



Topic/Issue

July 2012

The BLM has released an environmental assessment (EA) that evaluates the environmental impacts of the proposed mineral exploration relative to reasonable alternatives related to two hardrock prospecting permit applications within the Gifford Pinchot National Forest. This EA has been jointly prepared by the BLM and USFS and is available for public comment until July 31, 2012.

Ascot Resources Ltd. (Ascot) has applied for a prospecting permit to drilling on 23 sites of federal mineral survey lands within the Gifford Pinchot National Forest in the vicinity of Goat Mountain in Skamania County, Washington. This is a leasable mineral activity under Bureau of Land Management's (BLM) authority with consent of the Forest Service (FS).

Background

Ascot acquired a 50% private and 50% federal mineral interest in approximately 898 acres within the Gifford Pinchot National Forest (GPNF) near Goat Mountain in Skamania County. The area is outside the legislated boundary of the Mount St. Helens National Volcanic Monument in an historic mining district. The ownership was obtained from General Moly Inc., and was previously known as Idaho General Mines Inc. This mineral estate has been privately owned since 1910. The private-interest is an "outstanding mineral right" because it was separated from the surface estate prior to the United States acquiring the surface in 1970. As of 1986, the remaining 50% of the mineral rights on this acreage is owned by the United States.

In the spring, 2010, Ascot notified the Forest Service and completed drilling of 14 exploratory holes on their private mineral interest, MS 708. After conducting an informal environmental analysis of the proposal the Forest Service issued Ascot a letter of concurrence in 2010. Ascot complied with stipulations to protect National Forest System resources and worked with Forest Service personnel who monitored the drilling.

In 2011 Ascot submitted a proposal to the BLM for a prospecting permit for exploratory drilling on 900 acres of Mineral Survey lands in the GPNF, which have federal minerals subject to the Mineral Leasing Act for Acquired Lands. Ascot withdrew their original interest in the 50% private interest in Mineral Survey MS 708 on October 7, 2011 and amended their prospecting permit to include the 50% federal interest of that mineral survey.

Contact Point

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