



Bokan Mountain Uranium Mine

Key Message

Rare Earth One (REO)—formerly Landmark Alaska Limited Partnership, an American subsidiary of the Canadian UCore Uranium, Inc.—has continued exploration activities at the historic Ross-Adams uranium mine at the Bokan Mountain area within the Tongass National Forest.

Background

The Ross-Adams uranium deposit was discovered in 1955 and is located approximately 38 miles southwest of Ketchikan on Prince of Wales Island in the west arm of Kendrick Bay. This area is within a timber production land use designation in the Tongass Land Management Plan, with an overlaying minerals use designation, the goal of which is to encourage the prospecting, exploration, development, and processing of locatable minerals in areas with high mineral potential. Active production occurred at Ross-Adams from 1957 until 1971, with an estimated total of 94,500 tons of uranium ore removed. The Ross-Adams site has the potential for near term activation of mining production.



Issue

The Forest Service has authorized REO exploration activities in the Bokan Mountain area since 2007. Further development of the mine will require Forest Service approval of a plan of operations, which will be subject to environmental analysis and public review and comment.

Current Situation

In July 2010, the Forest Service completed the necessary NEPA work to authorize REO to continue exploration activities on lands adjacent to the historic Ross-Adams mine. REO proposed mineral exploration of approximately 12 – 24 holes from 12 drill pad locations on National Forest System lands. Their current target is now rare earth elements that often occur near uranium deposits.



Photo of historic Ross Adams workings

REO believes there is great potential for new discoveries at the site and reactivation of mining production. Further information regarding mineral potential and exploration activities is available on the UCore web site at <http://www.ucoreuranium.com/bokan.asp>.

The historic Ross-Adams mine initially produced uranium ore from an open pit and subsequently from underground workings. Mine waste rock and contaminated soil remain on the site, adjacent to the area of REO's current exploration. The Forest Service is working with Newmont Exploration, Ltd., a previous producer of ore at the site, to begin the process of site clean-up. The State of Alaska and Environmental Protection Agency have also indicated a strong interest in site clean-up. A preliminary assessment and site inspection conducted pursuant to the Comprehensive Environmental Response, Compensation, and Liability Act (CERCLA) revealed that hazardous substances in concentrations exceeding normal background levels for arsenic, lead, and uranium exist in the waste rock and soil, and radiation emissions in levels exceeding background are occurring. All personnel involved in current exploration activities are complying with a health and safety plan authorized by the Forest Service that provides for protection from radiation.

More Information

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