MINUTE ITEM

37

09/23/87
W 40526
Pelka

APPROVAL OF A NONEXCLUSIVE CORE DRILLING PERMIT
SIERRA COUNTY

Calendar Item 37, attached, was pulled from the agenda prior to the meeting.

Attachment: Calendar Item 37.

CONTROL PAGE
MINUTE PAGE 3.99

CALENDAR ITEM

A 3

S 1

37

09/23/87
W 40526
Pelka

APPROVAL OF A NONEXCLUSIVE CORE DRILLING PERMIT
SIERRA COUNTY

APPLICANT Hecla Mining Company
6500 Mineral Drive, Box C-8000
Coeur d'Alene, Idaho 83814-1931

AGENT: Gene E. Ealy
Hecla Mining Company
6500 Mineral Drive, Box C-8000
Coeur d'Alene, Idaho 83814-1931

PROPOSED AUTHORIZATION:
Approval of a nonexclusive core drilling permit on 80 acres of land, more or less, located in Sierra County.

CONSIDERATION:
Filing fee of $25, processing fee of $250 and an acreage deposit of $80.

TYPE OF LAND AND LOCATION:
State Fish and Game proprietary lands located within the Antelope Valley Wildlife Area and further described as follows:

Parcel 1: SW 1/4 of SW 1/4, Sec. 22, T21N, R15E, MDM, Sierra County.

Parcel 2: NW 1/4 of NW 1/4, Sec. 27, T21N, R15E, MDM, Sierra County.

Parcels are located approximately three (3) miles southwest of Loyalton.

(ADDED 09/22/87 PGS. 235 thru 235.38)

PROPOSED PROJECT:

Hecla Mining Company proposes to conduct core drilling to determine if there are deposits of precious metals in the permit area by drilling 13 holes with a track mounted reverse air circulation rig, 4 1/8 inches in diameter to a maximum depth of 200 feet. Approximately 1/2 cubic foot of drill cuttings will be retained at five-foot intervals for off-site assaying. Drill holes shall be promptly abandoned upon completion of drilling. Drill sites shall be scarified and reseeded.

It is understood that the information from such drilling shall be made available to Department of Fish and Game and State Lands Commission. This permit shall in no way give Permittee any right to a lease or any other right to develop any minerals which may be discovered in the permit area. It is further understood, the staff of Fish and Game has found that the limited activities allowable under this permit are not incompatible with wildlife management objectives.

SURFACE DISTURBANCE:

Access to drill sites will be attained by an existing old logging road and by off road travel. No new road construction will be permitted. Surface disturbance is estimated to be approximately 80 square feet per drill site or a total of 0.02 acre for all 13 holes. The maximum anticipated excavated volume if all 13 holes are drilled to a depth of 200 feet will be approximately 9 cubic yards.

On June 25 and 26, 1987, an archeological field survey of the project area was conducted by Roger H. Werner. No significant cultural resources were located within the project area. A copy of this archeological field survey is on file in the Long Beach office of the State Lands Commission.

RECLAMATION:

Drill holes shall be abandoned as follows:

Upon abandonment, approximately five feet of surface casing required for drilling will be removed. Drill holes which do not encounter water shall be backfilled by replacement of drill cuttings into the hole. Drill holes which encounter water shall be abandoned in accordance with California Department of Water Resources Water Well Standards. Impervious sealing material is restricted to the use of bentonite clay only. Mixing of this bentonite clay is restricted to portable tanks or troughs only. No mud pits may be excavated. The top five feet of holes which are abandoned using bentonite clay shall be filled with drill cuttings so as to blend with the existing soil. Drill cuttings which are not utilized in backfilling operations shall be promptly removed from the State parcel.

To reduce impacts to recreational activities and deer resources, prospecting activities shall be restricted to the following time periods:

A. May 15 through August 10.

B. October 5 until deer migration occurs as determined by the Department of Fish and Game.

These dates may vary depending on deer migration and are subject to change by the Department of Fish and Game.

PREREQUISITE ITEMS:

1. Required statutory filing fee, expense deposit and acreage deposit have been submitted by the Applicant.

2. Subject parcel is not known to contain a commercially valuable deposit of minerals.

AB 884: 11/18/87.

OTHER PERTINENT INFORMATION:

1. Pursuant to the Commission's delegation of authority and the State CEQA Guidelines (14 Cal. Adm. Code 15025), the staff has prepared and circulated for public review a proposed Negative Declaration identified as EIR ND 420, State Clearinghouse 87052507, pursuant to the provisions of the CEQA. A copy of this environmental document is attached as Exhibit "C".

   Based upon the initial study, the proposed Negative Declaration, and the comments received in response thereto, there is no substantial evidence that the project will have a significant effect on the environment (14 Cal. Adm. Code 15074[b]).

2. Permit shall provide for a performance bond or other security device of $10,000 in favor of the State.

APPROVALS OBTAINED:

The subject permit application has been approved by the Office of the Attorney General as to compliance with the applicable provisions of the law with the understanding that; (1) the final legal form of the permit shall be approved by the Office of the Attorney General; and (2) the permit shall not be issued until the Department of Fish and Game executes the permit consistent with the provisions of Title 14 of CAC Section 550.

EXHIBITS:

A. Land Description.
B. Site Map.
C. Negative Declaration.

IT IS RECOMMENDED THAT THE COMMISSION:

1. CERTIFY THAT NEGATIVE DECLARATION ND 420, STATE CLEARINGHOUSE 87052507, WAS PREPARED FOR THIS PROJECT PURSUANT TO THE PROVISIONS OF THE CEQA AND THAT THE COMMISSION HAS REVIEWED AND CONSIDERED THE INFORMATION CONTAINED THEREIN. THE PROJECT SHALL INCLUDE THIS PERMIT AND ANY EXTENSION THE COMMISSION MAY GRANT IN ITS DISCRETION FOR THE SAME PROJECT DESCRIBED IN THE PERMIT. ANY EXTENSION SHALL NOT EXCEED ONE YEAR.

CALENDAR ITEM NO. 37 (CONT'D)

2. DETERMINE THAT THE PROJECT, AS DESCRIBED IN THE PERMIT, WILL NOT HAVE A SIGNIFICANT EFFECT ON THE ENVIRONMENT.

3. AUTHORIZE THE ISSUANCE OF A NONEXCLUSIVE CORE DRILLING PERMIT TO HECLA MINING COMPANY FOR A TERM OF TWO YEARS, ON (1) SW1/4 OF SW1/4 OF SECTION 22, T21N, R15E, MDM, SIERRA COUNTY; (II) NW1/4 OF NW1/4 OF SECTION 27, T21N, R15E, MDM, SIERRA COUNTY, CONTAINING APPROXIMATELY 80 ACRES, MORE OR LESS; IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE STANDARD FORM OF CORE DRILLING PERMIT.

EXHIBIT "A"

