

**Worksheet**  
**Determination of NEPA Adequacy (DNA)**  
**U.S. Department of the Interior**  
**Bureau of Land Management**

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**FIELD OFFICE:** Sierra Front Field Office

**NEPA NUMBER:** DOI-BLM-NV-C020-2012-0041-DNA

**CASEFILE PROJECT NUMBER:** N-85589

**PROPOSED ACTION TITLE/TYPE:** TNT Ventures Inc. Big Canyon Project, Plan of Operations Amendment

**LOCATION/LEGAL DESCRIPTION:** Sections 18 and 19, Township 14 North, Range 25 East, Mount Diablo Base and Meridian (MDB&M).

**APPLICANT:** TNT Ventures, Inc.

**A. Description of the Proposed Action and any applicable mitigation measures**

TNT Ventures, Inc. (TNT) is submitting Revision #1 to the Big Canyon Project Plan of Operations N-85589. The existing Environmental Assessment (EA), serialized DOI-BLM-NV-C020-2010-0003, was completed and the Decision Record and Finding of No Significant Impact were signed on January 22, 2010. TNT has redefined the total disturbance area since the approval of the existing Plan of Operations (Plan). With the subject Plan of Operations Amendment (POA) TNT will expand from 4.2 acres to 18.8 acres. Implementation would occur in July of 2012 and reclamation is anticipated in October of 2016.

**B. Land Use Plan (LUP) Conformance**

LUP Name: CCFO Consolidated Resource Management Plan (CRMP).  
Date Approved: 5/09/2001.

The Proposed Action (POA) is shown in MIN-1 of the CRMP to be in an area open to mineral entry. The following Standard Operating Procedures would apply to locatable minerals operations on lands open to locations within the Carson City District according to the CRMP:

- Pursuant to the mining laws, BLM lands are available for mineral entry, location, exploration, and operations which will not cause undue or unnecessary degradation of the public lands.
- Where cumulative surface disturbance of a project area is greater than five acres, a Plan of Operations and a Reclamation Plan are required of the operator. These plans will be reviewed in conjunction with the Nevada Division of Environmental Protection, Bureau of Reclamation and Regulation to ensure that all State permits are obtained and all state

regulations are followed. Plans of Operation may be revised to ensure that federal and State regulations are complied with to prevent undue or unnecessary degradation.

- Plans of Operation will require adequate bonding to guarantee that reclamation will be accomplished at mine closure or project completion.
- Reclamation is required of all levels of activity so as not to cause undue and unnecessary degradation.
- All mineral exploration roads on cut and fill slopes will be reclaimed by recontouring unless they are within or part of a pre-1981 mining disturbance.
- All levels of activity, casual use, notice, or plan of operation, will comply with federal and State regulations regarding air quality, water quality, solid wastes, wildlife and its habitat, archaeological and paleontological resources.

**C. Identify applicable National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) documents and other related documents that cover the Proposed Action.**

Environmental Assessment  
DOI-BLM-NV-C020-2010-0003-EA

TNT VENTURES INC.  
BIG CANYON PROJECT  
LYON COUNTY, NEVADA

A Class III cultural resources inventory, CRR 3-2500, *A Class III Cultural Resources Inventory of the TNT Venture (Big Canyon) Placer Project Plan of Operation, Lyon County, Nevada* (Kautz 2010), was performed to evaluate the extent and nature of cultural resources in the vicinity of the Proposed Action.

**D. NEPA Adequacy Criteria**

**1. Is the new proposed action a feature of, or essentially similar to, an alternative analyzed in the existing NEPA document(s)? Is the project within the same analysis area, or if the project location is different, are the geographic and resource conditions sufficiently similar to those analyzed in the existing NEPA document(s)? If there are differences, can you explain why they are not substantial?**

Yes. The new Proposed Action (POA) involves mining for locatable minerals which is a feature of the existing EA. The POA proposes disturbance within the same analysis area (project area). The amount of disturbance associated with the POA would be larger than previously projected in the initial plan. The POA proposes to expand disturbance from 4.2 acres to 18.80 acres, yet would still remain within the project area analyzed in the existing EA.

