mail it in using the address on reverse. **Comments can also be provided via email to:**  
**Lynn\_Bjorklund@nv.blm.gov.**

Name \_\_\_\_\_ County \_\_\_\_\_

Title \_\_\_\_\_ Organization \_\_\_\_\_

Mailing Address \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_

Email \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_ Meeting Location (if applicable) \_\_\_\_\_

Please check box if you do **not** want your name released when comments are made public.

Please check box if you want to receive the notice of availability of the draft Environmental Impact Statement.

**COMMENT** (use back side if you need additional space or attach additional sheets)

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**To Return via US Mail:** Fold in thirds so BLM address (on reverse) is showing, add postage, tape bottom of fold, and mail. **Please have comments postmarked by May 25, 2007.**

**To provide comments via email:** Please email comments to: Lynn\_Bjorklund@nv.blm.gov **by May 25, 2007.**

Comments, including names, street addresses, e-mail addresses, and phone numbers (if provided) of respondents will be available for public review at the BLM Ely Field Office during regular business hours (8:00 am to 4:30 pm), Monday through Friday, except holidays. Before including your address, phone number, e-mail address, or other personal identifying information in your comment, you should be aware that your entire comment – including your personal identifying information – may be made publicly available at any time. While you can ask us in your comment to withhold your personal identifying information from public review, we cannot guarantee that we will be able to do so.