

NEWS Release Bureau of Land Management • Forest Service

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BLM Initiates Planning For Hardrock Geological Prospecting *Announces Public Meetings*

Portland, Ore. – The Bureau of Land Management (BLM) announced today that it is beginning the process to evaluate an exploration plan for hardrock geological prospecting northeast of the Mount St. Helens National Volcanic Monument (NVM). Beginning in March 2011, Ascot Resources Ltd. (Ascot) – a Vancouver, B.C.-based company incorporated in the State of Washington as Ascot USA Inc.– applied for two prospecting permits.

The BLM will hold two public open houses to determine the nature and range of issues to be addressed in the environmental assessment, including alternatives: Longview – February 15; and Morton – February 16.

The purpose of this public scoping process is to determine the nature and range of issues to be addressed in the environmental assessment, including alternatives. Ascot’s pending application pertains only to mineral exploration at 23 sites by directionally drilling approximately 63, two to three inch boreholes using portable equipment. This work will take place over former roads and drill pads, many of which were established by a previous company that held patent to these lands in the early 1980s.

The applications are specific to an approximately 900-acre area, managed by the U.S. Forest Service, north of the Green River and just outside of the Mount St. Helens NVM. Most of the lands are in the blast zone from the 1980 eruption of Mount St. Helens and were salvage logged, and reforested in the 1980s.

Each drill site will generally occupy less than 400-square feet. The total disturbance area for all pads will be less than ¼ acre. Access to these sites will require the temporary reactivation of approximately 1.7 miles of former roads. In accordance with the plan of operations, all disturbances will be fully reclaimed. The hardrock minerals that are of interest include copper, molybdenum, silver and gold, and other associated minerals.

“The proposed work is focused solely on acquiring geologic and minerals information. Whether this work will show an economically valuable and a physically developable deposit is unknown at this time,” said BLM State Director Ed Shepard. “Even if this work indicates the presence of an economically valuable mineral deposit, leasing and site development would have to go through separate environmental review and leasing process,” continued Shepard.

It is important to note that this is an unconnected and distinctly different action from the planning work that took place in 2008 regarding a former lease application from General Moly Inc., for the same lands. Ascot is not seeking a lease right, rather it is requesting only authorization to conduct limited geologic prospecting.

In the matter of General Moly, the BLM announced in April 2008 that it had decided to move forward with the “No Action” alternative in the March 2007 environmental



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assessment (EA) and reject the hardrock lease application. The BLM concluded that establishment of lease rights, even with a contingent right stipulation, would be premature until a valuable mineral resource was delineated as a basis for determination of whether development would be compatible with the purpose for which the lands were acquired by the Federal Government.

Members of the public will have an opportunity to hear from the BLM, U.S. Forest Service, Ascot, and have an opportunity to comment on the proposed prospecting.

Wednesday, February 15

Cowlitz Regional Conference Center, Loowit Room
1900 7th Ave
Longview, Washington
6:30 to 8:00 p.m.

Thursday, February 16

Lyle Community Center
700 W. Main Street
Morton, Washington
6:30 to 8:00 p.m.

Comments will be accepted at the public meetings, as well as the web, email, and mail.

Web: Additional information about the project, including a project area map, drilling sites and equipment, scoping report, and other related information can be obtained from the BLM Website at:
<http://www.blm.gov/or/programs/minerals/prospecting>

Email: BLM_OR_Prospecting_EA@blm.gov

Mail: Bureau of Land Management
c/o Goat Mountain Prospecting
P.O. Box 2965
Portland, Oregon 97208

Scoping comments must be received prior to midnight March 16, 2012 to be considered for public record. Documents pertinent to this proposal may be examined at:

Oregon State Office
Public Room
333 SW 1st Avenue
Portland, OR 97204

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