LAND DESCRIPTION W 40526

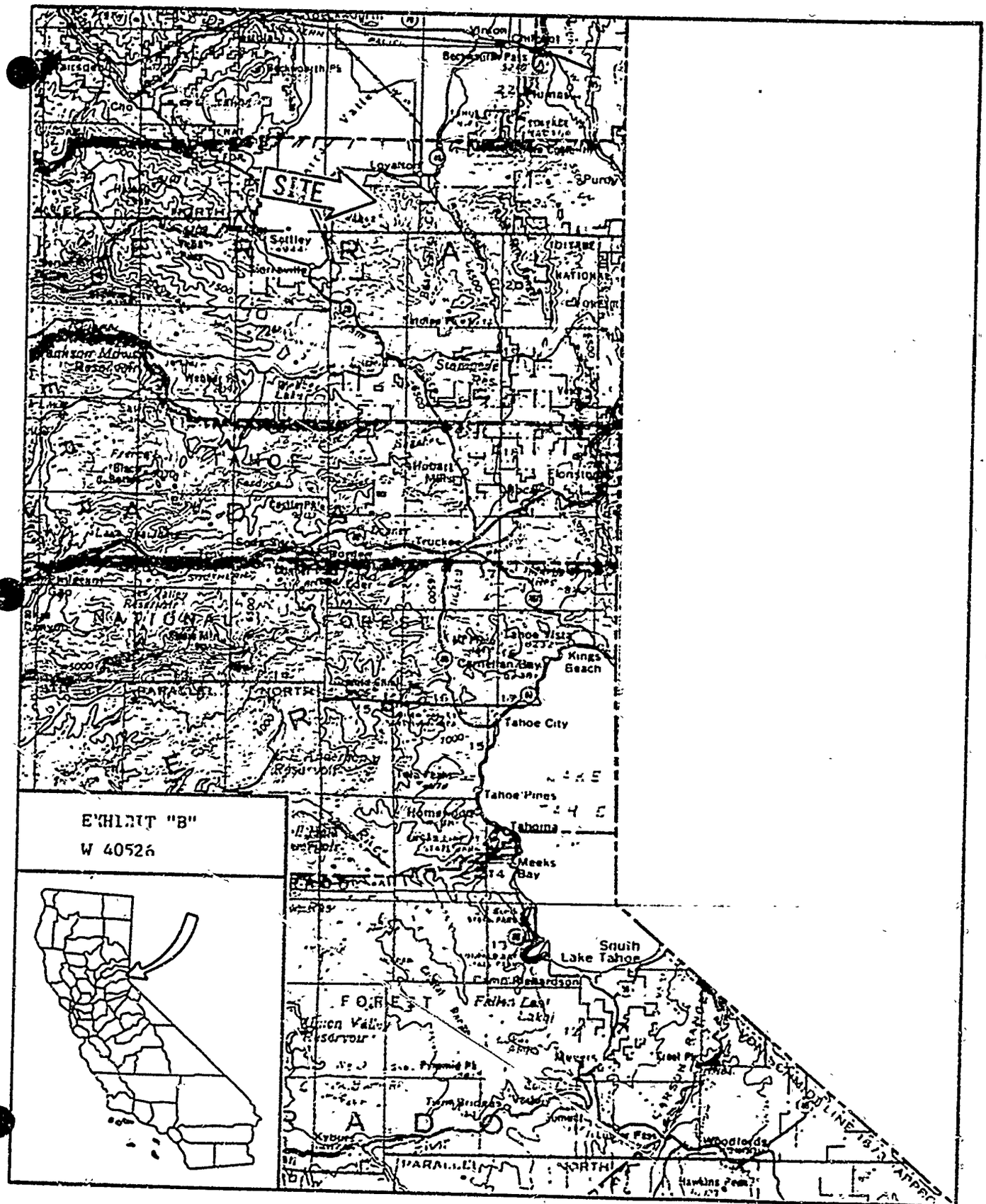
Two parcels of state-owned land in Sierra County, California, described as follows:

The SW 1/4 of SW 1/4 of Section 22, and the NW 1/4 of NW 1/4 of Section 27, T21N, R15E, MDM.

END OF DESCRIPTION

PREPARED AUGUST 17, 1987, BY BIU 1.

0550b



CALENDAR PAGE 235.6
MINUTE PAGE 3206

STATE OF CALIFORNIA STATE LANDS COMMISSION

GEORGE DEUKMEJIAN, Governor

STATE LANDS COMMISSION
1807 13TH STREET
SACRAMENTO, CALIFORNIA 95814

PROPOSED NEGATIVE DECLARATION

EIR ND 420

File Ref.: W 40526

SCH#: 8705 2507

Project Title: Mineral Prospecting Permit - Antelope Valley Area

Project Proponent: Hecla Mining Company

Project Location: SW¼ of SW¼, Section 22, NW¼ of NW¼, Section 27, T.21 N., R.15 E., M.D.M., approximately 3 miles southwesterly of Loyalton, Sierra County.

Project Description: Prospecting for precious metals and other valuable minerals by drilling 13 holes, 4-1/8 inches in diameter to a maximum depth of 200 feet with a track mounted reverse air circulation rig. Approximately ½ cubic foot of drill cuttings will be retained at five foot intervals for off-site assaying. Drill holes will be properly abandoned. Drill sites will be scarified and seeded.

Contact Person: TED T. FUKUSHIMA **Telephone:** (916)322-7813

This document is prepared pursuant to the requirements of the California Environmental Quality Act (Section 21000 et seq., Public Resources Code), the State CEQA Guidelines (Section 15000 et seq., Title 14, California Administrative Code), and the State Lands Commission regulations (Section 2901 et seq., Title 2, California Administrative Code).

Based upon the attached Initial Study, it has been found that:

/ / the project will not have a significant effect on the environment.

/x/ mitigation measures included in the project will avoid potentially significant effects.

CALENDAR PAGE 235.7
MINUTE PAGE 3207
Form 13.17 (10/84)

File Ref.: W 40526

SCH# 87052507

MITIGATION MEASURES

Proposed for Incorporation into the Project Description

1. Access to the thirteen drillsites shall be confined to existing dirt roads and trails to the maximum extent feasible. Off road travel is to be restrained to the minimum required. No new road construction is permitted.

2. To minimize the production of fugitive dust, all vehicle speed shall not exceed 20 mph.

3. Permittee shall perform all activities so as to minimize impact on vegetation. No trees may be removed.

4. Upon completion of prospecting activities, all equipment and refuse will be promptly removed from the site.

5. All drill pads or areas disturbed by drilling activities shall be scarified and seeded by hand-broadcasting. The seed mixture type may be either that provided by the U.S. Forest Service for use in the area or be in accordance with the "Erosion and Sediment Control Guidelines for Developing Areas of the Sierras".

6. Drillholes which do not encounter water shall be backfilled by replacement of drill cuttings into the hole. Drillholes which encounter water shall be abandoned in accordance with California Department of Water Resources Water Well Standards. Impervious sealing material is restricted to the use of bentonite clay only. Mixing of this bentonite clay is restricted to portable tanks or troughs only. No mud pits may be excavated. The top five feet of holes which are abandoned using bentonite clay shall be filled with drill cuttings so as to blend with the existing soil. Drill cuttings which are not utilized in backfilling operations shall be promptly removed from the State parcel.

7. Prospecting activities shall be restricted to the following time period:

A. May 15 through August 10.
B. October 5 until deer migration occurs as determined by the Department of Fish and Game.

These dates may vary depending on deer migration and are subject to change by the Department of Fish and Game.

LETTER

Hecla Mining Company

June 26, 1987

State Lands Commission
245 West Broadway, Suite 425
Long Beach, California 90802

Attn: D. J. Everitts

Subject: Response: File Ref: W 40526

Dear Mr. Everitts:

1 Hecla Mining Company believes a Negative Declaration (ND) would be sufficient for this project. Drilling of this nature has been successfully completed and reclaimed on nearby property with minimal disturbance.

Sincerely,

Brent Willoughby
Project Manager

[illegible]

[illegible] Mineral Drive • Box C8000 • Coeur d'Alene, Idaho 83814-1939 • (208) 769-4100 • TELEX 326476

RESPONSE

1 Comment noted.

235.10
3210

LETTER

SIERRA COUNTY

Department of Planning and Building Inspection
[illegible]

July 7, 1987

State of California
Lands Commission
245 West Broadway, Suite 425
Long Beach, CA 90802

File: Hecla Mining
(W-40526)

Attn: Mr. D. J. Everitts
Assistance Chief

Dear Mr. Everitts:

This will acknowledge receipt of your June 19, 1987 request for comments on an initial study regarding an application of Hecla Mining Company for a mineral prospecting permit on State Fish and Game proprietary lands located in Antelope Valley, Sierra County.

First, you should be advised that the Sierra County Planning Commission, on July 10, 1986, issued a Special Use Permit to Hecla Mining Company to allow drilling of seven (7) angle reverse circulation holes to a depth of 200 feet in order to ascertain the ore potential of the eastern slopes of Antelope Valley. This applied only to a forty (40) acre parcel (APN 16-060-013 of private property.

We now understand that Hecla Mining Company is proposing a similar program on State Fish and Game Lands which consists of thirteen (13) exploratory holes. Your request for comments is therefore confined to this exploratory program and not further or subsequent development of private, State Fish and Game, or governmental lands.

The Board of Supervisors, during its regular meeting of July 7, 1987, considered the content of your June 19, 1987 packet and takes the position that mitigation and/or conditions of any permit granted by your agency contain the following:

1. The operator shall conform to those exploratory mining activities described within the submitted Special Use Permit Application. This includes no new road construction, noise and dust to be minimized, no tree removal, no alteration of stream beds, no mechanized dozer equipment, no on-site fuel storage, no camping or on-site occupancy. Any deviation from the proposed drilling operation plans shall be subject to Staff review.

2. Upon completion of the exploratory program, all equipment and refuse will be removed from the property.

RESPONSES

[illegible] mitigation measures number 1, [illegible] and 5.

1 Hecla Mining Company is restricted to only those [illegible] project descriptions within this Proposed Negative Declaration. [illegible] production of noise, alteration of stream beds, [illegible] equipment, on-site fuel storage and camping is not permitted.

2 See mitigation measure number 5.

3 Not applicable.

4 See mitigation measure number [illegible].

5 Prior to initiating exploratory activities, Hecla Mining Company [illegible] and maintain until released by the State, a bond or alternate [illegible] acceptable to the State in the amount of $10,000.

6 [illegible] the California Department of [illegible]

235.11
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LETTER (Cont.)

Mr. D. J. Everitts
July 7, 1987
Page Two

3. Upon completion of the 1986 operation, the temporary access road that was allowed to be built as a component of the 1985 Special Use Permit shall have to be bermed at its entry point to avoid continual vehicular use and becoming an entrenched roadway.

4. All drill pads or areas disturbed by drilling activities shall be smoothed, compacted and reseeded. The reseeding shall occur at an appropriate time of the year (May-August), prior to start of the winter season, to insure a high success rate. All drilling areas disturbed during the 1986 operation, as well as those not reclaimed from the 1985 permit, shall be reclaimed by May 15 1987. The seeding type shall be in accordance with the Erosion and Sediment Control Guidelines for Developing Areas of the Sierras".

5. Prior to initiating exploratory activities, the applicant shall provide a performance security in a form acceptable to the County in the amount of $100.00. The $500.00 performance security from 1985 will be retained by the County as well as the additional $100.00 until all areas disturbed during the 1985 and 1986 drilling operations are reclaimed to the satisfaction of Sierra County. The County shall retain the posted security until September 15, 1987 to insure that site stabilization and reseeding plans are complete.

6. All proposed uses of this property should be precluded during that period of time that migratory or verident deer movement is occurring or key winter-summer deer habitat is being used by deer.

Thank you and we would appreciate your consideration and approval of this request.

Sincerely,

SIERRA COUNTY
PLANNING DEPARTMENT

[signature]

[illegible]
Planning Director

THD [illegible]
cc [illegible], Board of Supervisors
[illegible] - Steve Bishop (Sierraville)
Planning

235.12
3212

LETTER

[illegible] THE RESOURCES AGENCY

DEPARTMENT OF FISH AND GAME

[illegible] ROAD SUITE A
[illegible] CALIFORNIA 95670
[illegible] 355-7020

AUG 5 1987

Mr. Gregory J. Pelka
State Lands Commission
245 West Broadway, Suite 425
Long Beach, CA 90802

Dear Mr. Pelka:

1 The Department of Fish and Game has reviewed the application of Hecla Mining Company to drill 13 exploratory holes on land included in the Antelope Valley Wildlife Management Area near Loyalton, Sierra County.

Hecla's exploratory activities have been observed in recent years on their patented land and nearby US Forest Service lands.

The application properly identifies the area as critical deer winter range for the Loyalton-Truckee deer her

The Department of Fish and Game concludes that a mitigated Negative Declaration is proper for this project. From a fish and wildlife viewpoint, the plan to abandon the dry drill holes by backfilling with drill cuttings is acceptable. If water is encountered, the drill hole should be partly filled with betonite clay with a soil cap. The impervious material should be mixed in portable containers to minimize surface disturbance. The mitigation measures include all those measures described in the "Detailed Project Description" included in their application.

2 Additionally, the Department will impose a time constraint on the drilling activities. The noise and attendant activities will result in unnecessary disturbance to wintering deer. Wintering deer do not leave the area totally until about mid-May. Early fall storms, usually in mid-October, mark the return of deer to their winter ranges. Deer archery season opens in mid-August and hunting recreational activities are common on the area until early October.

The requested activities must take place during the time when there will be no impact to recreational activities or the deer resource dependent on the Antelope Valley WMA. The Department therefore requires that the exploratory activity take place from May 15 through August 10 and from October 5 until deer migration occurs as determined by the Department. The start up and shut down dates may vary depending on deer migration and will be determined by the Department.

RESPONSES

1 See mitigation measure number 6

2 See mitigation measure number [illegible]

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LETTER (Cont.)

In conclusion, the Department contends that a mitigated Negative Declaration is proper following adoption of all mitigation measures contained in the project description and the time constraint requested by the Department.

Thank you for the opportunity to review this project. If I can be of further assistance, please contact Patricia Perkins, Wildlife Management Supervisor at (916) 355-7010.

Sincerely,

Patrick C. Green

/cl James D. Messersmith
Regional Manager

235.14
3214

LETTER

The United States Department of Agriculture
Forest Service
Sierraville Ranger District
P.O. Box 95
Sierraville, CA 96126

2810

JUL 3 1987

Mr. Gregory J. Pelka
State Lands Commission
245 West Broadway, Suite 425
Long Beach, CA 90802

Dear Mr. Pelka,

1 In response to your agency's letter dated June 19, 1987, regarding Hecla Mining Company's proposal and the need for an EIR or ND. It is my recommendation that an ND be used to address this project.

Over the past few years Hecla has performed similar exploratory drilling on National Forest Lands and we have seen minimal impact to other resources. Also, they have performed well in meeting our requirements for their operations.

Sincerely,

STEPHEN F. BISHOP
District Ranger

RESPONSE

1 [illegible]

235.15
3215

LETTER

[illegible] THE RESOURCES AGENCY
DEPARTMENT OF FORESTRY
[illegible]
GEORGE DEUKMEJIAN, Governor

June 23, 1987

Mr. D. J. Everitts
Assistant Chief
Extractive Development Program
State Lands Commission
245 West Broadway, Suite 425
Long Beach CA 90802

Dear Mr. Everitts

FILE REFERENCE W 40526
SCH# 87052507

We have reviewed the Application for a Prospecting Permit by Hecla Mining Company and believe a Negative Declaration would be appropriate for this phase of the project. We offer the following comments for your consideration as the project progresses

1. All activities on the wildlands and equipment used for exploratory purposes will need to comply with the state's fire prevention standards.

2. If this area is timberland and the prospecting results in a decision to conduct a mining project, a Timberland Conversion Permit may be required under the Forest Practice Act

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on this project. If you need further information please contact Doug Wickizer at the above address and phone number.

Sincerely,

Kenneth L. Delfino

Kenneth L. Delfino
Deputy Director for
Resource Management

Wh

cc Bob Brown

CONSERVATION IS WISE USE—KEEP CALIFORNIA GREEN AND GOLDEN

RESPONSES

1 The prospecting permit requires Hecla Mining Company [illegible] applicable laws and regulations [illegible] and with all applicable requirements [illegible]

2 Any mineral extraction leases issued to Hecla Mining Company [illegible] applicable laws and regulations [illegible] and with all applicable requirements [illegible] counties

235.16
3216

LETTER

CALIFORNIA REGIONAL WATER QUALITY CONTROL BOARD—
CENTRAL VALLEY REGION

24 July 1987

Mr. Greg Pelka
State Lands Commission
245 W. Broadway, Suite 425
Long Beach, CA 90802

HECLA MINING COMPANY - EXPLORATORY DRILLING IN ANTELOPE VALLEY, SIERRA COUNTY

1 Hecla Mining Company proposes to drill 13 boreholes on California Department of Fish and Game Land. We believe a Negative Declaration will be sufficient to cover our environmental concerns.

The boreholes should be abandoned, whether ground water is encountered or not, using impermeable material such as cement-bentonite grout.

If you have any questions, please call me at (916) 361-5655.

