

Twitter Thread by [Eric Lipton](#)



[Eric Lipton](#)

[@EricLiptonNYT](#)



JUST POSTED: The Trump administration is rushing to approve a final wave of large-scale mining and energy projects on federal lands, encouraged by investors who want to try to ensure the projects move ahead even after President-elect Biden takes office

Let's take a look at some of these projects awaiting actions in the remaining weeks of Trump's tenure. MASSIVE mining projects on federal lands. First stop, ARIZONA. Sacred Native American lands now in a national forest are targeted for destruction to make way for a copper mine



United States Department of Agriculture
Tonto National Forest

Resolution Copper Project and Land Exchange Environmental Impact Statement

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Current Status (as of Dec. 10, 2020)

Both federal and non-federal appraisals of land exchange parcels currently are being conducted. Once completed, they will be reviewed by the regional appraiser. After appraisals are accepted, the information will be made available to the public for review. The final EIS and draft record of decision presently are scheduled to be published in the Federal Register in January 2021.

The Tonto National Forest's Schedule of Proposed Actions (SOPA) is an estimate for publication of the final EIS and draft ROD. It is based on several variables involving stakeholders and entities from the public and private sectors. These variables include current project progress and the amount of work remaining, reliance on external factors such as cooperating agencies to maintain regulatory compliance, and the land exchange appraisal process.

In spring 2020, the estimated publication of the documents was adjusted on the SOPA to December 2020. This was an update from the estimated December 2021 publication, which in turn was an adjustment from the original proposed publication of July 2020. Adjustments reflect the difference between the estimated timeline and the actual time it took to complete the necessary steps. **The latest adjustment - January 2021 - does not reflect an acceleration of the NEPA process or the SOPA.**

Project Information

On behalf of the Secretary of Agriculture, the Tonto National Forest is preparing a single Environmental Impact Statement for two related federal actions:

- Approving a general plan of operations submitted by Resolution Copper Mining, LLC, which would govern surface disturbance on National Forest System (NFS) lands from mining operations that are reasonably incident to extraction, transportation, and processing of copper and molybdenum.
- The mine proposal would create one of the largest copper mines in the United States, with an estimated surface disturbance of 6,951 acres (approximately 11 square miles).



A northerly view of the Oak Flat Federal parcel. (Photo courtesy of SWCA)

Project Timeline Update

The final EIS and draft Record of Decision (ROD) presently are scheduled to be published in the Federal Register in January 2021.

Visit [Resolution Copper Timeline](#)  for more information.

Mailing List

If you would like to receive updates from the Tonto National Forest regarding the Resolution Copper Project and Land Exchange final EIS, sign up for our mailing list.

[Resolution Copper Mailing List](#)

Forest Service Point of Contact

John Scaggs
Tonto National Forest
john_scaggs@usda.gov 

Apache Leap Special Management Area
[Apache Leap SMA website](#) 

Next stop SOUTH DAKOTA. Area near Black Hills planned for massive new uranium mine, on land also historically held by Native American tribe. Groundwater would be contaminated to extract the radioactive uranium.

