



October 6, 2014

Subject: Proposed Bagdad Mine Stockpile Extension Project Scoping Notice

Dear Interested Party:

A proposal has been submitted to the Bureau of Land Management (BLM) Kingman Field Office by Freeport-McMoRan Bagdad Inc. (FMBI) to modify their Mine Plan of Operations (MPO) at the Bagdad Mine, located in Yavapai County west of the unincorporated community of Bagdad, Arizona. The proposed modification would authorize the extension of an existing, consolidated leach and waste rock stockpile on the south side of the mine. The modification also contemplates the installation of limited, future distributed facilities south of the stockpile. In addition, Arizona Public Service Company (APS) has submitted a proposed amendment to an existing right-of-way (ROW) for the construction of access roads to maintain a 115-kilovolt power line within the same geographic area of the MPO modification. The MPO modification and ROW amendment propose new surface disturbance to approximately 600 acres of public land managed by the BLM and approximately 90 acres of private land.

This scoping notice is to inform the public that the BLM Kingman Field Office is analyzing these proposals in compliance with the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969, as amended (NEPA), and the Federal Land Policy and Management Act of 1976, as amended. This is the first step in the scoping process under NEPA, which requires federal agencies to consider the potential physical, biological, social, and economic effects of their actions on the environment. These proposals will be analyzed under either a NEPA Environmental Assessment (EA) or Environmental Impact Statement (EIS), depending upon the significance of issues identified during the scoping process. This scoping period is being structured so, if BLM chooses to do an EIS, comments received during this scoping period will be sufficient to satisfy the requirements of an EIS and no further scoping would be required.

### **Description of Proposed Projects**

FMBI owns and operates the copper mining operation at the Bagdad Mine, located approximately 100 miles northwest of Phoenix, in western Yavapai County, Arizona. Mining has occurred in the Bagdad area since the early 1880s, and open pit mining began in 1945. The majority of the existing Bagdad Mine operations and facilities are situated on private lands. However, some Bagdad Mine operations are conducted on BLM lands under an existing 1996 MPO (as amended), *Plan of Operations for Upper Mammoth Tailings & South Waste Rock Disposal Facilities*. Approximately 671 acres of BLM-managed lands in Sections 8 and 9 of Township 14 North, Range 9 West have been previously approved for disturbance through the approval of the 1996 MPO and subsequent amendments (see attached map - BLM approved disturbance area).

The BLM accepted the *Bagdad Mine Stockpile Extension Modification to the Mine Plan of Operations* (MPO Modification) as administratively complete in June of 2014. The MPO Modification seeks to modify the 1996 MPO (as amended) for the extension of the existing consolidated Plan IX Leach/South Waste Rock Stockpile (the Stockpile) located in Sections 16 and 17 of Township 14 North, Range 9 West (see attached map). The proposed extension includes increasing the existing Stockpile by approximately 450 acres onto BLM-managed lands and would allow for the construction, operation, closure, and post-closure of the proposed Stockpile extension. The operation of the expanded Stockpile would continue in the same manner as the existing Stockpile. The stockpile extension would be both lateral and vertical. The conceptual design plan for the stockpile illustrates a height of approximately 1,200 feet, extending to approximately 4,850 feet above mean sea level. Overburden and mineralized waste rock materials from the open pit will continue to be placed on the Stockpile by haul trucks. Leaching would occur on the western, Plan IX Leach portion of the Stockpile, and overburden/mineralized waste rock would be stored

on the eastern, South Waste Rock portion of the Stockpile. The southern boundary of the proposed stockpile extension generally corresponds to a drainage divide (ridgeline); stockpiled materials would not be placed south of this divide. Storm water runoff from the stockpile extension would continue to be directed to the existing open pit to the north. The proposed Stockpile extension has an anticipated operational life of approximately 40 years.

