

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT
CATEGORICAL EXCLUSION DOCUMENTATION
and
DECISION RECORD

ORIGINATING OFFICE: Pocatello Field Office, Idaho Falls District

PROPOSED ACTION: Closure of abandoned mine sites

NEPA NUMBER: DOI-BLM-ID-I020-2013-0001-CX

CASEFILE NUMBER(S): NA

DESCRIPTION OF PROPOSED ACTION:

The BLM Pocatello Field Office proposes to remediate seven abandoned mine sites and related features. Five sites occur approximately 7 miles southeast of Montpelier, Bear Lake County, Idaho within the Sheep Creek Hills area (see figure 1). Two sites occur approximately 1 mile east of Pocatello, Bannock County, Idaho within the Chinese Peak area (see figure 2). Together the sites contain numerous physical safety hazards which include open adits and shafts with unstable walls and ceilings. The sites occur in areas easily accessible to the public for recreational and other purposes on lands administered by the Bureau of Land Management. The locations of the sites as well as proposed closure methods are as follows:

- 1) Bonanza Shaft
Location: T. 14 S., R. 45 E., Section 10, NWNE
Features/Proposed Closure Method:
Shaft 1 (S1) will be closed by installing a bat grate culvert (BGC) and securing the shaft collar with both Poly Urethane Foam (PUF) and waste rock backfill. Closure will require the use of heavy equipment such as an excavator or backhoe.
Adit 1 (A1) will be closed by installing a BGC and securing the adit portal with waste rock backfill. Closure will require the use of heavy equipment such as an excavator or backhoe.

- 2) Duke Mine
Location: T. 14 S., R. 45 E., Section 10, SWNE
Features/Proposed Closure Method:
Shaft 1 (S1) will be closed by installing a BGC and securing the shaft collar with both PUF and waste rock backfill. Closure will require the use of heavy equipment such as an excavator or backhoe.
Shaft 2 (S2) will be entirely backfilled utilizing waste rock material. Closure will require the use of heavy equipment such as an excavator or backhoe.

- 3) North of Oregon Trail
Location: T. 13 S., R. 45 E., Section 27, SWNE
Features/Proposed Closure Method:
Shaft 1 (S1) will be closed by securing the shaft collar with PUF. The PUF and shaft collar will be covered with waste rock material to contour with pre-existing waste rock pile. No heavy equipment is required for the site.
- 4) Bonneville Group
Location: T. 13 S., R. 45 E., Section 27, NWNE
Features/Proposed Closure Method:
Site consists of four shafts (S1, S2, S3, and S4) and two adits (A1 and A2) which will be closed by backfilling with waste rock material. Closure will require the use of heavy equipment such as an excavator or backhoe.
- 5) North of Bonneville Group
Location: T. 13 S., R. 45 E., Section 22, NWSE
Features/Proposed Closure Method:
Site consists of two shafts (S1 and S2) which will be closed by entirely backfilling the shafts with waste rock material to contour with pre-existing waste rock pile. Closure will require the use of heavy equipment such as an excavator or backhoe.
- 6) Fort Hall District #136
Location: T. 7 S., R. 35 E., Section 4, Lot 4
Features/Proposed Closure Method:
Shaft 1 (S1) will be closed by securing the shaft collar with PUF. The PUF and shaft collar will be covered with waste rock material to contour with pre-existing waste rock pile. No heavy equipment is required for the site.
- 7) Fort Hall District #137
Location: T. 6 S., R. 35 E., Section 4, NWNW
Features/Proposed Closure Method:
Adit 1 (A1) will be closed by installing a BGC and securing the adit portal with waste rock backfill. Closure will require the use of heavy equipment such as an excavator or backhoe.
Adits 2 and 4 will be closed by securing the portal adit with PUF and waste rock backfill.
Adit 3 (A3) contains a grate that has been damaged. Closure involves replacing the grate with a BGC and securing the adit portal with waste rock backfill. Closure will require the use of heavy equipment such as an excavator or backhoe.

Funding for the closures was obtained by the Pocatello Field Office to complete closures during the 2013 budget year. The sites have been evaluated by the BLM Idaho Mine Closure Team to determine the appropriate closure method (bat grate culvert, polyurethane foam plug, backfill, etc.). Proposed closure methods have also been coordinated with the Southeast Region of the Idaho Department of Fish and Game to determine if bats utilize the features as habitat. Sites likely utilized by bats will be closed with bat friendly closures. Depending on site conditions upon remediation, proposed closure designs may be modified.

CONSULTATION AND COORDINATION:

The Pocatello Field Office will maintain a publicly available record of this Categorical Exclusion (CX) Documentation. Following the decision, notice to the public will be posted in Idaho BLM's NEPA database which is accessed via Idaho BLM's public website.

Proposed closure designs for the abandoned mine sites have been determined by the BLM Idaho Mine Closure Team with consultation from the Southeast Region of the Idaho Department of Fish and Game.

FINDING AND RECOMMENDATION:

Certain actions have been determined to be excluded, by category, from documentation requirements of NEPA. The authority for this categorical exclusion is found in the Departmental Manual at BLM 516 DM 11.9 J (8): *Installation of minor devices to protect human life (e.g. grates across mines)*. A list of certain exceptions to categorical exclusions is found in the Departmental Manual at DOI 516 DM 2, Appendix 2. A categorical exclusion cannot be used for any action for which any of these exceptions apply.

The action described in categorical exclusion DOI-BLM-ID-I020-2013-0001-CX has been reviewed to determine that none of the extraordinary circumstances listed below pertain to the proposed action.

<u>DM #</u>	<u>Extraordinary Circumstance</u>
2.1	Have significant impacts on public health or safety
2.2	Have significant impacts on such natural resources and unique geographic characteristics as historic or cultural resources; park, recreation or refuge lands; wilderness areas; wild or scenic rivers; national natural landmarks; sole or principal drinking water aquifers; prime farmlands; wetlands (Executive Order 11990); floodplains (Executive Order 11988); national monuments; migratory birds; and other ecologically significant or critical areas.
2.3	Have highly controversial environmental effects or involve unresolved conflicts concerning alternative uses of available resources [NEPA section 102(2)(E)].
2.4	Have highly uncertain and potentially significant environmental effects or involve unique or unknown environmental risks.
2.5	Establish a precedent for future action or represent a decision in principle about future actions with potentially significant environmental effects.
2.6	Have a direct relationship to other actions with individually insignificant but cumulatively significant environmental effects.
2.7	Have significant impacts on properties listed or eligible for listing on the National Register of Historic Places as determined by either the bureau or office.

- 2.8 Have significant impacts on species listed or proposed to be listed on the List of Endangered or Threatened Species, or have significant impacts on designated critical habitat for these species.
- 2.9 Violate a Federal law, or a State, local, or tribal law or requirement imposed for the protection of the environment.
- 2.10 Have a disproportionately high and adverse effect on low income or minority populations (Executive Order 12898).
- 2.11 Limit access to and ceremonial use of Indian sacred sites on Federal lands by Indian religious practitioners or significantly adversely affect the physical integrity of such sacred sites (Executive Order 13007).
- 2.12 Contribute to the introduction, continued existence, or spread of noxious weeds or non-native invasive species known to occur in the area or actions that may promote the introduction, growth, or expansion of the range of such species (Federal Noxious Weed Control Act and Executive Order 13112).

DECISION RECORD AND RATIONALE:

The decision to be made is whether or not the described mine closure procedures are within the intent of the CX described in BLM 516 DM 11.9 J (8) and no extraordinary circumstances exist that would require further NEPA analysis.

The Proposed Action is consistent with the Abandoned Mine Lands Program Policy (Manual Section 3720). An objective of the policy is to protect public safety and reduce liabilities by eliminating or reducing hazards posed by abandoned mines. The location of the abandoned mine sites are located in areas utilized for outdoor recreation and are readily accessible to the curious public.

The proposed action clearly attempts to achieve the AML program objective without triggering any of the listed extraordinary circumstances and therefore may be handled as a CX without further NEPA analysis.

LAND USE PLAN CONFORMANCE:

The proposed action is in conformance with the following General management direction in the Pocatello Resource Management Plan (April 2012), approved July 10, 2012, by the Idaho BLM State Director:

Goal GE-1. Continuously update resource and use information/data in order to proactively address changing needs and or conditions (pg. ARMP-14).

Objective GE-1.1. Inventories and surveys documenting the condition and extent of resources/uses are given sufficient emphasis to monitor changes in conditions, provide “measurements” of ecosystem health or baseline data/information, and enable specialists to respond to changes when needed (pg. ARMP-14).

Action GE-1.1.2. Information gained through inventory, survey and monitoring programs will be used in making management decisions (pg. ARMP-14).

Action GE-1.1.3. Undertake proactive management of public land activities, including, but not limited to, mitigating potential adverse effects (pg. ARMP-14).

APPEALS INFORMATION:

Appeals information can be found at 43 CFR 4.410.

