

**UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT
POCATELLO FIELD OFFICE
Categorical Exclusion
Fiscal Year 2015 Abandoned Mine Land Closures
DOI-BLM-ID-I020-2015-0008-CX**

Applicant: NA

Project/Serial No.: NA

Project Lead: Bryce Anderson, Geologist/BLM Pocatello Field Office

Proposed Action: The proposed action is to remediate four mine sites and related features during the 2015 budget year. The sites have been evaluated by the Bureau of Land Management (BLM) Idaho Mine Closure Team to determine the appropriate closure method (bat gate, bat grate culvert, polyurethane foam plug, backfill, etc.). Together the sites contain numerous physical safety hazards which include open adits and shafts with unstable walls and ceilings. The sites also occur in areas easily accessible to the public for recreational and other purposes on lands administered by the BLM. Sites chosen for closure include:

Fort Hall District #155 (ID-I020-00155)

Location: Township 7 South, Range 35 East, Section 24, NWNWNE (see also figure 1).

Features/Proposed Closure Method: The site consists of one partially collapsed adit with a portal opening of approximately 3 feet wide by 1 foot tall. Portal of adit would be secured with poly urethane foam (PUF) and backfilled with waste rock material. Closure may require the use of heavy equipment such as an excavator.

Fort Hall District #156 (ID-I020-00156)

Location: Township 6 South, Range 35 East, Section 17, SWNE (see also figure 2).

Features/Proposed Closure Method: Site consists of two open adits. Adit one has a portal opening with dimensions of approximately 2 feet high by 2 feet wide. Adit two has a portal opening with dimensions of approximately 5 feet wide by 3 feet high. Both adits would be closed with PUF and waste rock backfill or backfilled entirely with waste rock. Closure would require the use of heavy equipment such as an excavator.

Fort Hall District #157 (ID-I020-00157)

Location: Township 6 South, Range 35 East, Section 17, NWSWNE (see also Figure 2).

Features/Proposed Closure Method: Site consists of two open adits. Adit one has a portal opening with dimensions approximately of 6 feet wide and 2 feet high. Adit two has a portal opening with dimensions of approximately 5 feet by 5 feet. Both adits would be closed with PUF and waste rock backfill or backfilled entirely with waste rock. Closure would require the use of heavy equipment such as an excavator.

Blue Jacket Mine (ID-I020-00160)

Location: Township 7 South, Range 35 East, Section 9, NENE (see also figure 3).

Features/Proposed Closure Method: Site consists of one decline shaft and three adits. Decline Shaft one has an opening with dimensions of 4.5 feet by 1.4 feet. Adit one has a portal opening with dimensions of approximately 4 feet wide by 4 feet high. Adit two has a portal opening with dimensions of approximately 5 feet wide by 6 feet wide. Adit three has a portal opening with

dimensions of approximately 4 feet by 5 feet. Adit one and shaft one would be closed with PUF and waste rock backfill or backfilled entirely with waste rock. Adit two and adit three would be closed with a bat gate or bat grate culvert. Closure may require the use of heavy equipment such as an excavator.

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 and Bat Conservation International.

Land Use Plan Conformance Statement:

Land Use Plan Name: Pocatello Resource Management Plan (April 2012)

Date Approved/Amended: July 10, 2012

The proposed action is in conformance with the LUP, even though it is not specifically provided for, because it is clearly consistent with the following LUP decision(s) (objectives, terms, and conditions):

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).

Finding or Recommendation: The proposed action is categorically excluded as outlined in 516 DM 11.9 J (8): Installation of minor devices to protect human life (e.g. grates across mines). None of the extraordinary circumstances described in 516 DM 2, Appendix 2 apply.

/s/ Bryce Anderson
Preparer signature

7/16/2015
Date

/s/ Blaine Newman
NEPA Reviewer signature

7/16/2015
Date

Decision and Rationale for the Decision:

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.

/s/ David A. Pacioretty
David A. Pacioretty
Field Manager

7/17/2015
Date

Appeals Information:

Appeals information can be found at 43 CFR 4.410.

