Overview of BLM Abandoned Mine Lands Program

Restoring Watersheds Impacted by Abandoned Mines, Protecting Public Safety and Liability, and Using Risk-Based Decision Making

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Inventory

Inventory crews walk the area around Mining Districts collecting field data with GPS-equipped dataloggers. Abandoned mine features and sites are recorded into the Abandoned Mine and Site Cleanup Module database. Sites are tracked from discovery to remediation and monitoring/maintenance.

BLM analyzes each mine in terms of risk to human health and environment to determine if an action is needed and to rank sites. BLM evaluates each site using the recreational visitor screening assessment.

Risk Analysis

The BLM AML program mitigates risk to humans while protecting wildlife habitat and preserving historical integrity.

Response Actions — Physical Safety Hazards

Installation of a bat cupola – La Florida Mountains, New Mexico.

Construing support for the riser. Applying polyurethane foam. Backfilling the mine shaft. Finished bat gate.

Other examples of closures.

Bat gate in adit. Wildlife-friendly mesh. Cupola installation that preserves historical integrity.

Response Actions — Environmental Mitigation

Abandoned mine sites are assessed for contaminants and contaminant pathways and are remediated to reduce exposure to visitors and impacts to the environment.

Mine Effluent – Example from Champagne Creek, Idaho.

Mine Effluent. Passive water treatment using cells filled with organic debris to raise pH of water and precipitate metals.

Contaminated Soil – Example from Grants Uranium Belt, New Mexico.