



United States
Department of
Agriculture

Forest
Service

0170 0029
HUMBOLDT NF

Ely Ranger District
P. O. