UNITED STATES
DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT
TUCSON FIELD OFFICE

DECISION RECORD

IFNM Abandoned Mine Remediation

Environmental Assessment
DOI-BLM-AZ-G020-2016-0001-EA

BACKGROUND

The Ironwood Forest National Monument (IFNM) Project Area of the Tucson Field Office contains approximately 12,700 acres of public land that contain approximately 900 abandoned mine land (AML) shafts, adits, pits and trenches. The area receives moderate to high levels of recreation use. Many of the AML features are near recreation use areas, and are therefore hazardous to the public. Through backfilling, fencing, signing, and gating, AML hazards will be eliminated to protect public health and safety, and restore watersheds for resources, recreation, fish, and wildlife. The AML program helps restore the environment and improve safety for visitors and users of public lands.

DECISION

The decision is to eliminate AML hazards to the public on IFNM by utilizing a combination of proven AML remediation methods, and these are: backfilling, fencing/signing, and or bat gating abandoned mine features on public land in the Ironwood Forest National Monument. Backfilling would be utilized to close mine features where access allows. Where access doesn't allow, fencing/signing would be used to restrict access to mine features. Where bat resources exist in mine features, bat gating would be used to restrict human entrance to mine features while allowing the continued use of mine features by bats. Sensitive resources including cultural, historic, wildlife, and threatened and endangered species would be protected from harm during this project by the pre-project identification of these resources and subsequent avoidance of the resources during the project.

ALTERNATIVES

Preferred Alternative (Backfill/Fence and Sign/Bat Gate Alternative): A combination of remedial methods work best because environmental conditions and site access varies widely across the project area. Backfilling will used to close mine features that have no environmental concerns and that are easy to access with equipment. Fencing and signing will be used were sensitive environmental features are present and where equipment access is limited or impossible. Bat gating will be utilized at mine features which contain bats or bat habitat in an effort to secure the hazards and at the same time protect bat habitat.

Fence and Sign Only Alternative: Under this alternative, fencing and signing AML features would be the sole means of remediation, and no backfilling and bat gating would utilized.

No Action Alternative: No reduction of AML hazards to the public would occur under this alternative. As such, this alternative was not selected.

RATIONALE FOR SELECTION

The preferred alternative was selected because it is the most effective means of securing hazards within the project area. Because the preferred alternative provides three remedial methods, it is more flexible, and that flexibility enables BLM to protect sensitive resources (cultural, threatened and endangered species, plants, and wildlife) and at the same time protect the public. The Fence and Sign Only Alternative was not selected because it only marginally protects the public from AML hazards as anyone can climb through a fence to access a mine feature. The no action alternative was not selected because it does not protect the public from AML hazards.

CONSULTATION AND COORDINATION

Public Scoping and Review

Claimants of active mining claims in the project area were notified of BLM's intent to secure hazards associated with AML features on their claims. Claimants were provided 30 days to comment. No comments were received.

Grazing permittees with allotments encompassing the projects area were notified of BLM's intent to secure hazards associated with AML features on their allotments. Permittees were provided 30 days to comment. No comments were received.

Endangered Species Act:

An endangered species act effects determination has been completed for this project and it has been determined that no impacts to threatened or endangered species will occur. Bat Conservation International conducted internal surveys of all mine features subject to this project and discovered no evidence of use by Lesser Long Nosed Bats, a federally listed species

IMPLEMENTATION

Project implementation will occur from June-September, 2016.

ADMINISTRATIVE REVIEW OPPORTUNITIES

This decision may be protested or appealed under the procedures outlined in BLM Handbook 8720-1 Chapter IV (8) and 43 CFR Part 4 and the enclosed Form 1842-1.

This decision may be appealed to the Interior Board of Land Appeals, Office of the Secretary, in accordance with the regulations contained in 43 CFR, Part 4 and the enclosed Form 1842-1. If an appeal is taken, your notice of appeal must be filed in writing to Melissa D. Warren, Field Manager, Tucson Field Office, 3201 East Universal Way, Tucson, Arizona, 85756 within 30 days from receipt of this decision. The appellant has the burden of showing that the decision appealed from is in error. If you wish to file a petition pursuant to regulations at 43 CFR 2801.10 or 43 CFR 2881.10 for a stay of the effectiveness of this decision during the time that your appeal is being reviewed by the Board, the petition for a stay must accompany your notice of appeal. A petition for a stay is required to show sufficient justification based on the standards listed below. Copies of the notice of appeal and petition for a stay must also be submitted

to each party named in this decision and to the Interior Board of Land Appeals and to the appropriate Office of the Solicitor (see 43 CFR 4.413) at the same time the original documents are filed in this office. If you request a stay, you have the burden of proof to demonstrate that a stay should be granted.

Standards for Obtaining a Stay

Except as otherwise provided by law or other pertinent regulations, a petition for a stay of a decision pending appeal shall show sufficient justification based on the following standards:
(1) The relative harm to the parties if the stay is granted or denied,
(2) The likelihood of the appellant's success on the merits,
(3) The likelihood of immediate and irreparable harm if the stay is not granted, and
(4) Whether the public interest favors granting the stay.

Notices of Appeal must be in writing and must be hand delivered, mailed, or faxed. Requests cannot be accepted via email, voicemail, or other electronic means.

/s/ Melissa Warren — May 25, 2016

Melissa D. Warren, Field Manager — Date