



File Code: 2810, 1950

Date: January 9, 2008

Dear Forest User:

The Gallatin National Forest Big Timber Ranger District is seeking your comment on a mineral exploration proposal in East Boulder Plateau area of the Stillwater Complex. You are being contacted since you may be potentially interested in or affected by implementation of this proposal. The purpose for action is the submission of Beartooth Platinum Corporation's Chrome Mountain – Gallatin 2008 Plan of Operations. The proposal covers the same area analyzed and approved in Beartooth Platinum's Chrome Mountain - 2007 permit, which expires on July 5, 2008. The need for action is the Forest Service's responsibility to approve, or require modifications to, the Plan of Operations in accordance with Federal mining and environmental law.

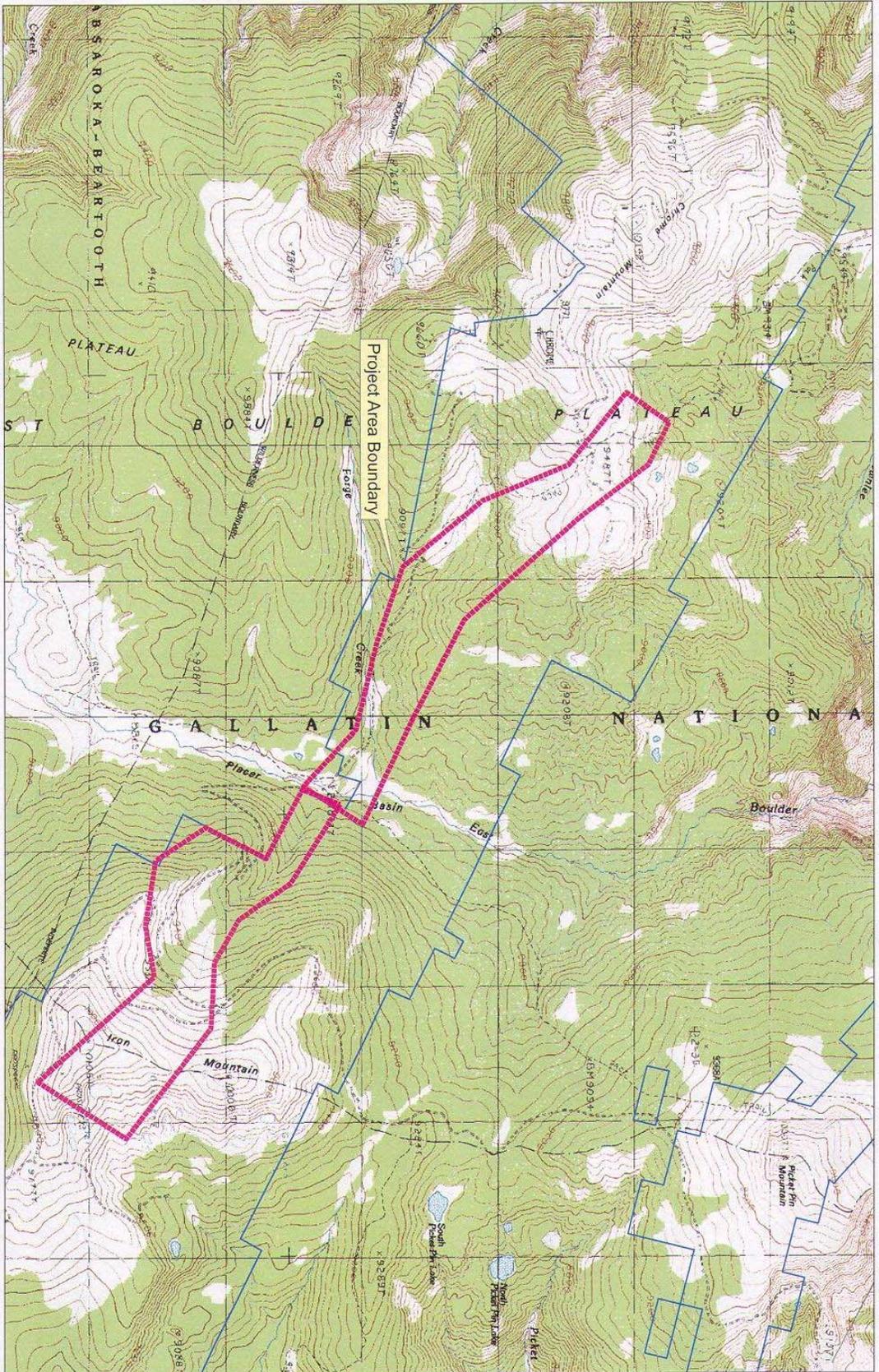
Project Description

Beartooth Platinum proposes to conduct exploratory core drilling on the Gallatin National Forest in the East Boulder Plateau area between Nye and Big Timber, Montana. Drilling is proposed in tributaries to the Boulder River, and East Boulder River (Figure 1 - Drilling Area Map). Drilling area legal description is T4S, R13E, Sections 33, and 34; T5S, R13E, Sections 2, 3, 11, and 12 P.M.M. A maximum of 40 sites would be drilled in this area on the Gallatin National Forest. Up to two drill rigs would be working at one time. Where ground-conditions permit, a small track-mounted backhoe would be driven to drill sites and used for site leveling and reclamation. As each exploration hole is completed, the drill rig would be moved to the next location, and reclamation would be completed. Specific items proposed in the Plan of Operations include:

Access and Timing

Primary access would be via Picket Pin Road # 2140 and Chrome Mountain Road #140. No road or trail construction or reconstruction is proposed. Beartooth Platinum would be required to complete road maintenance commensurate with the amount of use by their employees. This could include cleaning ditches and culverts and repair of any exploration-related damage to roads and road drainage features. Dependent upon weather and snow conditions, drilling could be scheduled to start operations as early as July 1 on the Gallatin National Forest.





Bearrooth Platinum Corporation
 Proposed Drill Area Boundary
 on the Gallatin Forest to Accompany
 the 2008 Plan of Operations
 December 18, 2007

1 inch equals 1,500 feet
 0 0.5 1 1.5 2 Miles



Project Scoping Letter *for*
Beartooth Platinum Corporation – Proposed 2008 Gallatin Plan of Operations
Page 3 of 6

The majority of the drill sites would be mobilized with ground-based travel both on and off existing routes, while others would be mobilized with helicopters.

All drilling would be completed in fall 2008.

Exploratory Drilling

Up to an overall 30 feet by 50 feet area would be occupied at each drill site. A small drill rig, either mounted on tracks, a trailer, or a helicopter-transportable module, would be used at each drill site. To minimize impacts to surface resources, emphasis would be placed on setting up drills in existing openings and rocky areas. Actual drill-pad locations will be determined by local geology and surface morphology and on the ground review by a USFS representative. Exact drill site locations will be determined with the intent of locating drill sites in a manner that minimizes impacts to the environment and forest surface resources.

To provide for worker safety, potentially hazardous trees may be felled at some sites prior to use. At sites with sparse tree cover, hazard tree felling would not always be necessary. If trees are cleared, cut materials would be used for reclamation or leveling drill rigs. To minimize the need for site leveling, drill rigs would have self-leveling legs or blocks. Local materials (down logs, rocks) could also be utilized for drill rig leveling. Water for drilling would initially be pumped or gravity-fed from local sources such as springs, seeps, and creeks. During drilling, water and drill cuttings would be collected in an infiltration gallery, where cuttings would settle out and water would be reused for drilling. Drilling at each site would occur 24 hours per day.

Reclamation

All areas disturbed by exploration operations (drill sites, water drafting sites, equipment storage areas, helispots, access routes, etc.) would be reclaimed to prevent or control environmental damage and return the areas to a stable configuration similar to the original condition. Any excavated topsoil and organic matter would be stockpiled separate from the mineral soil and utilized for site reclamation. Upon completion of the drill hole, Beartooth Platinum would dispose of drill cuttings and plug drill holes in compliance with applicable State and Federal law.

Other specific reclamation measures would depend on site conditions, but could include road/trail maintenance, loosening compacted areas, re-contouring, installing waterbars, distribution of woody debris and organic matter, revegetation, and noxious weed treatment.

Reclamation would be concurrent with operations or occur immediately after completion of activities at the site.

Regulatory framework

Federal Mining Laws

Laws governing activities on National Forest System lands provide the public a statutory right to conduct locatable mineral exploration, provided activities are reasonably incident to mining and comply with other Federal laws and regulations (1872 Mining Law, 1897 Organic Act, 1955 Mining Law and case law). Federal regulations direct the Forest Service to regulate such activities for the purpose of minimizing adverse environmental effects to surface resources (36 CFR 228A).

Gallatin Forest Plan

The Gallatin National Forest Land and Resource Management Plan (*Gallatin Forest Plan*) Forest-wide goal pertinent to minerals is to “Provide for orderly and environmentally acceptable exploration and development of minerals, oil and gas, and geothermal resources” (page II-1, *Gallatin Forest Plan*). *Gallatin Forest Plan* Forest-wide standards include “Existing and future rights to prospect, develop and mine on National Forest lands open to mineral entry will be recognized” and “The type of access approved in a plan of operations under 36 CFR 228 will be consistent with the stage of exploration or development and will be in accordance with management area goals” (page II-24). Beartooth Platinum’s activities are proposed in *Gallatin Forest Plan* Management Areas 3, 6, 16, and 17. The MA 3 goal is “Managed essentially in their present condition to protect existing improvements and resources, with minimal investment for resource activities” (page III-8). The MA 6 goal is “Provide for a wide variety of dispersed recreational opportunities and provide for additional public access to these areas” (page III-17).