IMPLEMENTATION:

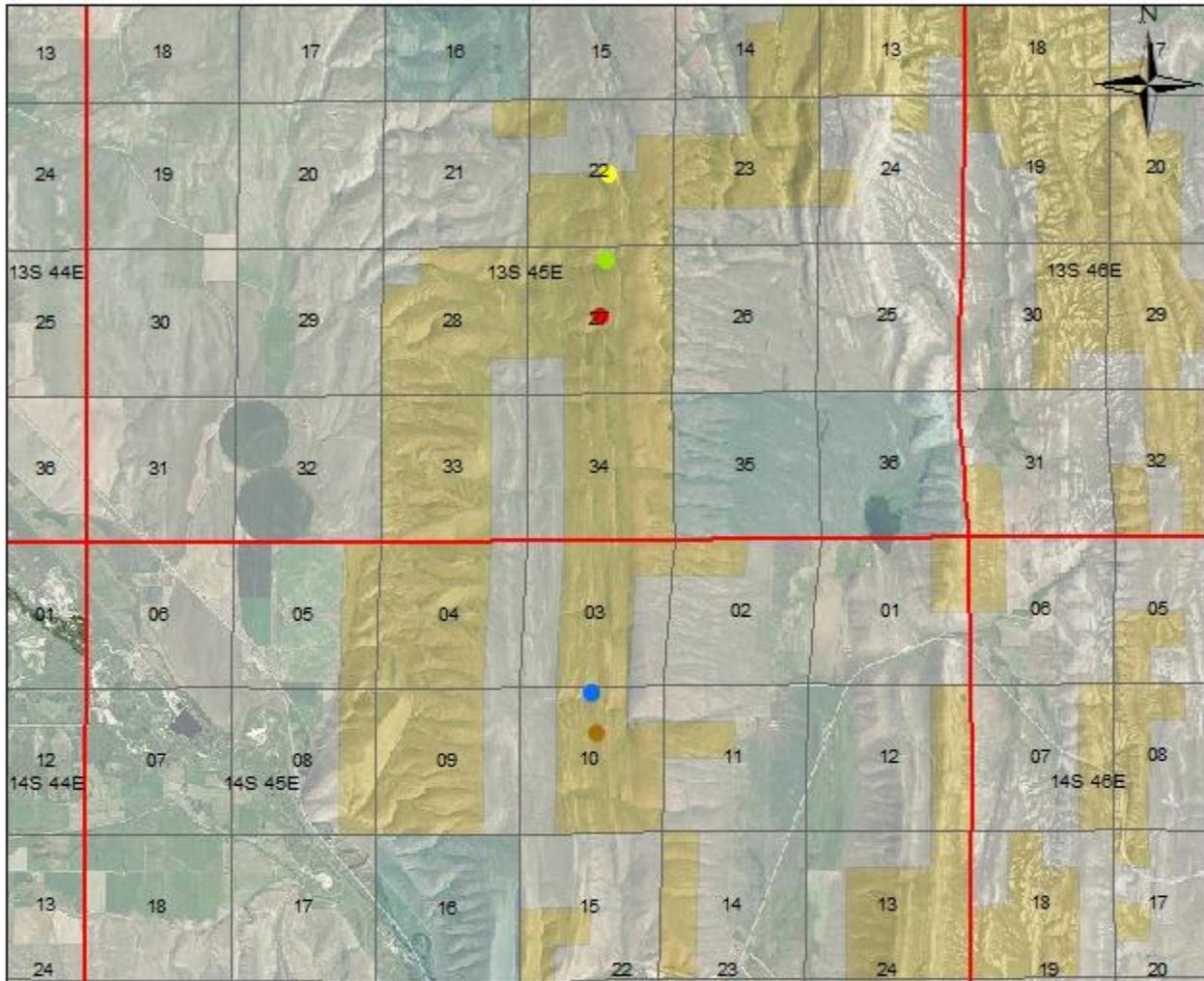
I have reviewed the plan conformance statement and have determined that the proposed action is in conformance with the approved land use plan. The activities meet the category of actions noted above and I have determined that none of the exceptions apply; therefore no further environmental documentation is required.

