



United States Department of the Interior



BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT
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In Reply Refer To:

N-64634

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AUG 14 2015

Dear Interested Public:

The Bureau of Land Management (BLM) is seeking public input as it initiates an Environmental Assessment (EA) for Pershing Gold Corporation, a wholly owned subsidiary of Gold Acquisition Corporation (GAC), on its Relief Canyon project. The Relief Canyon Mine, located approximately 17.5 miles east-northeast of Lovelock, Nevada began operations in 1981. The mine has been owned and operated under several different owners over the past 34 years. GAC recently purchased the property and has submitted a Modification to the Plan of Operations (POO) (NVN 064634) to re-activate and expand the mine.

The proposed expansion as discussed in the Modified POO, includes the following:

- Expand the footprint of the existing pit area by approximately 68.3 acres (41.2 public, 27.1 private);
- Develop a new waste rock storage area (Waste Rock Area 5) on 95.7 acres of private land;
- Improve the closure design for the old heaps by covering them with approximately three feet of overburden and waste rock, which will serve as a hold and release type of evapotranspiration cover;
- Drill one or more new water supply wells as necessary to augment or replace the existing wells which will be impacted by mining activities;
- Install additional piezometers as necessary to augment the existing array or replace some piezometers which will be impacted by mining activities;
- Improve site communications by installing radio repeater hardware;
- Add wireless links to the production wells, crushing systems and process plant;
- Construct new growth media stockpiles, diversion ditches for storm water control, and reconfigure certain roads and fence lines necessary for the expanded facilities;
- Construct new exploration drill roads and sites;
- Construct an on-site analytical laboratory;
- Relocate and expand the on-site warehouse facilities;

- Develop a new on-site Class III landfill that will be integrated into Waste Rock Storage Area 5;
- Potentially process ores from other sites on the existing heap leach facilities (toll leaching) and
- Close and reclaim all project facilities at the completion of the operation.

Past BLM authorizations have approved up to 622.5 acres of surface disturbance at the Relief Canyon Mine, with 396.9 acres in current use. These proposed activities will result in a total of 211.8 acres of new disturbance, leaving 13.8 acres for future use.

The public is invited to submit comments relative to the development of an EA within 30 days of the date of this letter. Please send written comments to Mr. Lorence Busker, project manager, at the above address, or e-mail wfoweb@blm.gov with Relief Canyon Mine Expansion (Sappington) in the subject line. This letter and a map are also available on the webpage at <http://1.usa.gov/1NrpZHI>. In addition, a copy of the Relief Canyon Plan of Operations is available for review at the Winnemucca District during regular business hours.

Also, public comments related to historic preservation issues, as prescribed in the National Historic Preservation Act, should be submitted at this time

Public comments submitted for this modification, including names and addresses of commenters will be available for public review during regular business hours 7:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m., Monday through Friday, except holidays. Before including your address, phone number, e-mail address, or other personnel identifying information in your comment, be advised that your entire comment, including personal identifying information, may be made publicly available at any time. While individuals may request that the BLM withhold personal identifying information from public review, BLM cannot guarantee it will be able to do so. If you wish us to withhold your personal information, you must state this prominently at the beginning of your comment. We will make all submissions from organizations or businesses available for public disclosure in their entirety.

If you have any questions, please contact Mr. Lorence Busker at (775) 623-1500 or at the above address.

Sincerely,



Aron C. King
Field Manager
Humboldt River Field Office