DANIEL T. WARD
Staff Engineer

DW:ss

cc: Mr. Joe Heckel, Sierra County Planning Dept., Downieville
Mr. Pete Dolms, Condor Environmental Management, Sonora

RESPONSE

1 See mitigation measure number 1

All exploratory holes drilled to date by Hecla Mining [illegible] abandoned [illegible] drilling cuttings in the hole [illegible] been encountered

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LETTER

PETITION REQUESTING EIR FOR
DRILLING PROJECT
PROPOSED FOR ANTELOPE VALLEY
July 1, 1987

The undersigned are responding to a request from the State Lands Commission regarding an application by Hecla Mining Company for a prospecting permit on State Fish and Game lands located in the Antelope Valley of Tahoe National Forest in northern Sierra County, California. A number of concerns lead us to request a full Environmental Impact Report before said permit is issued.

1 Initial concerns center around information on the Environmental Impact Assessment Checklist that are untrue and misleading. Of 69 questions concerning the impact the drilling of 13 wells would cause only 3 have been checked "yes". With out full geological and archeological studies many of the questions in the checklist must be answered "maybe", until more research is done. The proposed drilling is to be done over an identified fault and the effects of disrupting water strata in this area could have a much greater impact than implied.

2 The effect of increased traffic, noise, and dust on the residence of this valley is considerably underplayed in the report presented by Hecla. We are sensitive to the disruption of our life style and are opposed to the activities that will occur with the proposed Hecla Prospecting. Already the activity that has centered around the proposed Hecla project has caused local residence inconvenience as they have been forced to put up with increased traffic in areas that have been, until now, safe, quiet haunts for hiking, riding and bicycling.

3 It is implied in the Environmental Impact Assessment Checklist that no long term effects will result from the proposed prospecting permit in Antelope Valley. This is obviously untrue. This is just the first step in a project which, if undertaken, will subject this valley and the undersigned to disruptions of our way of life and even to the potential for severe health hazards.

We understand that the initial prospecting permit is concerned only with 13 wells, but also feel the initial prospecting cannot be separated from the project as a whole. The magnitude of an open pit mining operation using a cyanide extraction method threatens so much that nothing short of the greatest caution at every step of the projects adoption must be taken.

We the undersigned sincerely hope the State Lands Commission will require an Environmental Impact report before issuing a prospecting permit for the drilling of wells in Antelope Valley.

Signed by 66 local concerned citizens.

RESPONSES

1 On June 24 and [illegible], 1987, an archeological field survey of the project area was conducted by [illegible] H. Werner. No significant cultural resources were located within the project area. A copy of this archeological field survey is on file in the Long Beach office of the State Lands Commission.

According to California Division of Mines and Geology 1:250,000 [illegible] of California, the Hot Springs fault is approximately located [illegible] of the project. Since the drillholes will be [illegible] abandoned immediately after drilling as required by the Commission, the drilling should not disrupt water strata in the area.

2 The minor amount of increased traffic, noise, and dust generated in the project area will be temporary. Hecla Mining Company estimates drilling time not to exceed one day per hole.

3 This "project" involves a mineral prospecting permit which will [illegible] the drilling of 13 exploratory holes. Should the prospecting [illegible] successful, the applicant must apply for a mineral extraction [illegible] the granting of such leave, an environmental impact report will be prepared, circulated, and considered.

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LETTER

Dean Jennings
Star Route,
Loyalton, CA 96118

July 6, 1987

Mr. Gregory J. Folks
State Lands Commission
245 West Broadway, Suite 425
Long Beach, CA 90802

Dear Mr. Folks:

1 This is a response to your request for comments on the mineral prospecting permit application of Hecla Mining Company for drilling exploratory holes on land owned by California State Fish and Game.

Last Wednesday, July 1st, a meeting was conducted between Hecla Mining representatives and those residents of Sierra County which will be directly affected by their proposal of an open-pit, cyanide leaching process, gold mine.

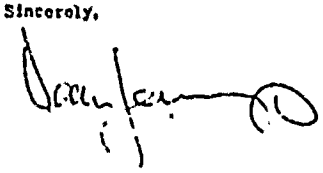
The permit application by Hecla came up during the course of conversation and many of us wondered why your letter of June 19th had not been sent to most of the local residents involved. This oversight has since been corrected; my copy arrived Friday and I thank you.

The environmental impact assessment checklist submitted by Hecla to your office as part of the initial study of the project lacked credibility in many of the question responses. Most of those present felt that for this return alone, Hecla would be required to submit to an Environmental Impact Report. A petition to that effect will soon be sent to you.

The meeting was held at the Bilderston Ranch, which lies due north of the proposed mine and the drilling site in question. Fred Bilderston is presently out of the country on business, and cannot respond to your letter. My wife and I have been, and are presently managers of his ranch on a year-round basis and the concerns that he has for this project are well known to us. The proposed drilling site is approximately 1000 yards up-gradient from Bilder Reservoir, which is at the south end of the ranch. We have been licenced by the State to grow trout on a commercial basis, which we have done for the past four years. A drilling operation could have a definate impact were it to disturb those springs feeding the lake. The answers given on the assessment checklist did not address this possibility.

On behalf of Mr. Bilderston, I request that an EIR be required for this project. Thank you for your consideration in this matter.

Sincerely,



RESPONSE

1 It has been an experience that properly abandoned drillholes do not [illegible] the water air ta.

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LETTER

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE
Soil Conservation Service
1350 N. Main St., Suite 1
Red Bluff, CA 96080
916-527-2667

July 14, 1987

State Lands Commission
245 West Broadway, Suite 425
Long Beach, CA 90802

Subject: Consultation Pursuant to Sec. 21080.3 of the Public Resource Code: (Antelope Valley Area)

Attention: Mr. Gregory J. Pelka

Dear Mr. Pelka:

1 The U.S.D.A., Soil Conservation Service believes a complete EIR is necessary for proposed mineral exploration in Antelope Valley, Sierra County.

We request this EIR due to concerns over soil, water, forage and wildlife resources in the Valley.

Linden A. Brooks
Area Conservationist

LAB:cje

RESPONSE

1 Based on the nature of the project, the currently [illegible] of governmental [illegible] notes (see comments received), and past [illegible] with this type of project, we do not [illegible]

235.20
3320

LETTER

SIERRA VALLEY RESOURCE CONSERVATION DISTRICT

P. O. Box 175
Loyalton, California 96118

July 1, 1987

State Lands Commission
245 West Broadway, Suite 425
Long Beach, CA 90802

Attn: Mr. Gregory J. Pelka

Subject: Consultation Pursuant to Section 21080.3 of the Public Resource Code (Antelope Valley Area)

1 C The Sierra Valley Resource Conservation District requests an EIR for proposed exploration in Antelope Valley.

Louis Genasce, President
Sierra Valley Resource
Conservation District
P. O. Box 175
Loyalton, CA 96118

RESPONSE

1 Comment noted

235.21
3221

File Ref.: W 40526
SCH# 87052507

June 19, 1987

INITIAL STUDY
INTRODUCTION

Hecla Mining Company has applied to the State Lands Commission for a mineral prospecting permit on State Fish and Game proprietary land located in the Antelope Valley of the Tahoe National Forest in northern Sierra County, California. The proposed project involves drilling 13 exploratory holes, 4 1/8 inch in diameter to a maximum depth of 200 feet to explore for precious metals. Access will be obtained by an existing dirt logging road and by off-road travel. Upon completion of drilling, all holes shall be properly abandoned, and drill sites reclaimed.

The permit when issued, is for a two-year period and may be extended for a maximum of one year.

This initial study consists of an environmental impact assessment checklist, detailed project description, information form response and maps.