The MPO modification also proposes the installation of limited, future distributed facilities to fulfill the need for future support facilities that are typically associated with mining operations to meet safety, environmental, operational, closure and post-closure requirements. The distributed facilities are anticipated south of the drainage divide that defines the southern limit of the proposed Stockpile extension (Figure 1). Surface disturbance would be limited to a cumulative total of 150 acres of BLM-managed lands. Distributed facilities may include, but are not limited to, upgraded or additional electrical power lines, raw or process water lines, access roads, monitoring wells, communications equipment, stability monitoring equipment, or other support facilities. The environmental review provided by this NEPA analysis will enhance the ability to plan, design, and adjust the alignment of such features to protect natural resources; final engineering plans will be submitted to the BLM prior to ground-disturbing activities related to individual distributed facilities. The distributed facilities would be anticipated for use over 40 years, with the potential for continued use to support reclamation, closure, and post-closure of the mine.

APS has approval for a ROW to relocate the Bagdad 115 kV power line south of the proposed Stockpile extension. This approval permits construction and disturbance within the 100-foot ROW corridor. However, the approved ROW does not permit construction or improvement of roads outside the 100-foot ROW for power line construction and maintenance. In February 2013, APS submitted a proposed amendment to the existing ROW to construct and improve roads necessary for the future maintenance of the power line (Figure 1). Approximately 30 acres of disturbance are proposed to BLM-managed lands for the APS roads, spanning a cumulative total of approximately 5 miles. The APS proposed roads are located within the same geographic area as the limited, future distributed facilities described above and would be granted for a 30-year term, with the potential for extension.

### **Preliminary Issues and Concerns**

The purpose of the public scoping process is to determine relevant issues that will influence the scope of the environmental analysis, including alternatives, and guide the process for complying with NEPA. The BLM has identified the following preliminary issues.

- Potential loss of both historic and prehistoric cultural resources
- Degradation of visual resources
- Loss of wildlife habitat
- Loss of forage for livestock grazing
- Closure of existing vehicle routes used for recreation and public access
- Potential effects to water resources.

### **Public Involvement**

Open houses to present the proposed project, answer questions, and accept public comments will be held in the following locations and times. The meetings are “open house” style and will include a short presentation at the dates and times listed below.

- **October 22, 2014, 4:00 p.m. to 7:00 p.m., presentation at 5:00 p.m.** Hualapai Cultural Center, Peach Springs, Arizona
- **October 23, 2014, 5:00 p.m. to 7:30 p.m. presentation at 6:00 p.m.** Owens Elementary School, 14109 East Chicken Springs Rd, Wikieup, Arizona
- **October 28, 2014, 5:00 p.m. to 7:30 p.m. presentation at 6:00 p.m.** Bagdad Community Campus, 700 Palo Verde, Bagdad, Arizona
- **October 29, 2014, 5:00 p.m. to 7:30 p.m., presentation at 6:00 p.m.** Prescott Adult Center, 1280 East Rosser Street, Prescott, Arizona

### **Public Comments**

We are inviting your comments on this proposal. Public input is important in establishing the level and scope of the analysis. The public is encouraged to participate throughout the NEPA process to help in identifying the level of analysis needed, alternatives to the proposed action, other issues or concerns that should be analyzed or mitigated, and any other comments or ideas to help ensure the completeness of the analysis process.

We can best use your comments if they are received no later than the end of the 30-day scoping period, November 4, 2014. A comment form has been enclosed for your convenience. Please mail your written comments to Bagdad Mine MPO Modification, 2755 Mission Boulevard, Kingman, AZ 86401, or fax to 928-718-3761. Electronic comments may be submitted to *blm\_az\_kfo\_bagdad\_mine@blm.gov*.

Comments received in response to this solicitation, including names and addresses of those who comment, will be considered part of the public record and will be available for public inspection.

For project information and updates, please visit the project website at <http://bit.ly/bagdadMPO>. If you have questions regarding this proposal, do not hesitate to contact Mr. Walter (Buzz) Todd, III, Project Manager, at (928) 718-3717 or by email at [wtodd@blm.gov](mailto:wtodd@blm.gov).

We look forward to receiving your comments and thank you for your participation in the NEPA process for this project.

Sincerely,

Ruben Sanchez  
Field Manager  
BLM Kingman Field Office

Enclosures