Extraordinary Circumstances Requiring Preparation of an EA or EIS

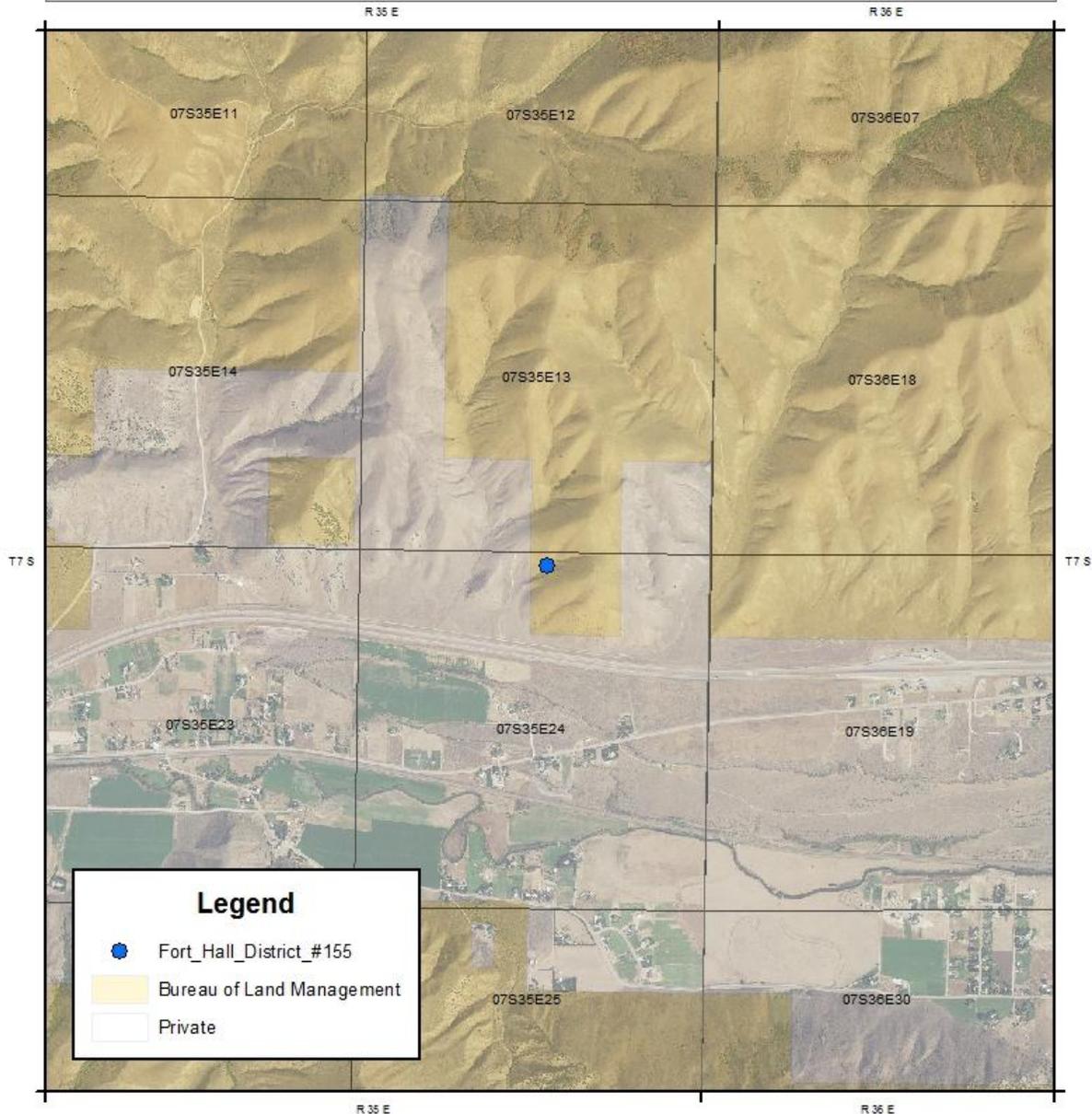
The action described in categorical exclusion DOI-BLM-ID-I020-2015-0008-CX has been reviewed to determine if any of the following extraordinary circumstances listed below apply, as listed in the Departmental NEPA regulations (43 CFR 46.215). A rationale for why the circumstance does not apply is included below:

Extraordinary Circumstances	
1.	Have significant impacts on public health or safety. <i>Together the sites contain numerous physical safety hazards which include open adits and shafts with unstable walls and ceilings. Closure of the abandoned mine sites would protect public safety and reduce liabilities by eliminating or reducing hazards posed by abandoned mines on public lands.</i>
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. <i>The sites do not occur within any designated parks, refuge lands, wilderness areas, wild or scenic rivers, national natural landmarks, floodplains, sole or principal drinking water aquifers, prime farm lands, wetlands, national monuments, or other ecologically significant or critical areas. The sites occur within the Pocatello Special Recreation Management Area however closure to the site would not impede any recreational opportunities. Closure of the abandoned mine sites would protect public safety and reduce liabilities by eliminating or reducing hazards posed by abandoned mines on public lands. The proposed action would not have significant impacts on migratory birds since proposed activities will involve areas previously disturbed by mining activity. A Turkey Vulture nest was discovered within adit one of the Fort Hall District #157 abandoned mine site. Closure will be completed when all young have fledged the nest. A cultural survey and inventory was completed at the Fort Hall District #155, #156, and #157 sites on May 11, 2015. A cultural survey and inventory was completed at the Blue Jacket Mine on June 25, 2015. No National Register of Historic Places (NRHP) eligible sites were identified.</i>
3.	Have highly controversial environmental effects or involve unresolved conflicts concerning alternative uses of available resources [NEPA section 102(2)(E)]. <i>No highly controversial environmental effects or potential unresolved conflicts concerning alternative uses or available resources have been identified.</i>
4.	Have highly uncertain and potentially significant environmental effects or involve unique or unknown environmental risks. <i>There are no known highly uncertain or potentially significant environmental effects associated with the proposed action. There are also no unique or unknown environmental risks associated with the proposed action.</i>
5.	Establish a precedent for future action or represent a decision in principle about future actions with potentially significant environmental effects. <i>The proposed action would not establish a precedent for future action or represent a decision in</i>

Extraordinary Circumstances

	<i>principle about future actions with potentially significant environmental effects. Closure of abandoned mine sites are evaluated on a site by site basis.</i>
6.	Have a direct relationship to other actions with individually insignificant but cumulatively significant environmental effects. <i>The proposed action would not have a direct relationship to other actions with individually insignificant but cumulatively significant environmental effects.</i>
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. <i>A cultural survey and inventory was completed at the Fort Hall District #155, #156, and #157 sites on May 11, 2015. A cultural survey and inventory was completed at the Blue Jacket Mine on June 25, 2015. No NRHP eligible sites were identified.</i>
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. <i>No Threatened or Endangered Species are known to inhabit the project area.</i>
9.	Violate a Federal law, or a State, local, or tribal law or requirement imposed for the protection of the environment. <i>The proposed action would not violate any Federal, State, local, or tribal law or requirement imposed for the protection of the environment.</i>
10.	Have a disproportionately high and adverse effect on low income or minority populations (Executive Order 12898). <i>The proposed action would not result in any environmental effects that would affect low income or minority populations.</i>
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). <i>There are no known Indian sacred sites within the project area. The proposed action would not prevent access to any Indian sacred sites on Federal Lands or impact traditional use within the area.</i>
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). <i>Equipment utilized for closure of the abandoned mine sites would be cleaned prior to entry onto BLM administered lands to prevent the spread of noxious weed seeds. Following closure, the sites would be monitored for presence of noxious weeds.</i>

Figure 1. Aerial Photograph of the Fort Hall District #155 Abandoned Mine Site.