STATE LANDS COMMISSION
June 1987

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STATE LANDS COMMISSION

W 40526

APPLICATION FOR PROSPECTING PERMIT

HECLA MINING COMPANY

SIERRA COUNTY

JUNE 1987

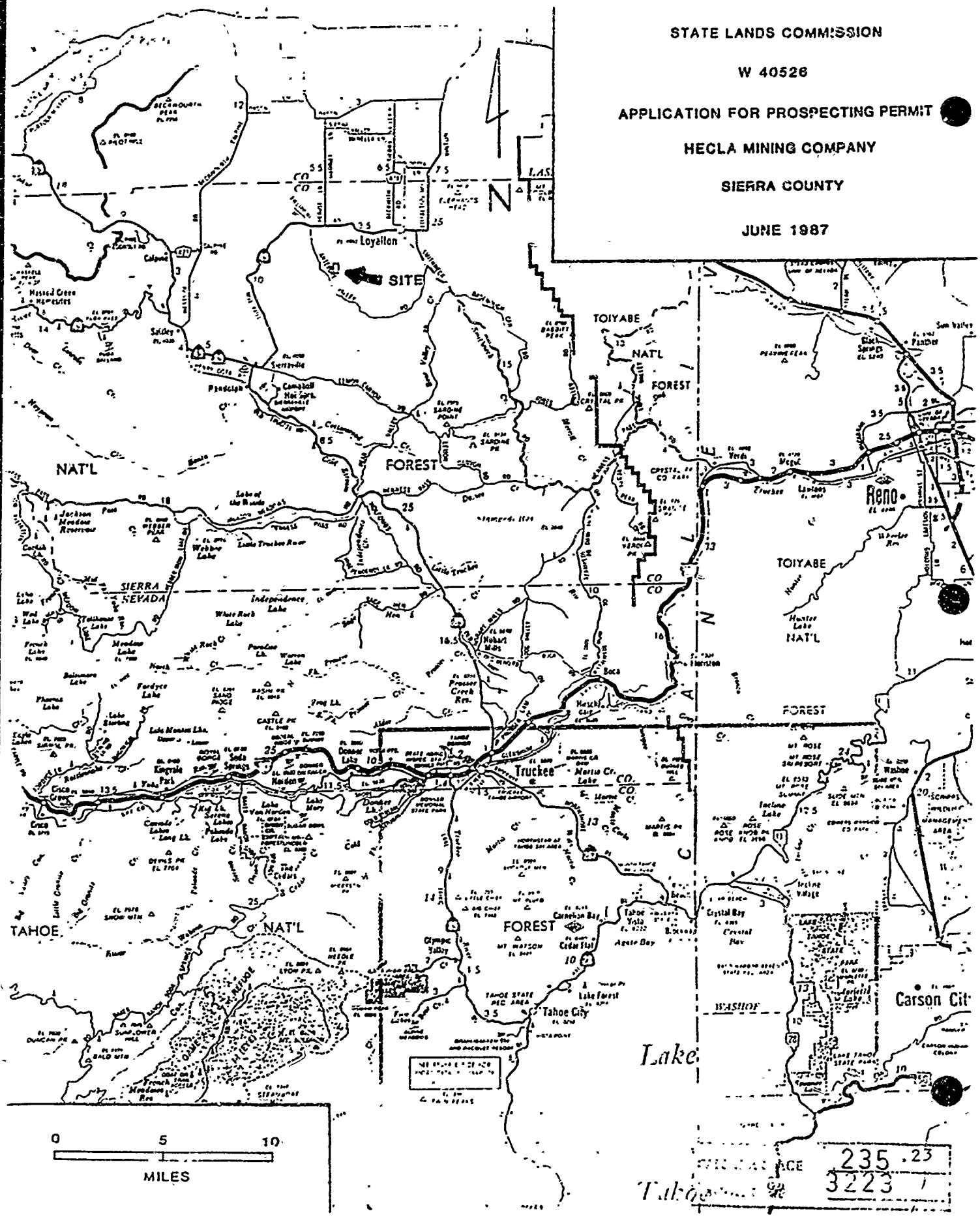

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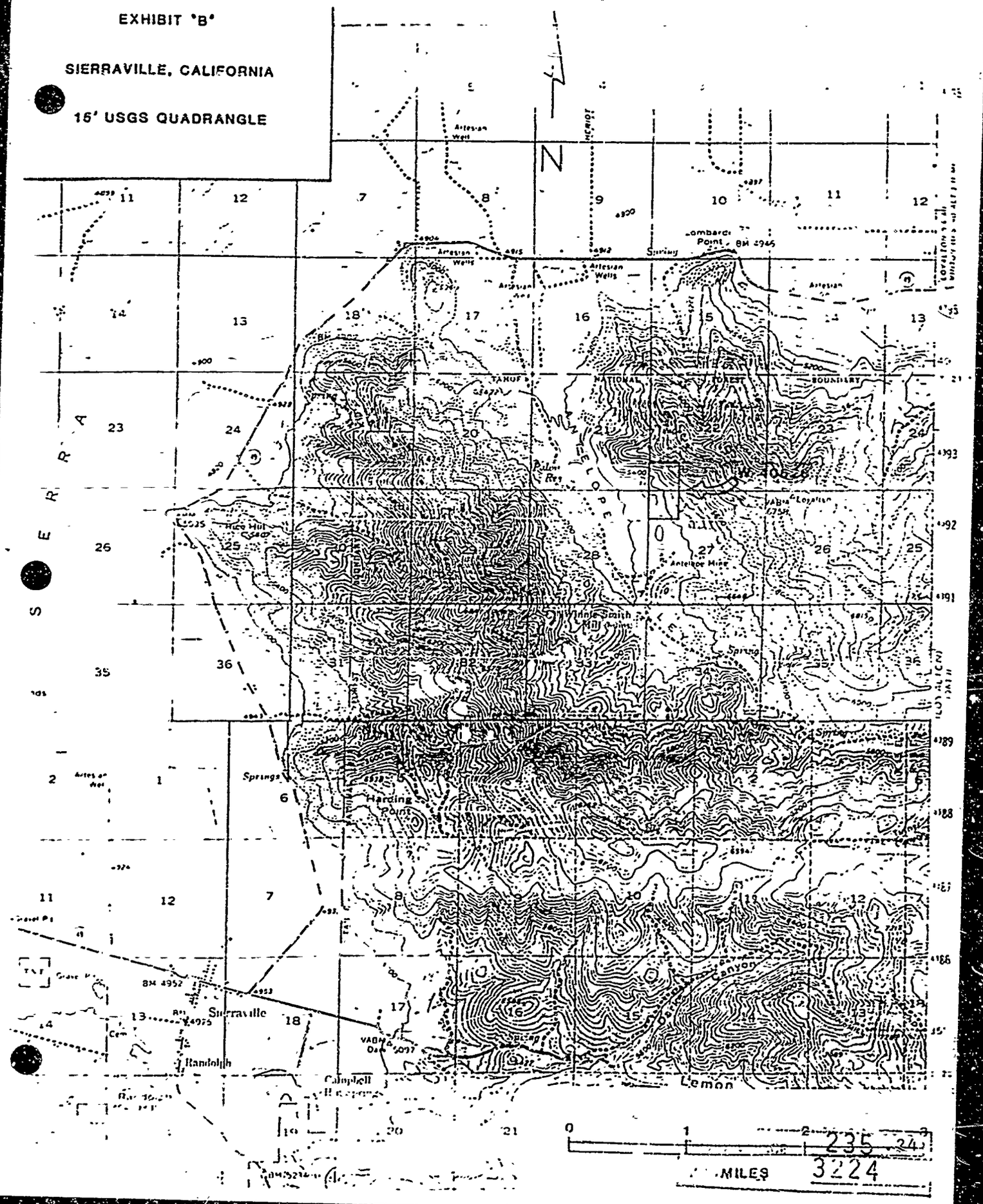
EXHIBIT "B"

SIERRAVILLE, CALIFORNIA

15' USGS QUADRANGLE



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W 40526

DETAILED PROJECT DESCRIPTION

Hecla Mining Company proposes to conduct precious metal exploration in the permit area by drilling 13 holes, 4 1/8 inches in diameter to a maximum depth of 200 feet and retaining samples for off-site assaying. Please refer to Exhibit A and B for location maps of the project. Refer to Exhibit C for a detailed parcel map showing individua drill hole locations and existing access.

Drilling will be accomplished using a track mounted reverse air circulation rig. A down-the-hole hammer will break the rock to 1/2 inch diameter particles which are blown out of the hole to a cyclone. Cuttings are retained at five foot intervals with approximately 1/2 cubic foot saved from each interval. The remaining cuttings will be stockpiled for backfilling the hole. No cores will be taken and no drilling mud will be used. Holes will be drilled at an approximate inclination of 45 degrees. The drilling crew will consist of three men who will be transported in one pickup truck. Lodging will be in a motel in the nearby town of Loyalton.

