

FINDING OF NO SIGNIFICANT IMPACT

Adelaide Mine Exploration Project Environmental Assessment DOI-BLM-NV-W010-2011-0003-EA

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Based on the interdisciplinary analysis conducted in the Adelaide Mine Exploration Project Environmental Assessment (EA) DOI-BLM-NV-W010-2011-0003-EA, dated August 2012, for the Proposed Action, a review of the plan of operations and my consideration of the Council of Environmental Quality's (CEQ) criteria for significance (40 CFR 1508.27), both with regard to the context and the intensity of impacts, and with the implementation of all mitigation measures developed through the analysis (refer to Chapter 6 of the EA), I have determined that there are no significant impacts associated with the Proposed Action. Therefore, preparation of an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) pursuant to Section 102(C) of the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) is not required.

The Proposed Action is in conformance with the approved Sonoma-Gerlach Management Framework Plan (1982) and is consistent with other Federal agency, state, and local plans to the maximum extent consistent with Federal law and Federal Land Policy Management Act provisions.

Context

Golden Predator Mines US Inc. (GPMI) submitted a Plan of Operations (POO) for mineral exploration activities in the vicinity of the Adelaide mine. The components of the POO are collectively referred to as the Proposed Action in this document. Exploration activities proposed under this POO involve the following: excavation of an underground exploration tunnel and ventilation shaft to facilitate underground drilling, construction of minor ancillary support facilities, construction of an ore stockpile pad and waste rock disposal area, construction of a storm water evaporation cell, re-establishment and/or maintenance of existing access and haul roads, and additional surface exploration drilling and trenching. Reclamation involves backfilling the underground workings, recontouring the surface disturbances and re-establishing vegetation.

The project is located approximately ten miles south of Golconda, Nevada, in Township 34 North, Range 39 East, sections 13 and 24; and Township 34 North, Range 40 East, sections 18 and 19, Mount Diablo Base and Meridian (Project Area). The Project Area covers approximately 641 acres, of which approximately 28 acres are proposed to be disturbed.

The project is located on public lands administered by the Bureau of Land Management, Winnemucca District Office, Humboldt River Field Office (HRFO), and is expected to continue for approximately 5 years, pending results of the exploration.

Intensity

1) *Impacts that may be both beneficial and adverse.*

The EA considered possible beneficial and adverse impacts of the proposed exploration project. New employment for a proposed work force and use of local retail services, restaurants and lodging are possible throughout the approximate 5 years of the project.

Impacts from the implementation of the Proposed Action that stand out as potentially adverse are in the areas of special status species and wildlife. Mitigation measures to reduce impacts have been developed through the analysis.

Upon project completion, all exploration-related disturbances would be reclaimed and all ancillary facilities removed. Under the Proposed Action, including the environmental protection measures specified in the proposed action (EA section 2.1.6) there are not expected to be adverse impacts to any of the affected resources due to the presence of these features.

2) *The degree to which the proposed action affects public health or safety.*

Exploration activities are not expected to cause adverse public health effects. Safety requirements would be required by Mine Safety and Health Administration (MSHA) and the Nevada Industrial Relations Division of Mine Safety. No adverse public health or safety effects are expected from use of the reclaimed areas.

3) *Unique characteristics of the geographic area such as proximity to historic or cultural resources, park lands, prime farmlands, wetlands, wild and scenic rivers, or ecologically critical areas.*

The project would not affect park lands, prime farmland, wetlands, wild and scenic rivers or ecologically critical areas. All areas to be disturbed by project-related activities have been inventoried and evaluated for historic and/or cultural resources.

4) *The degree to which the effects on the quality of the human environment are likely to be highly controversial.*

Mineral exploration activities are not new to Nevada. Such activities are prone to generating public comment through scoping and the public comment period on the preliminary EA. Issues and concerns brought forward through scoping were taken into consideration for analysis in preparing the preliminary EA. Concerns raised on the preliminary EA have been addressed in the final EA and in the decision making process.

5) *The degree to which the possible effects on the quality of the environment are likely to be highly uncertain or involve unique or unknown risks.*

The exploration techniques involved with the Proposed Action are all common methods employed in the mining industry and are not expected to produce uncertain or unique risks.

6) *The degree to which the action may establish a precedent for future actions with significant effects or represents a decision in principle about a future consideration.*

Implementation of the Proposed Action would not set any known precedents or establish any principles for future decisions. The proposed exploration activities are commonly applied throughout the industry.

7) *Whether the action is related to other actions with individually insignificant but cumulatively significant impacts.*

Cumulative effects were analyzed for the potential effects on cultural resources; invasive, non-native species; migratory birds; special status species; and wildlife resources. Detailed analyses of these areas were done to assess the potential cumulative impacts. Based on the environmental assessment and implementation of the recommended mitigation measures, no significant cumulative impacts are expected. When evaluated together with other past, present or reasonable foreseeable activities in the area, the authorized activity does not result in cumulatively significant impacts at the local or landscape scale.

8) *The degree to which the action may adversely affect districts, sites, highways, structures, or objects listed in or eligible for listing in the NRHP or may cause loss or destruction of significant scientific, cultural, or historic resources.*

The proposed action would have no adverse effects to cultural or historic resources.

9) *The degree to which the action may adversely affect an endangered or threatened species or its habitat that has been determined to be critical under ESA of 1973.*

No species listed as threatened or endangered under the Endangered Species Act occur within the project area, nor are any impacted by the proposal.

The greater sage-grouse (*Centrocercus urophasianus*) is a candidate species for listing under the federal Endangered Species Act (ESA), and impacts to sage-grouse were analyzed in this EA. With the implementation of the mitigation measures developed in the analysis, these impacts would be reduced.

10) *Whether the action threatens a violation of Federal, State, or local law or requirements imposed for the protection of the environment.*

No threats of violation were identified in the preparation of the EA and any authorization regarding this proposed project would stipulate that the operator must obtain all necessary approvals from other federal, state, and local agencies before proceeding.



Michael Truden
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8-24-2012

Date