Legend

- Fort_Hall_District_#155
- Bureau of Land Management
- Private



Map Created: 1/15/2015

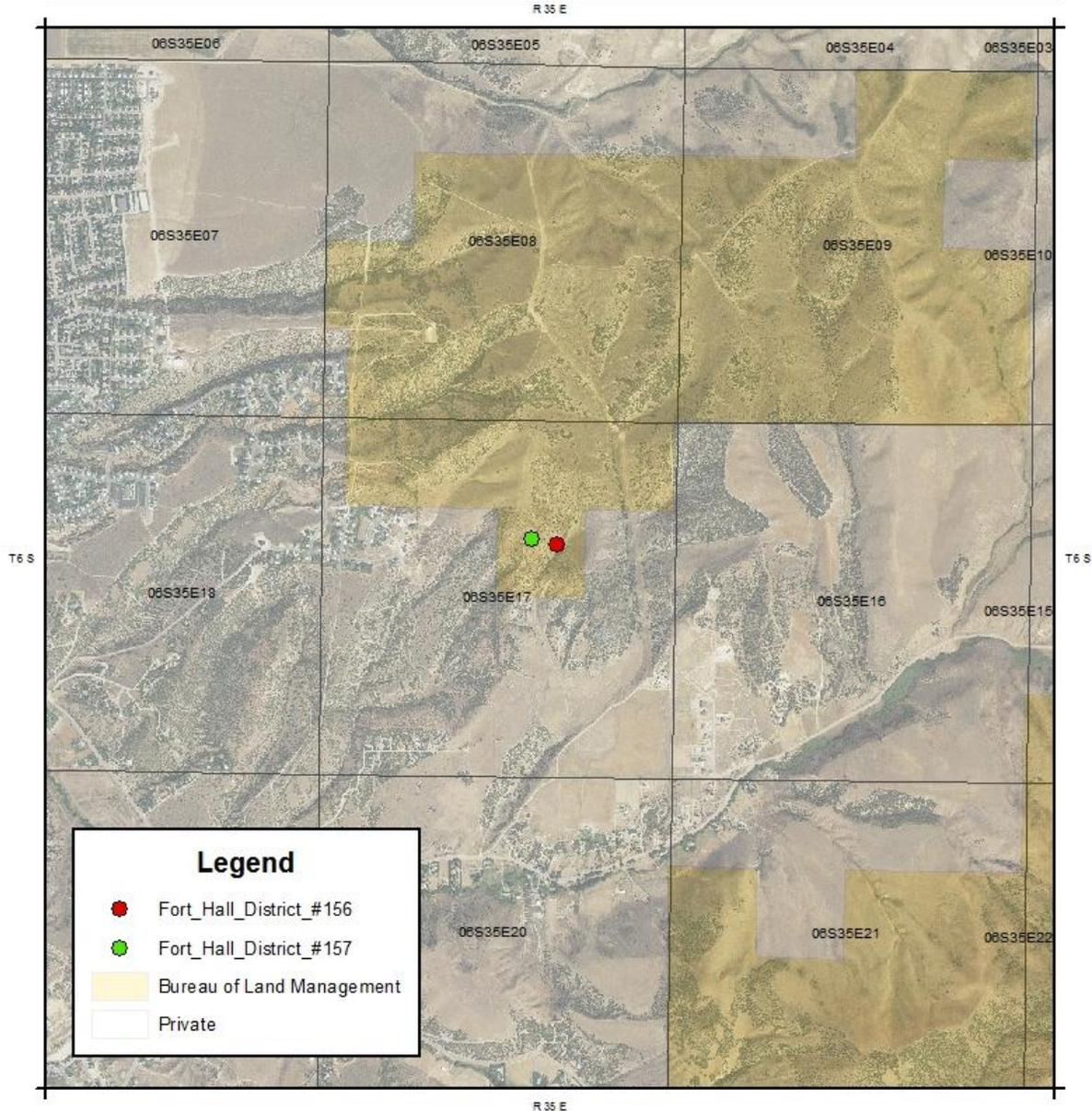
The surface management status ("land ownership") should be used as a general guide only. Official BLM records, located at the Bureau of Land Management (BLM) and other offices, should be checked for up-to-date information concerning any specific tract of land.

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. The following cannot be made Section 508 compliant. For help with this data or information, please contact the BLM Idaho State Office Webmaster at 208-373-4000.

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 Map Projection: NAD83 UTM zone 12N



Figure 2. Aerial Photograph of the Fort Hall District #156 and Fort Hall District #157 Abandoned Mine Sites.



