

An explanation of the ratings assigned to draft environmental impact statements (EISs) was published in FR dated April 14, 1996 (60 FR 19047).

Draft EISs

ERP No. D-AFS-J65243-MT Rating LO, Castle Mountains Allotment Management Plan, Implementation, Lewis and Clark National Forest, Musselshell and King Hill Ranger Districts, White Sulphur Springs, Meagher County, MT.

Summary: EPA expressed lack of objections and recommended that additional information including improved descriptions of State Water Quality Standards and linkages to State lists of water quality limited streams be included in the FEIS.

ERP No. D-BLM-K67032-NV Rating EO2, Round Mountain Mine Mill and Tailings Facility, Construction and Operation for the Smoke Valley Operation, Plan of Operations Amendment Approval, Nye County, NV.

Summary: EPA expressed environmental objections to the proposed project because it could result in significant adverse cumulative impacts to waterfowl attracted to the pit lake which could exceed water quality standards for wildlife. We also recommended additional information in the Final Environmental Impact Statement (FEIS) regarding mitigation measures; impacts to soil, vegetation, wildlife, livestock, and springs and seeps; and monitoring.

ERP No. D-SFW-G64012-00 Rating LO, Mexican Wolf (*Canis lupus baileyi*) Reintroduction within the Historic Range, Implementation, in the Southwestern United States, Catron, Dona Ana, Grant and Lincoln Counties, NM and Apache and Greenlee Counties, AZ.

Summary: EPA had no objections to the proposed action and concurs with the Fish and Wildlife Service's selection of Alternative A as the environmentally preferred alternative.

Final EISs

ERP No. F-NPS-K61128-CA Santa Rosa Island Development Concept Plan, Implementation and Funding, Channel Islands National Park, Santa Barbara County, CA.

Summary: EPA requested that the NEPA Record of Decision contain a commitment to implement the water quality protection measures contained in the FEIS.

Dated: March 18, 1996.

William D. Dickerson,
Director, NEPA Compliance Division, Office of Federal Activities.

[FR Doc. 96-7003 Filed 3-21-96; 8:45 am]

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[ER-FRL-5414-5]

Intent To Prepare a Supplemental Environmental Impact Statement (SEIS) for the Alaska-Juneau (AJ) Mine Project, Juneau, AK

AGENCY: Environmental Protection Agency (EPA).

ACTION: Notice of intent to prepare an SEIS.

SUMMARY: In accordance with Section 511(c)(1) of the Clean Water Act (CWA) and Section 102(2)(c) of the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) EPA has identified a need to prepare an SEIS and publishes this Notice of Intent in accordance with 40 CFR 1501.7.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION OR TO SEND

SCOPING COMMENTS: William Riley, Office of Water Mining Coordinator OW-135, EPA, 1200 Sixth Avenue, Seattle, WA 98101, phone (206) 553-1412. Local contact is Steve Torok, EPA's Juneau office, phone (907) 586-7619.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: The proposed AJ Mine Project is subject to EPA authorization through CWA Section 402, including the National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) permit program. The project is a new source (40 CFR 122.2 and 122.29), and under CWA Section 511(c)(1) is subject to NEPA prior to the NPDES permit decision (40 CFR Part 6, Subpart F). The AJ Mine is an underground gold mine, located south of Juneau, Alaska, which closed in 1944. In 1988, Echo Bay, Alaska (Echo Bay) filed necessary permit applications to reopen the mine and an EIS was completed by the Bureau of Land Management in 1992. During the permitting phase, EPA completed a technical assistance report which concluded there was a high potential for significant degradation of the waters of the United States. Echo Bay proposed modifications to address concerns raised and filed new permit applications. EPA also commenced a rule-making that would allow consideration of submarine tailings disposal. New field studies to characterize marine and other resources are ongoing.

Project Description—The reopened AJ Mine would produce 15,000 tons per day of ore, and 80 million tons during the 13-year project life. Gold recovery

would be by means of gravity separation and froth flotation processes in an underground mill. No cyanide would be used. Surface facilities would be located at the Rock Dump area south of Juneau. The tailings would be pumped through a pipeline in Gastineau Channel for discharge at depth in Stephens Passage. Power would be supplied by diesel-gas turbine generators. Staffing is estimated at 400 personnel.

Project alternatives currently considered include: (1) Douglas Island Dry Tailings—the tailings would be piped across Gastineau Channel, dewatered and conveyed to a dry tailings disposal area on Douglas Island, (2) Sheep Creek Subaqueous Tailings—similar to the proposed action in the 1992 FEIS except the impoundment would hold less tailings, no cyanide would be used, and the flows of Sheep Creek would be partially diverted around the impoundment, (3) Powerline Gulch Subaqueous Tailings—similar to an option in the 1992 FEIS, except the impoundment would hold less tailings, no cyanide would be used, and surface runoff would be diverted around the impoundment, (4) Mine Backfill and Douglas Island Dry Tailings—combining backfilling of cemented tailings with surface disposal at a reduced dry tailings site on Douglas Island, (5) Submarine Tailings Disposal Upland Pipeline—similar to the proposal, except the tailings pipeline would follow an upland route along Gastineau Channel and to Stephens Passage for discharge.

SCOPING MEETING DATE AND COMMENT DEADLINE: On April 17, 1996, EPA will host an SEIS scoping open house at Centennial Hall in Juneau from 3:00 to 9:00 p.m. Scoping comments from the public will be welcomed that day, or they may be submitted to EPA in writing. The scoping period comment deadline is April 30, 1996.

ESTIMATED DATE OF DRAFT SEIS RELEASE: September, 1996.

Dated: March 20, 1996.

Richard E. Sanderson,

Director, Office of Federal Activities.

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