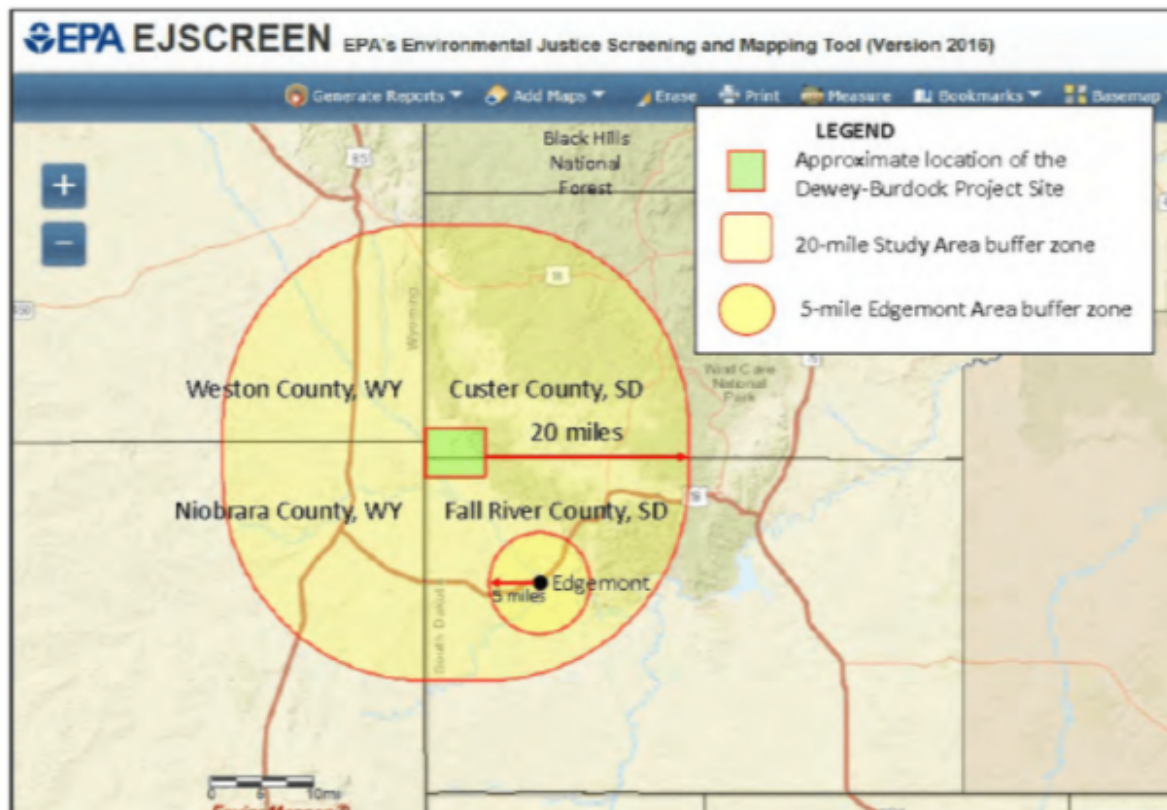





Figure 2. Location of the Study Area, which includes the Dewey-Burdock Project Area and a 20-mile buffer measured from the approximate Project Area Boundary, and the Edgemont Area, which includes a 5-mile buffer around the City of Edgemont.

As set forth in more detail in Section 9.1, consistent with the federal government's trust responsibility to federally-recognized tribes and the EPA Policy on Consultation and Coordination with Indian Tribes, the EPA Region 8 has engaged in consultation outreach and discussions with Indian Tribes that may be potentially affected by the EPA's UIC permitting and aquifer exemption actions for the Dewey-Burdock In-Situ Uranium Recovery Site. The Region has conducted outreach to Tribal governments at all stages of its process, including specifically inviting input on the 2019 Draft Revised EJ Analysis and on Tribal interests in the Black Hills as a sacred site.

Next stop, NEVADA, were one of world's largest lithium mines slated to be built starting soon on federal land. Final "Record of Decision" on project by Interior Department expected in EARLY January.



U.S. DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT

BLM National NEPA Register



DOI-BLM-NV-W010-2020-0012-EIS

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How to Get Involved

Last Updated: 12/16/2020, 10:00:17 MST

Thacker Pass Lithium Mine

Project Information

NEPA Number: DOI-BLM-NV-W010-2020-0012-EIS
Project Name: Thacker Pass Lithium Mine
Project Type: Environmental Impact Statement
Project Status: In Progress - Final EIS (non LUP)
Lead Office: Humboldt River FO
Last Updated: 12/16/2020, 11:00:17 MDT

What's New

Final Environmental Impact Statement - Available Now

The BLM published the Notice of Availability (NOA) for the Thacker Pass Final Environmental Impact Statement (FEIS) in the Federal Register on December 4, 2020. The release of the FEIS initiated a 30-day review period. Following the conclusion of that period, a Record of Decision (ROD) will be announced through local media and posted with the FEIS here.

The proposed project consists of an open pit lithium mine, processing facilities, and continued exploration of adjacent lands located in northern Humboldt County, Nevada, approximately 17 miles northwest of Orovada, 53 miles north-northwest of Winnemucca, and 20 miles south of the Oregon state border. The proposed project will have a life expectancy of approximately 41 years.


Public review and participation are encouraged. The FEIS and supporting documentation can be found under the Documents tab. A printed copy can also be viewed at the Winnemucca, McDermitt, and Denio branches of the Humboldt County Library, following the access protocols of each facility. Due to current BLM COVID-19 policy, which requires that BLM offices remain closed to the public, copies of the FEIS will not be available for review at the Winnemucca District office. Should this policy change, hardcopies of the document will be made available for viewing in our public room. A copy of the FEIS in Adobe Acrobat® portable data format (PDF) files on a universal serial bus (USB) data storage device (i.e. flash drive) is also available upon request (see How To Get Involved tab).

Project Location

City: Orovada
State/Territory: Nevada
Zip Code: 89425

Lead Contact Information

Name: Ken Loda
Email: blm_nv_wdo_thacker_pass@blm.gov
Phone: (775) 623-1539



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Eri, HERE, Garmin, FAO, USGS, EPA, NPS

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Next stop, UTAH, where Interior as soon as NEXT week, slated to give approval to what could soon be one of the large helium drilling operations in the United States on land in and around an iconic federal WILDERNESS area.