Access to the drill sites will be obtained by an existing old logging road and by off road travel. No new road construction will be permitted. Surface disturbance is estimated to be approximately 80 square feet per drill site or a total of 0.02 acre for all 13 holes. The maximum anticipated excavated volume if all the holes are drilled to a depth of 200 feet will be 9 cubic yards.

Upon abandonment, approximately five feet of surface casing required for drilling will be removed. Drill cuttings not retained as samples will be used to backfill each hole. In the event water is encountered during drilling, holes will be abandoned in accordance with California Department of Water Resources Water Well Standards. Drill sites will be scarified and seeded by hand-broadcasting. The seed mixture will be provided by the U.S. Forest Service for use in the area. A commercial fertilizer will be utilized to assist in germination and growth.

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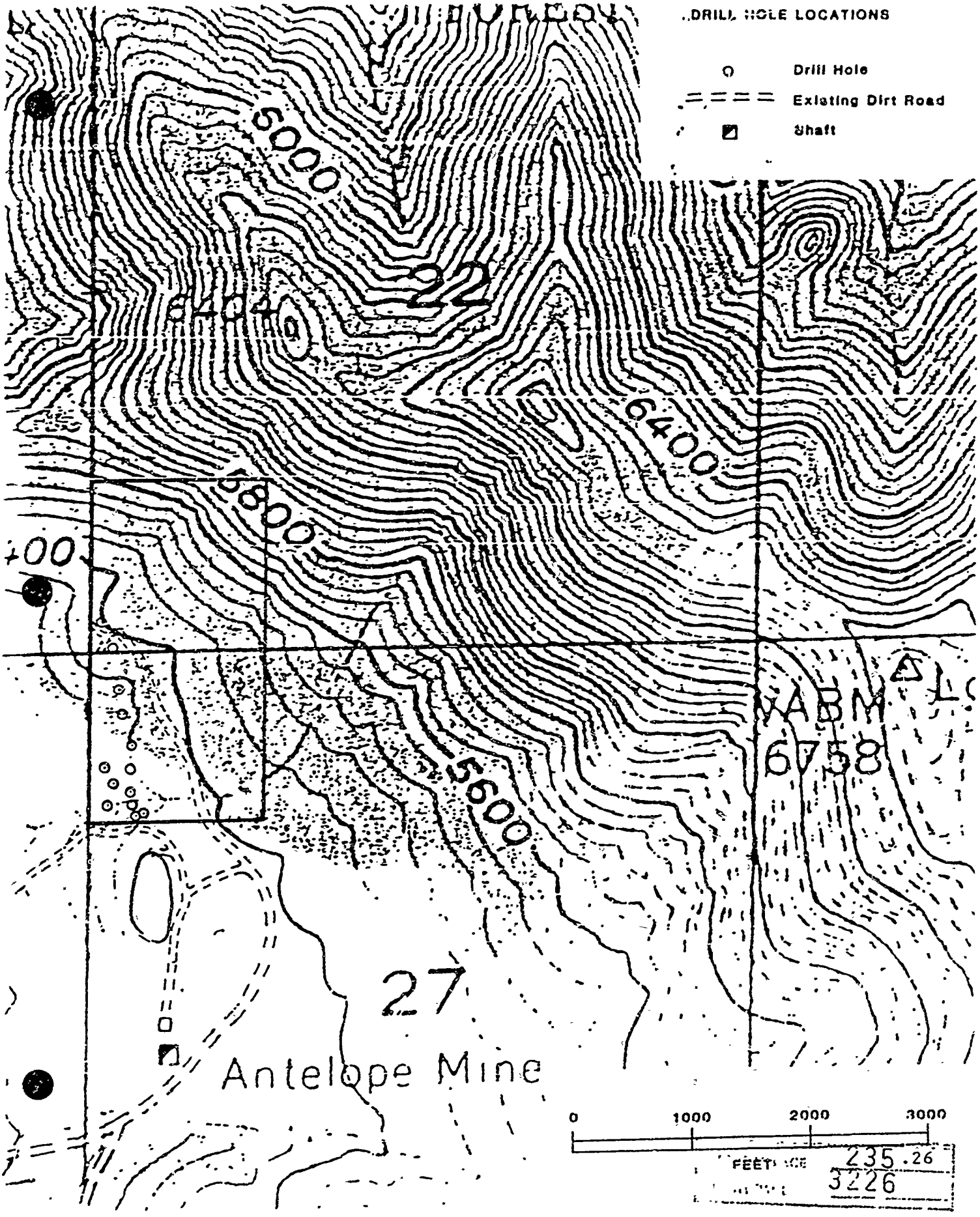
DRILL HOLE LOCATIONS
Drill Hole
Existing Dirt Road
Shaft
6000
6400
6800
6400
5600
27
Antelope Mine
0
1000
2000
3000
FEET
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ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT ASSESSMENT CHECKLIST – PART II

Form 13.20 (7/82)

File Ref.: [illegible]

I. BACKGROUND INFORMATION

A. Applicant: Hecla Mining Company
6500 Mineral Drive
Coeur d'Alene, Idaho 83814-1031

B. Checklist Date: 06 / 19 / 87

C. Contact Person: Gregory J. Pelko

Telephone: (213) 590-5201

D. Purpose: Prospecting for precious and other valuable minerals.

E. Location: S½ of S½ of Sec 22, T 21 N, R 15 E, MDM, Sierra County
N½ of N½ of Sec 27, T 21 N, R 15 E, MDM, Sierra County

F. Description: Drill 13 exploratory holes, 4 1/8 inch in diameter to a maximum depth of of 200 feet. Retain ½ cubic foot of sample from every five foot interval for off-site assaying. Properly abandon drill holes.

G. Persons Contacted:
James Messersmith-Regional Manager
Department of Fish and Game
1701 Nimbus Road, Suite A
Rancho Cordova, CA 95670

II. ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACTS. *(Explain all "yes" and "maybe" answers)*

	Yes	Maybe	No
A. *Earth.* Will the proposal result in:			
1. Unstable earth conditions or changes in geologic substructures?			X
2. Disruptions, displacements, compaction, or overcovering of the soil?	X		
3. Change in topography or ground surface relief features?			X
4. The destruction, covering, or modification of any unique geologic or physical features?			X
5. Any increase in wind or water erosion of soils, either on or off the site?			X
6. Changes in deposition or erosion of beach sands, or changes in siltation, deposition or erosion which may modify the channel of a river or stream or the bed of the ocean or any bay, inlet, or lake?			X
7. Exposure of all people or property to geologic hazards such as earthquakes, landslides, mudslides, ground failure, or similar hazards?			X

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	Yes	Maybe	No
B *Air* Will the proposal result in			
1 Substantial air emissions or deterioration of ambient air quality?			X
2 The creation of objectionable odors?			X
3 Alteration of air movement, moisture or temperature or any change in climate, either locally or regionally?			X
C *Water* Will the proposal result in			
1. Changes in the currents, or the course or direction of water movements, in either marine or fresh waters?			X
2 Changes in absorption rates, drainage patterns, or the rate and amount of surface water runoff?			X
3. Alterations to the course or flow of flood waters?			X
4 Change in the amount of surface water in any water body?			X
5. Discharge into surface waters, or in any alteration of surface water quality, including but not limited to temperature, dissolved oxygen or turbidity?			X
6. Alteration of the direction or rate of flow of ground waters?			X
7. Change in the quantity of ground waters, either through direct additions or withdrawals, or through interception of an aquifer by cuts or excavations?			X
8. Substantial reduction in the amount of water otherwise available for public water supplies?			X
9. Exposure of people or property to water-related hazards such as flooding or tidal waves?			X
10. Significant changes in the temperature, flow or chemical content of surface thermal springs?			X
D. *Plant Life* Will the proposal result in:			
1 Change in the diversity of species, or number of any species of plants (including trees, shrubs, grass, crops, and aquatic plants)?			X
2. Reduction of the numbers of any unique, rare or endangered species of plants?			X
3. Introduction of new species of plants into an area, or in a barrier to the normal replenishment of existing species?			X
4. Reduction in acreage of any agricultural crop?			X
E. *Animal Life* Will the proposal result in			
1. Change in the diversity of species, or numbers of any species of animals (birds, land animals including reptiles, fish and shellfish, benthic organisms, or insects)?			X
2. Reduction of the numbers of any unique, rare or endangered species of animals?			X
3 Introduction of new species of animals into an area, or result in a barrier to the migration or movement of animals?	X		
4. Deterioration to existing fish or wildlife habitat?			X
F *Noise.* Will the proposal result in:			
1 Increase in existing noise levels?	X		
2. Exposure of people to severe noise levels?			X
G. *Light and Glare* Will the proposal result in:			
1 The production of new light or glare?			X
H *Land Use* Will the proposal result in			
1 A substantial alteration of the present or planned land use of an area?			X
I *Natural Resources.* Will the proposal result in			
1 Increase in the rate of use of any natural resources?			X
2 Substantial depletion of any nonrenewable resources?			X

