

The current exploration project created approximately 105 acres of surface disturbance, of which 95 acres occur on public land and 10 acres occur on private land. About 75 percent of the existing facilities are located on previously disturbed ground within an existing open-pit mine. The proposed transition from an exploration project to a mining operation would disturb approximately 117 acres; an additional 106 acres of public land and an additional 11 acres of private land. If approved, the project total would be approximately 222 acres of surface disturbance.

The proposed project consists of constructing a new production shaft, improving existing roads, building an electrical power transmission line to the mine site, upgrading ancillary facilities, and continuing both surface and underground exploration. The proposed project would augment the existing mine water management facilities that currently include water treatment facilities and rapid infiltration basins by adding underground dewatering wells and obtaining a National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System permit to authorize discharge of groundwater to Little Antelope Creek. The Hollister Project would haul the mined ore using highway-legal trucks to existing off-site milling facilities via existing roads that would be improved as needed; no on-site processing facilities are proposed.

The Notice of Intent to prepare an EIS was published in the **Federal Register** on April 19, 2010. Scoping meetings and mailings were conducted to solicit public input to identify issues to be analyzed. The BLM contacted tribal governments with interest in this project to learn their issues and concerns and to conduct government-to-government consultation. Cooperating agencies include the Nevada Division of Wildlife and the Elko County Board of Commissioners.

During the public scoping period, the BLM received a total of 46 written comment submittals containing approximately 288 individual items. Key issues identified by individuals, groups, and governmental entities include: Potential impacts to cultural resources and the traditional cultural properties; access; noise; discharge to surface water, hydrology, and seeps and springs resulting from the groundwater drawdown; special status species, including snails and sage-grouse; potentially acid-generating waste-rock material; air quality; and support for the project. The scoping comments were used to guide the development of the alternatives and analysis, and address issues and concerns raised in regards to

the proposed project. The Draft EIS addresses the direct, indirect, and cumulative environmental impacts of the proposed action, which is approval of the project as proposed by Rodeo Creek Gold, and alternatives.

Four alternatives, in addition to the proposed action, are analyzed in the Draft EIS. These alternatives include the No Action Alternative, Mud Springs Road Transmission Line Alternative, Mud Springs Waste Rock Storage Facility Alternative, and the Backfill Alternative. The project would continue as it is currently permitted under the No Action Alternative. The Mud Springs Road Transmission Line Alternative describes an alternative north and south route for the proposed electric transmission line. The Mud Springs Waste Rock Storage Facility Alternative describes an alternate location for a new waste rock storage facility. The Backfill Alternative describes an alternative means of closure for the proposed shafts, which is to completely backfill the shaft with rock and dirt material.

Before including your address, phone number, email 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.

Authority: 40 CFR 1506.6, 40 CFR 1506.10.

Michael Herder,

District Manager, Elko District Office.

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DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR

Bureau of Land Management

[LLNMP0000 L13110000.XH0000]

Notice of Public Meeting, Pecos District Resource Advisory Council Meeting, New Mexico

AGENCY: Bureau of Land Management, Interior.

ACTION: Notice of Public Meeting.

SUMMARY: In accordance with the Federal Land Policy and Management Act and the Federal Advisory Committee Act of 1972, the U.S. Department of the Interior, Bureau of Land Management (BLM), Pecos District Resource Advisory Council (RAC), will meet as indicated below.

DATES: The meeting will be held on July 18, 2012, from 9 a.m.–4 p.m.

ADDRESSES: The meeting will be at the Bureau of Land Management Ft. Stanton Snowy River Cave National Conservation Area “Bunkhouse”, located at 1534 NM State Road 220, 1.75 miles from the junction of US Highway 380 and NM State Road 220. The public may send written comments to the RAC, 2909 W. 2nd Street, 88201.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:

Betty Hicks, Pecos District, Bureau of Land Management, 2909 W. 2nd Street, Roswell, NM 88201, 575-627-0242. Persons who use a telecommunications device for the deaf (TDD) may call the Federal Information Relay Service (FIRS) at 1-800-877-8229 to contact the above individual during normal business hours. The FIRS is available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, to leave a message or question with the above individual. You will receive a reply during normal business hours.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: The 10-member RAC advises the Secretary of Interior, through the Bureau of Land Management, on a variety of planning and management issues associated with public land management in New Mexico. Planned agenda items include: A briefing on Ft. Stanton Snowy River Cave National Conservation Area; cave management on BLM managed lands; White Nose syndrome; cave/carst management in oil and gas development areas; partnerships and vegetation management, a tour for RAC members of the Fort Stanton/Lincoln NM area and a demonstration of resistivity to locate subterranean features.

A half-hour public comment period during which the public may address the Council is scheduled to begin at 11:30 a.m. All RAC meetings are open to the public. Depending on the number of individuals wishing to comment and time available, the time for individual oral comments may be limited.

Douglas J. Burger,

District Manager.

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