U.S. DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT

BLM National NEPA Register



DOI-BLM-UT-G020-2020-0033-EA

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How to Get Involved

Last Updated: 12/3/2020, 07:47:33 MST

Twin Bridges Bowknot Helium

Project Information

NEPA Number: DOI-BLM-UT-G020-2020-0033-EA
Project Name: Twin Bridges Bowknot Helium
Project Type: Environmental Assessment
Project Status: In Progress - Comment and Review Period
Lead Office: Price FO
Last Updated: 12/03/2020, 08:47:33 MDT

Project Description

The BLM's purpose with respect to the proposed Project is to provide Twin Bridges with the opportunity to explore, develop, and produce commercial quantities of helium in accordance with its valid existing rights consistent with terms and condition of the lease. The proposed Project is the first step in determining whether the helium resource would be economically viable to recover and produce. The need for the action is established by the BLM's responsibility under the Mineral Leasing Act (MLA) of 1920, as amended by the Federal Land Policy and Management Act (FLPMA) of 1976; the Federal Onshore Oil and Gas Leasing Act of 1987; and the Helium Privatization Act of 1996, which establishes the BLM's authority and authorizes the Secretary of the Interior to enter into agreements with private parties for the recovery and disposal of helium on federal lands.

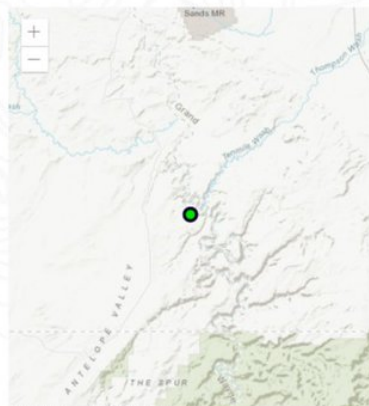
What's New

The Twin Bridges Bowknot Helium EA was open for public comment from October 22, 2020 through November 9, 2020.

This website provides the latest information on this project. Throughout the NEPA process, this website will be updated to include background documents, maps, meeting announcements, published bulletins, and other documents as applicable. In addition to accepting public input into the proposed project's NEPA process, the BLM is also inviting interested parties to participate in the proposed project's National Historic Preservation Act Section 106 process outlined at 36 CFR 800. During the Section 106 process, the BLM will consult with interested parties on identifying the area of potential effect, appropriate cultural resource identification efforts, the determination of effects to historic properties, and if necessary, the resolution of adverse effects for the proposed project.

Application Information

Program:	Fluid Minerals (Oil & Gas, Tar Sands, Oil Shale)	Sub-Program:	Oil & Gas
Applicant:	Twin Bridges LLC	Case File Number:	



Sands M

Antelope Valley

THE SPUR

Eri, HERE, Garmin, USGS, NGA, EPA, USGS, NPS

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NEXT STOP, WEST VIRGINIA/VIRGINIA where Forest Service slated to give final approval before mid January to a new natural gas pipeline that will be built across a national forest and the Appalachian Trail.



Forest Service
U.S. DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

Region 8, Jefferson National Forest

R8 MB-158

December 2020

Mountain Valley Pipeline and Equitrans Expansion Project

Final Supplemental Environmental Impact Statement



Forest Service

Bureau of Land Management



There are many others. Picked these as examples. Illustrates an intentional effort by President Trump and his Cabinet to open up public lands to mining/drilling, despite protests from Native Americans and environmentalists.

What is interesting is that many of these projects are sponsored by foreign investors, such as Rio Tinto, an Australian-based mining giant, which directly lobbied Commerce Sec. Wilbur Ross to speed up the project. Here is Ross discussing it during a visit to mine site in October

The U.S. has a special appreciation for global enterprises like Rio Tinto, that choose to engage in projects like this one on our shores. I well remember when your company met with me in 2017 and explained the 10-year challenge you already had endured as you sought the permits to enable you to make this huge investment.

That was one of the major reasons why President Trump moved so aggressively to reduce the red tape involved in such projects. We are grateful for your \$2 billion dollar investment in the project here to date, and for your forthcoming \$11 billion investment in the mine's construction.

Thanks in large part to the President's pro-growth policies, the United States is home to more foreign direct investment than any other country in the world. Believe it or not, it totals \$4.34 trillion. That's trillion with a big T. That's a lot, even by Washington's standards.

Please give the story a read (and a share). Will be doing tweet threads drilling down on individual projects. Collected thousands of pages of fed documents, detailing environmental consequences anticipated from these projects. Many r linked in story. <https://t.co/hARCFWtqph>

FYI, here is the area in Utah near what could soon be one of the largest helium drilling operations in United States, pending approval as soon as next week by Department of Interior. Construction slated to start immediately. Photos by Southern Utah Wilderness Alliance/Ray Bloxham