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J. *Risk of Upset.* Does the proposal result in:

	Yes	Maybe	No
1. A risk of an explosion or the release of hazardous substances (including, but not limited to, oil, pesticides, chemicals, or radiation) in the event of an accident or upset conditions?	☐	☐	☒
2. Possible interference with emergency response plan or an emergency evacuation plan?	☐	☐	☒
K. *Population.* Will the proposal result in:			
1. The alteration, distribution, density, or growth rate of the human population of the area?	☐	☐	☒
L. *Housing.* Will the proposal result in:			
1. Affecting existing housing, or create a demand for additional housing?	☐	☐	☒
M. *Transportation/Circulation.* Will the proposal result in:			
1. Generation of substantial additional vehicular movement?	☐	☐	☒
2. Affecting existing parking facilities, or create a demand for new parking?	☐	☐	☒
3. Substantial impact upon existing transportation systems?	☐	☐	☒
4. Alterations to present patterns of circulation or movement of people and/or goods?	☐	☐	☒
5. Alterations to waterborne, rail, or air traffic?	☐	☐	☒
6. Increase in traffic hazards to motor vehicles, bicyclists, or pedestrians?	☐	☐	☒
N. *Public Services.* Will the proposal have an effect upon, or result in a need for new or altered governmental services in any of the following areas:			
1. Fire protection?	☐	☐	☒
2. Police protection?	☐	☐	☒
3. Schools?	☐	☐	☒
4. Parks and other recreational facilities?	☐	☐	☒
5. Maintenance of public facilities, including roads?	☐	☐	☒
6. Other governmental services?	☐	☐	☒
O. *Energy.* Will the proposal result in:			
1. Use of substantial amounts of fuel or energy?	☐	☐	☒
2. Substantial increase in demand upon existing sources of energy, or require the development of new sources?	☐	☐	☒
P. *Utilities.* Will the proposal result in a need for new systems, or substantial alterations to the following utilities:			
1. Power or natural gas?	☐	☐	☒
2. Communication systems?	☐	☐	☒
3. Water?	☐	☐	☒
4. Sewer or septic tanks?	☐	☐	☒
5. Storm water drainage?	☐	☐	☒
6. Solid waste and disposal?	☐	☐	☒
Q. *Human Health.* Will the proposal result in:			
1. Creation of any health hazard or potential health hazard (excluding mental health)?	☐	☐	☒
2. Exposure of people to potential health hazards?	☐	☐	☒
R. *Aesthetics.* Will the proposal result in:			
1. The obstruction of any scenic vista or view open to the public, or will the proposal result in the creation of an aesthetically offensive site open to public view?	☐	☐	☒
S. *Recreation.* Will the proposal result in:			
[illegible]	☐	☐	☒

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1 [illegible] the alteration of or the destruction of a prehistoric or historic archeological site?

2 Will the proposal result in adverse physical or aesthetic effects to a prehistoric or historic building, structure, or object? . . . . . [ ] [ ] [X]

3 Does the proposal have the potential to cause a physical change which would affect unique ethnic cultural values? . . . . . [ ] [ ] [X]

4 Will the proposal restrict existing religious or sacred uses within the potential impact area? . . . . . [ ] [ ] [X]

U *Mandatory Findings of Significance.*

1 Does the project have the potential to degrade the quality of the environment, reduce the habitat of a fish or wildlife species, cause a fish or wildlife population to drop below self-sustaining levels, threaten to eliminate a plant or animal community, reduce the number or restrict the range of a rare or endangered plant or animal or eliminate important examples of the major periods of California history or prehistory? . . . [ ] [ ] [X]

2 Does the project have the potential to achieve short term, to the disadvantage of long-term, environmental goals? . . . . . [ ] [ ] [X]

3. Does the project have impacts which are individually limited, but cumulatively considerable? . . . . . [ ] [ ] [X]

4 Does the project have environmental effects which will cause substantial adverse effects on human beings, either directly or indirectly? . . . . . [ ] [ ] [X]

III. DISCUSSION OF ENVIRONMENTAL EVALUATION *(See Comments Attached)*

See attached discussion of environmental evaluation, environmental setting and detailed project description.

IV. PRELIMINARY DETERMINATION

On the basis of this initial evaluation:

[ ] I find the proposed project COULD NOT have a significant effect on the environment, and a NEGATIVE DECLARATION will be prepared.

[✓] I find that although the proposed project could have a significant effect on the environment, there will not be a significant effect in this case because the mitigation measures described on an attached sheet have been added to the project. A NEGATIVE DECLARATION will be prepared.

[ ] I find the proposed project MAY have a significant effect on the environment, and an ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT REPORT [illegible]

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Fred L. Fukushima
[illegible]

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III. Discussion of Environmental Evaluation

A 2. Disruption, displacement, compaction and overcovering of the soil will occur in the immediate vicinity of the drill sites. However, the disruption will be short term and all disturbed sites will be properly reclaimed.

E 3. The drilling activity will temporarily displace animals from the immediate vicinity. No long term effects are anticipated.

F 1. The operating drill rig will temporarily increase existing noise levels.

S 1. The drilling activity will temporarily reduce recreational opportunities on the project site.

The 80 acre parcel under application is within the 4,480± acre Antelope valley Wildlife Area acquired by the Wildlife Conservation Board for the California Department of Fish and Game (CDFG) in 1980. The CDFG acquired the parcel primarily for the prime deer winter range habitat as well as recreational opportunities including hunting, hiking, camping and general outdoor enjoyment. The federal government, through the Land and Water Conservation Fund, participated in this acquisition on a 50% basis. Due to the federal government's involvement, the CDFG has requested and received permission for conversion of land use for mineral prospecting activities.

In addition to CDFG lands in the Antelope Valley area of Sierra County, there exist an additional 16,300 acres belonging to

1) U.S. Department of Agriculture - Forest Service, Tahoe National Forest.
2) U.S. Department of the Interior - BLM, Susanville District.
3) Private Land both within and outside the NFS boundary.

Due to common land and resource management issues the private landowners and public agencies have united under the Antelope Valley Coordinated Resource Plan in order to best manage the land as an ecosystem. Common management concerns and goals of the private landowners and public agencies include:

1) protection and improvement of the deer winter range
2) coordination of livestock grazing with wildlife use
3) control of timber trespass
4) control of vehicle use in unauthorized areas

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5) abate stream erosion and raise the water table in Antelope Valley
6) the possibility of mineral resource development impacting other resources
7) the possibility of uncontrolled wildfire due to excess fuels

The entire area is zoned general forest. The general plan is designated intermediate forest for the entire Antelope Valley.

In the SW 1/4 of Section 27, immediately adjacent to the area under application lies the now abandoned Antelope Mine. This underground mine produced copper around the turn of the century from the same geologic formation in which present exploration is desired. Access to the underground workings of the Antelope Mine are no longer accessible.