<u>/s/ Bryce Anderson</u>	<u>11/13/2012</u>
Preparer	Date

<u>/s/ Blaine Newman</u>	<u>11/13/2012</u>
NEPA Reviewer	Date

<u>/s/ David A. Pacioretty</u>	<u>11/13/2012</u>
Field Manager	Date

**Figure 1. Proposed Abandoned Mine Closures
Within Bear Lake County, Idaho**



0 1.25 2.5 Miles



Abandoned Mine Sites

- North of Oregon Trail
- North of Bonneville Group
- Bonneville Group
- Bonanza Shaft
- Duke Mine

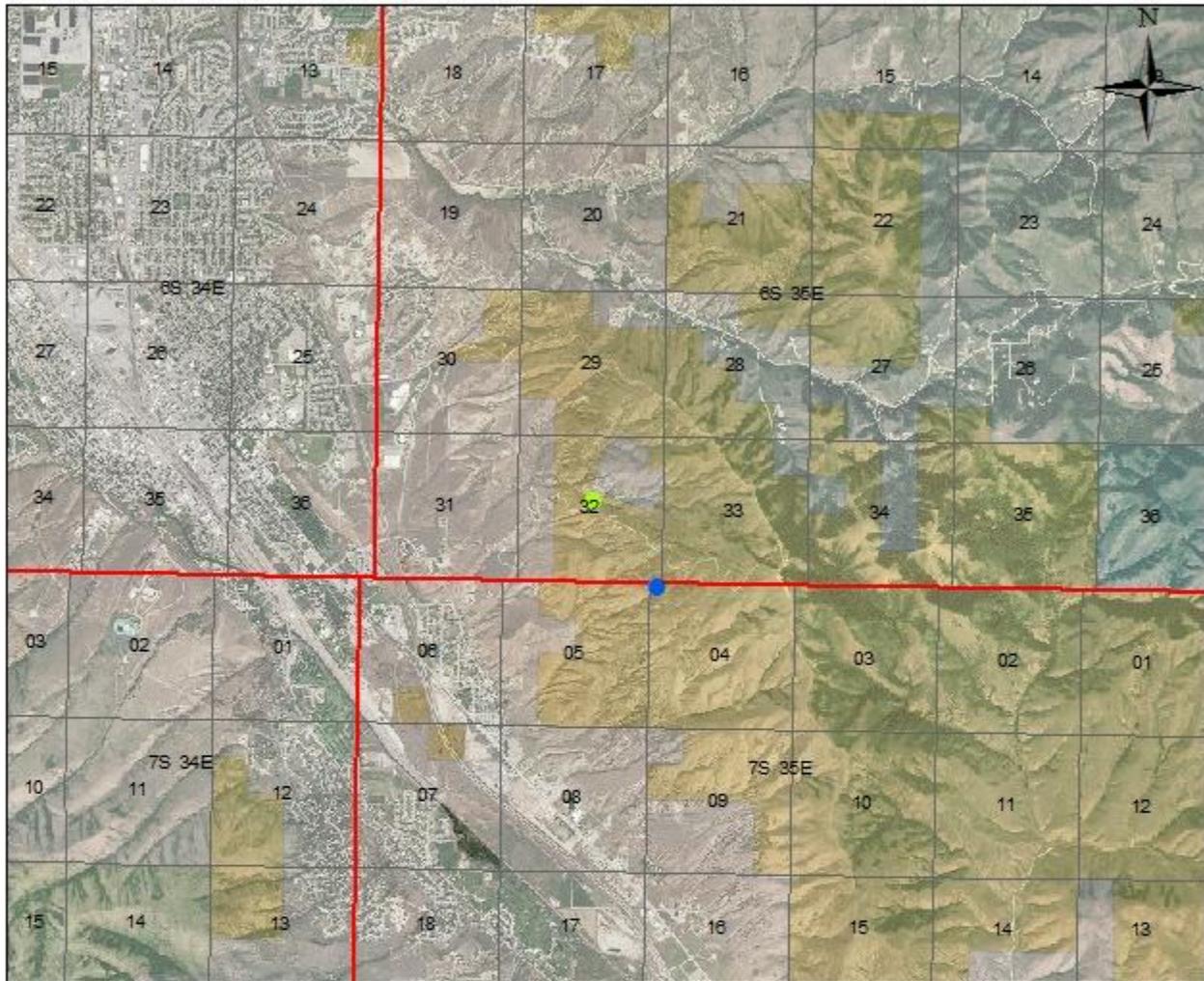
Surface Management Agency

- BLM
- Private
- State of Idaho

No warranty is made by the Bureau of Land Management.
The accuracy, reliability, or completeness of these data for
individual use or aggregate use with other data is not guaranteed.



**Figure 2. Proposed Abandoned Mine Closures
Within Bannock County, Idaho**



Abandoned Mine Sites

- Fort Hall District #136
- Fort Hall District #137

Surface Management Agency

- BLM
- Private
- State of Idaho
- US Forest Service



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