

increased from 1,371 acres of public land to 3,428 acres of public land. Disturbance on private land controlled by HRDI would be increased from 1,692 acres to 1,807 acres. The additional acreage in the project boundary would be used for exploration.

The Draft EIS analyzes two alternatives; the Proposed Action and the No Action Alternative.

The Proposed Action, if selected by the BLM, would include: Expansion of the plan boundary and use of the entire project area for exploration; incorporation of five rights-of-way; expand four existing open pits; the backfilling of all or portions of three open pits; build a dispatch center and expand maintenance facilities; expansion of haul and secondary roads, waste rock facilities, and heap leach facilities; expansion of existing and construction of two ready line and heavy equipment fueling areas; expansion of existing waste rock facilities; the operation a portable crusher with conveyors at the south heap leach facility; construct, operate, and then close the south heap leach facility, Merrill-Crowe process plant, and solution ponds; relocation of a segment of the Seven Troughs Road to bypass the south heap leach facility; expansion of the existing refinery and the Brimstone Merrill-Crowe plant; construct storm water diversions, install culverts, and other storm water controls; close the existing Class III landfill and construct a new Class III landfill; the drilling of one potable-water well and one process-water well; the relocation of the existing Brimstone substation, upgrade the existing Crofoot substation, and extension of power lines to new process areas; construction of growth media stockpiles; and reclamation of the project consistent with the proposed reclamation plan.

Under the No-Action Alternative the BLM would not approve the proposed plan of operations and there would be no expansion. HRDI would continue mining activities under the previously approved plans of operation.

Three other alternatives were considered, then eliminated: Daylight Hours Operation, Modified Exploration Activities, and Different Waste Rock Dump and Heap Leach Pad Configurations.

A Notice of Intent to Prepare an EIS for the Proposed Hycroft Mine Expansion was published in the **Federal Register** on April 1, 2011 (76 FR 18243). Ten comments were received during a 90-day scoping period. The comments stated concerns about lighting impacts to night skies and the economic benefits including jobs. The proponent prepared

a lighting plan designed to lessen the impacts of light outside the project area by using directional lighting, and lowering or moving light sources. Other issues raised during initial internal and external scoping were possible impacts from acid mine drainage and the proximity of the mine to the Black Rock Desert-High Rock Canyon-Emigrant Trails National Conservation Area (NCA). A Waste Rock Characterization Report has been completed for the various types of rock to be mined, and the specific measures that would be taken to prevent acid rock drainage will be outlined in the Draft EIS. While outside of the NCA, the project is within visual range of the NCA. Mitigating the visual issue is the fact that the mine has been in existence since 1987 and the NCA was designated in 1990.

Please note that public comments and information submitted including names, street addresses, and email addresses of persons who submit comments will be available for public review and disclosure at the above address during regular business hours (7:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.), Monday through Friday, except holidays.

Before including your address, phone number, email address, or other personal identifying information in your comment, you should be aware that your entire comment—including your personal identifying information—may be made publicly available at any time. While you can ask us in your comment to withhold your personal identifying information from public review, we cannot guarantee that we will be able to do so.

**Authority:** 40 CFR 1506.6 and 1506.10.

**Gene Seidlitz,**  
*District Manager.*

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## DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR

### Bureau of Land Management

[LLMT926000-L14200000-BJ0000]

#### Notice of Filing of Plats of Survey; Montana

**AGENCY:** Bureau of Land Management, Interior.

**ACTION:** Notice of filing of plats of survey.

**SUMMARY:** The Bureau of Land Management (BLM) will file the plat of survey of the lands described below in the BLM Montana State Office, Billings, Montana, on February 27, 2012.

**DATES:** Protests of the survey must be filed before February 27, 2012 to be considered.

**ADDRESSES:** Protests of the survey should be sent to the Branch of Cadastral Survey, Bureau of Land Management, 5001 Southgate Drive, Billings, Montana 59101-4669.

**FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:** Marvin Montoya, Cadastral Surveyor, Branch of Cadastral Survey, Bureau of Land Management, 5001 Southgate Drive, Billings, Montana 59101-4669, telephone (406) 896-5124 or (406) 896-5009, *Marvin\_Montoya@blm.gov*. Persons who use a telecommunications device for the deaf (TDD) may call the Federal Information Relay Service (FIRS) at 1-(800) 877-8339 to contact the above individual during normal business hours. The FIRS is available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, to leave a message or question with the above individual. You will receive a reply during normal business hours.

**SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:** This survey was executed at the request of the Regional Land Surveyor, Region 6, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, and was necessary to determine the Lee Metcalf National Wildlife Refuge lands.

The lands we surveyed are:

#### Principal Meridian, Montana

T. 9 N., R. 20 W.

The plat, in six sheets, representing the dependent resurvey of a portion of the north boundary and a portion of the subdivisional lines, the subdivision of sections 2, 3, 10, 11, 14, and 15, and the survey of portions of the easterly and westerly rights-of-way of the Montana Rail Link Railroad, through sections 2, 11, and 14 and certain parcels in Township 9 North, Range 20 West, Principal Meridian, Montana, was accepted December 21, 2011.

We will place a copy of the plat, in six sheets, and related field notes we described in the open files. They will be available to the public as a matter of information. If the BLM receives a protest against this survey, as shown on this plat, in six sheets, prior to the date of the official filing, we will stay the filing pending our consideration of the protest. We will not officially file this plat, in six sheets, until the day after we have accepted or dismissed all protests and they have become final, including decisions or appeals.

**Authority:** 43 U.S.C. Chap. 3.

**James D. Clafin,**  
*Chief Cadastral Surveyor, Division of Resources.*

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