

CHAPTER 6 - CONSULTATION AND COORDINATION

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6.1 PUBLIC PARTICIPATION SUMMARY

Public participation for the North Rasmussen Ridge Mine EIS is required by NEPA at four specific project steps: the scoping period, review of the Draft EIS, review of the Final EIS, and receipt of the Record of Decision from the BLM. The public participation process for the North Rasmussen Ridge Mine EIS is comprised of five components, as described in the following sections.

6.1.1 Public Scoping Period and Meetings

The public was provided a 47-day scoping period at the beginning of the EIS process to identify potential issues and concerns associated with the Proposed Action. Publication of a Notice of Intent (NOI) in the Federal Register initiated the public scoping period on May 18, 2001. The NOI summarized the Proposed Action and a determination by the agencies that an EIS would be necessary for analysis of Agrium's proposal. Legal notices of the Proposed Action and public scoping period were published in the Caribou County Sun newspaper on May 30, 2001, and in the Idaho State Journal newspaper on June 5, 2001. Public notice for the Forest Service started with publishing of the public notice in the Idaho State Journal and lasting 30 days.

A scoping letter was mailed to 120 agencies, groups, and individuals announcing the scoping period and describing the Proposed Action. Issues that had been identified by the agencies were also included in the mailing.

Formal public scoping meetings were held in Soda Springs, Idaho and Pocatello, Idaho on June 4 and 5, 2001, respectively. Site maps, photographs, a Power Point presentation describing the proposal, the scoping letter, and public comment forms were made available at these meetings.

The public scoping period ended on July 5, 2001. During that period the agencies received three written responses, and six comment forms from individuals and organizations. Two additional letters were received after the end of the scoping period and were also considered as part of the scoping record. Information obtained by the agencies during public scoping was combined with issues identified by the agencies themselves and this formed the scope of the EIS.

6.1.2 EIS Mailing List

A mailing list of interested persons was assembled from mailing lists maintained at the BLM Pocatello Resource Area Office and the USFS Caribou-Targhee National Forest Office. This list was supplemented by addresses of scoping participants. All parties and agencies on the mailing list were sent a letter requesting that they complete and return a preprinted form including any comments and their level of interest in receiving a copy of the Draft and Final EIS. The mailing list was adjusted accordingly. A copy of the mailing list is presented in Section 6.4.

6.1.3 Distribution of the Draft EIS

A 60-day Draft EIS review period was initiated by publication of the Notice of Availability for the Draft EIS in the Federal Register. Public review meetings were held in Soda Springs, and Pocatello, Idaho during the public comment period to obtain comments on the Draft EIS and to answer questions that the public had regarding the project or the EIS process.

The Draft EIS was distributed as follows:

- A Notice of Availability was published in the Federal Register specifying dates for the comment period and the date, time, and location of the public comment meetings.
- A news release was provided by the agencies at the beginning of the 60-day comment period on the Draft EIS. The news release was submitted to the same news organizations as for the initial public scoping announcement.
- The Draft EIS was distributed to interested parties identified in the updated EIS mailing list, as described above.

6.1.4 Final EIS Distribution

The Final EIS distribution will be completed after consideration is given to comments received on the Draft EIS. A 30-day Final EIS review period will be initiated by publication of the Notice of Availability for the Final EIS in the Federal Register. The Final EIS will be released as follows:

- Notice of Availability will be published in the Federal Register.
- Copies of the Final EIS will be sent to addresses on the updated mailing list.
- A news release will be issued to the same newspapers used for previous project announcements.

6.1.5 Record of Decision

Subsequent to the 30-day review period for the Final EIS, the USFS and IDL will make recommendations to the BLM and BLM will prepare a Record of Decision. The BLM Record of Decision will be distributed to people and organizations identified on the updated project mailing list. A Notice of Availability will be published in the Federal Register. A news release will be made to the same newspapers used for previous project announcements.

6.2 CONSULTATION WITH OTHER AGENCIES, ORGANIZATIONS AND ELECTED OFFICIALS

The following local, state, and federal agencies were consulted during preparation of the DEIS:

- U.S. Army Corps of Engineers
- U.S. Environmental Protection Agency
- U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service
- Idaho Department of Environmental Quality
- Idaho Department of Fish and Game
- Idaho Department of Water Resources – Eastern Region
- Idaho Conservation Data Center
- Caribou County Board of Commissioners
- Soda Springs City Council and Rotary Club
- Staff representatives of elected officials

The BLM, USFS and IDL coordinated with various agencies and organizations during the preparation of the DEIS and in reviewing the information in the document. Specific meetings held during this process were as follows:

- 1) January 15, 2003 - Met Sho-Ban Tribes for briefing of Supplemental Mine and Reclamation Plan.
- 2) December 18, 2002 - Met IDL in Idaho Falls to review Supplemental Mine and Reclamation Plan.
- 3) December 17, 2002 - Met IDEQ in Pocatello with ID Team to review comments on the Preliminary Draft EIS.
- 4) November 8, 2002 – Met IDEQ at the mine site for a tour with questions and answers.
- 5) October 28, 2002 – Met at the IDEQ office in Pocatello to discuss IDEQ’s comments on the groundwater modeling and use of attenuation in the fate and transport model prior to their preparing their comment letter on the DEIS.
- 6) October 10, 2002 – Met with Mr. Marv Hoyt of the Greater Yellowstone Coalition and Mr. John Robison and Mr. Justin Hayes of the Idaho Conservation League. Mine and Greystone personnel conducted a site visit with questions and answers.
- 7) February 21, 2002 – Met at the Soda Springs City Council office along with Soda Springs Rotary Club to review the project description and to take questions and answers.
- 8) February 13, 2002 – Met at the IDEQ office in Pocatello to review the Supplemental Mining and Reclamation Plan that triggered the preparation of the EIS.

- 9) January 29, 2002 – Met with representatives of Senator Crapo, Senator Craig and State Representative Simpson. Representatives were John Atkins, Francois Cleveland and Kitty Kuntz, respectively.
- 10) November 19, 2001 – Met in Idaho Falls with managers and staff from BLM, USFS, IDL, and Greystone to assess progress on the project.
- 11) August 8, 2001 – Met with Mr. Marv Hoyt of the Greater Yellowstone Coalition at the mine site for a tour with questions and answers.
- 12) There were 2 field trips in 2000 for the ID Team. An October 2, 2000 field trip included USFS, IDEQ, Idaho Fish and Game, and BLM. An October 17, 2000 field trip included USFS and BLM participants.

6.3 LIST OF PREPARERS AND REVIEWERS

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Soda Springs Ranger District

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Jim Laprevote	Hydrologist
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