

## Kirkland High Quality Pozzolan Mine, Draft Mining and Reclamation Plan of Operations

### SCOPING OVERVIEW

#### Purpose of Scoping

Although not required by the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) law nor by regulation for an environmental assessment, the BLM conducted an extensive scoping effort for this project which included an open house and 78-day scoping period. According to 43 Code of Federal Regulations (CFR) Part 46.305 “Public Involvement in the Environmental Assessment Process:”

“(a) The bureau must, to the extent practicable, provide for public notification and public involvement when an environmental assessment is being prepared. However, the methods for providing public notification and opportunities for public involvement are at the discretion of the Responsible Official.”

“(a) (2) Although scoping is not required, the bureau may apply a scoping process to an environmental assessment.”

The objective of scoping falls into three broad categories:

1. The relevant **issues** associated with a proposal;
2. If there are means to **minimize the effects** from the proposal; and
3. If there are **reasonable action alternatives that meet the project purpose and need** the BLM should consider during the environmental analysis.

#### Outreach Summary

##### News Releases/Published Articles

On June 26, 2017 the BLM published a news release announcing the public scoping period. The BLM provided letter notification to approximately 143 residents within a 2-mile radius of the proposed mine site (Kirkland and Skull Valley). The notification included a link to the project website with additional information available.

A public open house was held on July 11, 2017 at the Skull Valley Community Center. Approximately 140 people were in attendance.

On July 24, 2017 the BLM published a second news release announcing the extension of the public scoping period. The BLM provided email or postcard notification to approximately 1,659 residents in the communities of Skull Valley, Kirkland, Yarnell, Congress, Peoples Valley and Prescott. The notifications included a link to the project website with additional information available, including Frequently Asked Questions.

Flyers announcing the extension were posted in US Post Offices in the Skull Valley, Kirkland, Yarnell and Congress, and on a community board in Peoples Valley. Articles were published in *The Daily Courier* (Prescott) on July 19, 2017 and August 4, 2017; the *Wickenburg Sun* on July 19, 2017 and July 27, 2017; *The Yellow Sheet* on August 2, 2017; and the *Sedona Eye* on July 22, 2017.

On August 23, 2017 the BLM published a news release for the final extension of the public scoping period until September 11, 2017. An article on the second extension of the public scoping period was published in *The Daily Courier* (Prescott) on August 31, 2017. Flyers announcing the scoping extension and the Project Timeline Fact Sheet were posted in US Post Offices in Skull Valley, Kirkland, Yarnell and Congress, and on a community board in Peoples Valley.

## Comments Received

Approximately 989 emails or comment letters were received (approximately 1,442 pages, including literature, reports attached to emails or letters). An email or comment letter may have more than one issue statement. Some emails or comment letters were duplications. The BLM also received petitions with 255 signatures or statements from a website (approximately 133 pages).

Petitions were submitted for the following topics:

1. Request an extension of the scoping period for 120-days;
2. Request an environmental impact statement;
3. Petition with various issues and concerns on the proposed mine;
4. Petition with a wide range of environmental issues, many non-specific to this project including statements such as “Save the Earth.”

As previously described on the project website, the NEPA process is not an election and the BLM does not tally up the number of ‘votes cast’ in making its determination on what issues to analyze. Public comments received were made available on the project website on October 19, 2017.

## **Project Website**

On June 26, 2017 the BLM published the project website through ePlanning, the BLM’s national “NEPA Register.” All public notifications were provided a hyperlink to the project Home page, which provided an introduction to the project. The Documents page included the Draft Mining and Reclamation Plan of Operations, Biological Evaluation, Conceptual Mine Plan Map, the Scoping Notification Letter, News Releases, and copies of all posters used during the public Open House. The Links page included a hyperlink to information on the General Mining Act of 1872 and a Council on Environmental Quality publication titled, “Citizens Guide to the National Environmental Policy Act.” The How to Get Involved page explained the various methods of submitting comments which included by: fax, US Mail, electronically through the project website, and to the following email address: KIRKMPO@blm.gov. The BLM also provided responses to Frequently Asked Questions.

## **Issues Categories**

Based on a review of the comments received, the following issues questions were identified by the public:

<b>Number of Comments</b>	<b>Issue Question</b>
46	What would be the potential project-related impacts to land uses, such as dispersed recreation, sightseeing, and livestock grazing, in the vicinity of the mine?
431	What would be the potential project-related impacts to air quality, from the mine and transportation of mined materials?
19	What would be the potential project-related impacts to cultural resources from the mine?
57	What would be the potential project-related impacts to emergency response services and public safety in the mine and along the transportation network?
11	What would be the potential project-related impacts to mineral resources?
165	What would be the potential project-related impacts to noise in the vicinity of the mine and along the transportation network?
5	What would be the potential project-related impacts to paleontological resources in the mine?
320	What would be the potential project-related impacts to social and economic resources (workforce, tax revenues, quality of life) in the vicinity of the mine and along the transportation network?
5	What would be the potential project-related impacts to soils/geology in the mine?
1,039	What would be the potential project-related impacts to the existing road infrastructure along the transportation network?
52	What would be the potential project-related impacts to the vegetation communities within and adjacent to the mine?
64	What would be the potential project-related impacts to the visual character of the mine vicinity?
446	What would be the potential project-related impacts to surface and groundwater within the mine and vicinity?
125	What would be the potential project-related impacts to wildlife, including sensitive species, in the vicinity of the mine?