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NV State Clearinghouse
209 E. Musser St., Rm 20
Carson City, NV 89710

SCOPING Buckskin Mountain Abandoned Mine Closures 2012

The Santa Rosa District Ranger of the Humboldt-Toiyabe National Forest intends to construct 15 permanent closures of dangerous abandoned mine workings in the vicinity of Buckskin Mountain, Santa Rosa District, Nevada for the following reasons:

1. Protect the public from unstable, open abandoned mine features.
2. Conserve bat habitat
3. Preserve the historic features in and around the mines.

The general location of these features is in T39N R45E, section 11, MDM.

Four principal types of closures are proposed to secure abandoned mine openings. Closures are intended to be more robust and long-term than the temporary barbed-wire and t-post fences currently present. These consist of steel gates and grates, gates built within a culvert of varying diameter and secured with polyurethane foam (PUF), polyurethane foam plugs emplaced on a false bottom or bulkhead and capped with fill material, and earthen backfills. A particular closure option will be selected depending on the:

- presence or absence of bat habitat within a working,
- the likelihood of adversely affecting an important cultural resource during construction,
- the stability of rock or fill comprising the opening,
- whether the opening tapers or expands at depth (horizontally or vertically) and
- the presence of suitable backfill (devoid of cultural artifacts, proximal to the opening and accessible by heavy equipment without cross-country travel).

The 15 separate features identified at the site include five vertical features (shafts, declines or inclined shafts), six stope openings (oddly shaped horizontal openings leading into a larger void), two adits (a horizontal tunnel without an exit) and two horizontal pits. These workings are concentrated in four distinct areas across the property.

The underground workings are driven through a series of horizontally-bedded volcanic rocks and hot spring-related sedimentary beds. The flat lying nature of these bedded rocks poses serious stability issues around the portals and collars of the various openings, mainly because the ceiling rock is highly fractured and prone to failure. Evidence of this condition is seen in the concentrations of large boulders that have accumulated on the floor beneath these openings and the large fractures and cracks present in the overhanging ceiling rocks left in place. This ceiling



instability coupled with the odd configuration of several of the workings limits the closure options available at 10 of the 15 workings due to the high risk to worker safety.

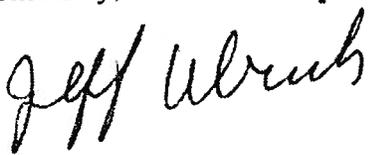
The Forest Service has contacted and gained concurrence for the project from the State of Nevada Division of Mining, the Nevada Department of Wildlife, the State Historic Preservation Officer and the mining claimant of record.

This action may be categorically excluded from further analysis and documentation in an environmental impact statement (EIS) or environmental assessment (EA), as described in FSH 1909.15 Section 31.2 Category 8, short-term (one year or less) mineral, energy, or geophysical investigations and their incidental support activities that may require cross-country travel by vehicles and equipment, construction of less than one mile of low standard road, or use and minor repair of existing roads." Specifically, the proposed action fits within the following example cited for Category 8: "approving interim and final site restoration measures." No extraordinary circumstances have been identified that require mitigation during implementation of this project.

Your written comments, concerns, and suggestions should be sent to Ken Maas, project coordinator at 1200 Franklin Way, Sparks, NV 89431, or faxed to the following number: (775-355-5399), or emailed to kmaas@fs.fed.us and must include the author's name and address. Please put the name of this project "Buckskin Mountain Abandoned Mine Closures 2012" on your comments. If you have specific questions or concerns you may contact Mr. Maas directly at 775 352-1223 or Boyd Hatch at 775 623-5025.

The Forest Service requests your comments on this project by March 31, 2012. We thank you for your interest in the management of your national forests and look forward to hearing from you.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Jeff Ulrich". The signature is written in a cursive, slightly slanted style.

JEFF ULRICH
District Ranger