**2. Is the range of alternatives analyzed in the existing NEPA document(s) appropriate with respect to the new proposed action, given current environmental concerns, interests, and resource values?**

Yes. The POA constitutes a feature of the existing EA/FONSI and Decision Record that was prepared and approved January of 2010, the POA lies within the same project area and the area of disturbance has increased. Hence, the range of alternatives analyzed in the existing NEPA document would still be valid.

**3. Is the existing analysis valid in light of any new information or circumstances (such as, range- land health standard assessment, recent endangered species listings, and updated lists of BLM-sensitive species)? Can you reasonably conclude that new information and new circumstances would not substantially change the analysis of the new proposed action?**

Yes. The existing analysis is valid due to the fact that the POA is associated with an EA/FONSI and Decision Record that was prepared and authorized. The proposed POA constitutes a feature of the approved action within the previously analyzed project area and involves expanded disturbance. No new information or circumstances have arisen from a resource management prospective within the last year and a half since the original NEPA document was completed and it was determined that the impacts associated with the proposed action would be insubstantial. Hence, the POA would not require a revision of the existing EA. The project area is not within preliminary priority or general habitat for the greater or bi-state sage-grouse, candidates for listing under the Endangered Species Act.

**4. Are the direct, indirect, and cumulative effects that would result from implementation of the new proposed action similar (both quantitatively and qualitatively) to those analyzed in the existing NEPA document?**

Yes. The POA proposes to disturb more acreage but does not involve any action outside of the previously analyzed project area; therefore, the direct, indirect, and cumulative impacts would be similar. Cultural resources contributing to National Register of Historic Places eligibility would be avoided by the proposed amendment. Through adherence to the avoidance measures and stipulations found in the Plan Approval Letter, the project would have no adverse effects to historic properties under Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966, as amended. Therefore, the direct, indirect, and cumulative effects are similar to those analyzed in the existing NEPA document.

**5. Are the public involvement and interagency review associated with existing NEPA document(s) adequate for the current proposed action?**

Yes. The POA is a feature of the proposed action approved in the existing EA, and the public involvement and interagency review associated with the existing EA/FONSI employed appropriate public and agency reviews. Due to the remote location of the initially proposed action, no public scoping or public comment was sought in association with the existing EA. The Nevada Department of Environmental Protection (NDEP) was a coordinating agency in association with preparation of the existing EA and the determination of completeness for the

proposed amendment. Native American consultation has been ongoing since the exiting EA/FONSI was completed. No new Native American concerns in addition to those already identified in the existing EA have been identified.

**E. Persons/Agencies/BLM Staff Consulted**

<u>Name</u>	<u>Title</u>	<u>Resource/Agency Represented</u>
Richard Gantt	Environmental Specialist	NDEP
Dan Erbes	Geologist	BLM
Joel Hartmann	Geologist	BLM
Rachel Crews <i>EC</i>	Archeologist	BLM
Brian Buttazoni	Planning & Environmental Coordinator	BLM

Note: Refer to the original EA for a complete list of the team members participating in the preparation of the original environmental analysis.

**Conclusion**

Based on the review documented above, I conclude that this proposal conforms to the applicable land use plan and that the NEPA documentation fully covers the proposed action and constitutes BLM's compliance with the requirements of the NEPA.

  
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Signature of Project Lead

  
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Signature of NEPA Coordinator

  
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Signature of Authorized Officer

Date: 7-6-12

Note: The signed Conclusion on this Worksheet is part of an interim step in the BLM's internal decision process and does not constitute an appealable decision. However, the Decision based on this DNA is subject to protest or appeal under 43 CFR Part 4 and the program-specific regulations (43 CFR 3809).