Legend

- Fort_Hall_District_#156
- Fort_Hall_District_#157
- Bureau of Land Management
- Private



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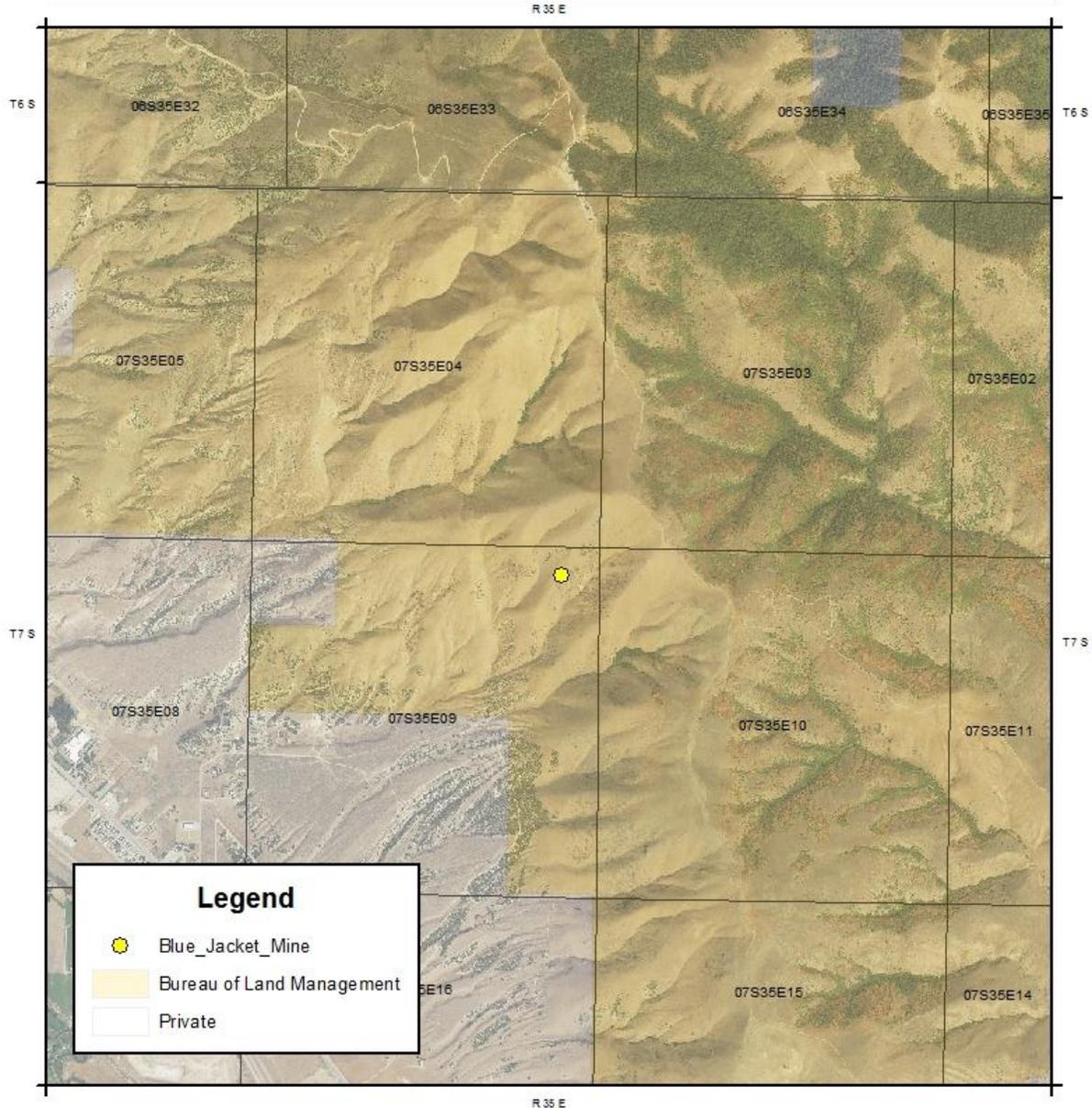
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Map Projection: NAD83 UTM zone 12N



Map Created: 1/15/2015

Figure 3. Aerial Photograph of the Blue Jacket Abandoned Mine Site.



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 Map Projection: NAD83 UTM zone 12N



Map Created: 1/15/2015