The MA 16 goal is “Maintain or improve vegetative conditions and forage production for livestock use” (page III-50). The MA 17 goal is “Maintain or improve vegetative conditions and forage production for livestock and wildlife use” (page III-52).

Though not repeated here, other applicable forest-wide goals, objectives, and management area standards, including protection of air, cultural resources, fish, recreation opportunities, soils, visual resources, water, and wildlife, can be found in the *Gallatin Forest Plan* (pages II-I to III-71).

NEPA and Forest Service Policy

The National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) and Forest Service Policy specify that routine proposed actions within specific categories, including mineral exploration, be addressed through an environmental analysis referred to as a categorical exclusion (Forest Service Handbook 1909.15-2007-1). If it is determined that the degree of potential effects would result in extraordinary circumstances, further environmental analysis and documentation may be warranted.

Preliminary Issue Identification and Resolution

Preliminary potential issues identified by the Forest Service and potential issue resolutions in Beartooth Platinum’s Plans of Operations are displayed in the following table:

Potential Issues	Potential Issue Resolution
Effects to water quality.	No drilling in streams or wetlands. When possible, locate drill sites and infiltration galleries at least 300 feet from fish bearing streams and 200 feet from other riparian areas. No discharge to surface water. Fuel and equipment storage standards. Spill containment and reporting plan. Site reclamation and monitoring.
Effects to wildlife and sensitive plants.	Limit lower elevation helicopter flight routes during specific wildlife-use periods. Conduct Biological Evaluation to identify timing and operating restrictions needed to reduce or eliminate effects and adjust drill site locations/operations as needed.
Effects to archaeological resources.	Drilling areas were inventoried in 2007 in order to identify any potential impacts from ground disturbance and drill site locations/operations.
Effects to recreational users	Minimize trips into drill sites. Reclaim or repair impacts to roads, trails, or routes. No helicopter landings or low elevation flights in the Absaroka-Beartooth Wilderness
Effects of overland travel to vegetation and soils.	Require specific conditions of use, such as concentrating use in open and rocky areas and no overland travel during excessively wet periods. Reclamation of disturbed areas will be required.
Noxious weed spread.	Wash and inspect all equipment for noxious weed seed. Minimize site disturbance. Site reclamation and monitoring, with appropriate follow-up treatment of any noxious weeds.

Opportunities for Public Input

This letter formally initiates the scoping period for the environmental analysis (i.e. NEPA) process for Beartooth Platinum Corporation’s Iron Mountain – Custer and Gallatin 2008 Plan of Operations. This request for comment and input is an attempt to collaboratively involve the public and other agencies in identifying concerns and issues associated with approving or requiring modifications to this Plan of Operations.

Project Scoping Letter *for*
Beartooth Platinum Corporation – Proposed 2008 Gallatin Plan of Operations
Page 6 of 6

The Forest Service is interested in issues or concerns you may have with Beartooth Platinum's proposed Plan of Operations. Comments should display points of dispute or debate relevant to this Plan of Operations. Comments received, including the names and addresses of those who comment, will be considered part of the public record and be available for public inspection. Please contact us if you would like to continue to receive information about this and other minerals projects on the Beartooth and Big Timber Districts. Your name will be removed from the mailing list for this project and the minerals mailing list if you do not provide comment or specifically request to remain on the lists. For further information, to provide comment, or to remain on the minerals mailing list, please contact:

Lars Halstrom
Big Timber Ranger District
P.O. Box 1130
Big Timber, MT 59011
Phone: (406) 932-5155
E-mail: lhalstrom@fs.fed.us

Please provide comment and/or input addressing this proposed Plan of Operations by February 8, 2008.

Sincerely,

BILL AVEY
Big Timber District Ranger

The U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) prohibits discrimination in all its programs and activities on the basis of race, color, national origin, age, disability, and where applicable, sex, marital status, familial status, parental status, religion, sexual orientation, genetic information, political beliefs, reprisal, or because all or part of an individual's income is derived from any public assistance program. (Not all prohibited bases apply to all programs.) Persons with disabilities who require alternative means for communication of program information (Braille, large print, audiotape, etc.) should contact USDA's TARGET Center at (202) 720-2600 (voice and TDD). To file a complaint of discrimination, write to USDA, Director, Office of Civil Rights, 1400 Independence Avenue, S.W., Washington, DC 20250-9410, or call (800) 795-3272 (voice) or (202) 720-6382 (TDD). USDA is an equal opportunity provider and employer.