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ENVIRONMENTAL SETTING

scribe the project site as it exists before commencement the project. Include information such as topography, il stability, plants and animals, and any cultural, storical or scenic aspects. Describe any existing ructures on the site, the use of the structures, and ether they will be retained or removed.

escribe the surrounding properties. Include information uch as topography, soil stability, plants and animals, nd any cultural, historical or scenic aspects. Indicate he type of land use and intensity of land use of the ea.

nclude a statement of the proposed liquid, solid or aseous waste disposal methods necessary for the rotection and preservation of existing land and water ses.

cant Responses:

he project site is on a hill which slopes gently to the southwest. The area is alluvial covered, with some yellow pine trees and bitter brush. The most noted animals are ule-deer. There are no existing structures on the site. ock outcrops consist of isolated zones approximately 20 eet by 100 feet of silicified volcanic material. Material surrounding the outcrops consists of talus and gravel, 5 to 40 feet in thickness. No known cultural or historical resources occur on the project site. An archeological survey of the project site and surrounding area is anticipated to be completed by the middle of July. Scenic aspects consist of wooded, rolling hills overlooking Antelope Valley. The State land has the same features as that surrounding it.

The Antelope Valley area is on the eastside of the main Sierra Nevada range and is characterized by the dry climate and ecosystem typical of the Great Basin. Antelope Valley proper is a broad valley floor with a spring fed stream. The surrounding ridges are dominated by stands of Jeffrey pine, with the west slopes onto the Sierra Valley tending to a juniper/cedar - sagebrush - annual grassland. Antelope Valley contains bitterbrush, mountain mahogany, sagebrush as well as perennial and annual grasses. Elevations range from 5000' to 6800'. The area has a history of fire as well as recent (past 100 years) logging.

The entire area is key deer winter range for the Loyalton - Truckee deer herd. The abundance of bitterbrush, mountain mahogany, sagebrush, and adjacent alfalfa and other croplands as well as the relative scarcity of snow make this a critical area to wintering deer.

Ranches border the west and north edge of the area. Typically, these ranches are on the valley floor and contain private land extending within the exterior forest boundary. Grazing usually extends onto the forest via on-off or regular permits since the forest boundary is rarely fenced in this area.

Drilling for precious metals has been successfully completed on nearby property by Hecla Mining Company. Additional land use includes wildlife habitat and recreation.

3. The drilling will be performed with reverse air circulation and the cuttings will be retained. All trash will be removed from the site.

. OF ENVIRONM...

...ing acquisition, develop...
Please answer the following qu...
... maybe on additional sheet(s)

	YES	MAYBE	NO
...ures of any bays, tidelands, beaches, lakes or hills, or ground contours?	[ ]	[ ]	[X]
...s from existing residential areas or public lands or roads?	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]
...ate or character of the general area of the project?	[ ]	[ ]	[X]
...ant or animal life?	[ ]	[ ]	[X]
...f solid waste or litter?	[ ]	[ ]	[X]
... smoke, fumes or odors in the vicinity?	[ ]	[ ]	[X]
...bay, lake, stream or ground water quality or quantity, or an drainage patterns?	[ ]	[ ]	[X]
...e noise or vibration levels in the vicinity?	[ ]	[ ]	[X]
...ed land or on a slope of 10 percent or more?	[ ]	[ ]	[X]
... potentially hazardous materials such as toxic or radioactive ...mables or explosives?	[ ]	[ ]	[X]
...and for municipal services (e.g., police, fire, water, sewage)?	[ ]	[ ]	[X]
... fuel consumption (e.g., electricity, oil, natural gas)?	[ ]	[ ]	[X]
...t or a series of projects?	[ ]	[ ]	[X]

PART V

CERTIFICATION

...nformation and materials furnished in this application are true and complete to the best of my ...lief. I recognize that this application and the project it addresses are subject to all laws of the ..., and the regulations and discretionary policies of the State Lands Commission.

Gene K. Ealy *Gene K. Ealy* Date: 4/10/87

Vice President - Exploration

Date

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ENVIRONMENTAL SETTING

1. Describe the project site as it exists before commencement of the project. Include information such as topography, soil stability, plants and animals, and any cultural, historical or scenic aspects. Describe any existing structures on the site, the use of the structures, and whether they will be retained or removed.

2. Describe the surrounding properties. Include information such as topography, soil stability, plants and animals, and any cultural, historical or scenic aspects. Indicate the type of land use and intensity of land use of the area.

3. Include a statement of the proposed liquid, solid or gaseous waste disposal methods necessary for the protection and preservation of existing land and water uses.

Applicant Responses:

1. The project site is on a hill which slopes gently to the southwest. The area is alluvial covered, with some yellow pine trees and bitter brush. The most noted animals are mule-deer. There are no existing structures on the site. Rock outcrops consist of isolated zones approximately 20 feet by 100 feet of silicified volcanic material. Material surrounding the outcrops consists of talus and gravel, 5 to 40 feet in thickness. No known cultural or historical resources occur on the project site. An archeological survey of the project site and surrounding area is anticipated to be completed by the middle of July. Scenic aspects consist of wooded, rolling hills overlooking Antelope Valley. The State land has the same features as that surrounding it.

2. The Antelope Valley area is on the eastside of the main Sierra Nevada range and is characterized by the dry climate and ecosystem typical of the Great Basin. Antelope Valley proper is a broad valley floor with a spring fed stream. The surrounding ridges are dominated by stands of Jeffrey pine, with the west slopes onto the Sierra Valley tending to a juniper/cedar - sagebrush - annual grassland. Antelope Valley contains bitterbrush, mountain mahogany, sagebrush as well as perennial and annual grasses. Elevations range from 5000' to 6800'. The area has a history of fire as well as recent (past 100 years) logging.

The entire area is key deer winter range for the Loyalton - Truckee deer herd. The abundance of bitterbrush, mountain mahogany, sagebrush, and adjacent alfalfa and other croplands as well as the relative scarcity of snow make this a critical area to wintering deer.

Ranches border the west and north edge of the area. Typically, these ranches are on the valley floor and contain private land extending within the exterior forest boundary. Grazing usually extends onto the forest via on-off or regular permits since the forest boundary is rarely fenced in this area.

Drilling for precious metals has been successfully completed on nearby property by Hecla Mining Company. Additional land use includes wildlife habitat and recreation.

3. The drilling will be performed with reverse air circulation and the cuttings will be retained. All trash will be removed from the site.

SECTION C: ASSESSMENT OF ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACTS

All phases of a project, such as planning, acquisition, develop[illegible] its impact on the environment. Please answer the following questions by placing a check [illegible] appropriate [illegible] Discuss all items checked "yes" or "maybe" on additional sheet(s).

Will the project involve	YES	MAYBE	NO
1. A change in existing features of any bays, tidelands, beaches, lakes or hills, or substantial alteration of ground contours?	[ ]	[ ]	[X]
2. A change in scenic views from existing residential areas or public lands or roads?	[ ]	[ ]	[X]
3. A change in pattern, scale or character of the general area of the project?	[ ]	[ ]	[X]
4. Significant effect on plant or animal life?	[ ]	[ ]	[X]
5. Significant amounts of solid waste or litter?	[ ]	[ ]	[X]
6. A change in dust, ash, smoke, fumes or odors in the vicinity?	[ ]	[ ]	[X]
7. A change in ocean, bay, lake, stream or ground water quality or quantity, or an altering of existing drainage patterns?	[ ]	[ ]	[X]
8. A change in existing noise or vibration levels in the vicinity?	[ ]	[ ]	[X]
9. Construction on filled land or on a slope of 10 percent or more?	[ ]	[ ]	[X]
10. Use or disposal of potentially hazardous materials such as toxic or radioactive substances, flammables or explosives?	[ ]	[ ]	[X]
11. A change in demand for municipal services (e.g., police, fire, water, sewage)?	[ ]	[ ]	[X]
12. Increase in fossil fuel consumption (e.g., electricity, oil, natural gas)?	[ ]	[ ]	[X]
13. A larger project or a series of projects?	[ ]	[ ]	[X]

PART V

CERTIFICATION

I certify that all information and materials furnished in this application are true and complete to the best of my knowledge and belief. I recognize that this application and the project it addresses are subject to all laws of the State of California, and the regulations and discretionary policies of the State Lands Commission.

Applicant: Gene K. Ealy *Gene K. Ealy* Date: 4/10/87

Title: Vice President - Exploration

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Date: 3238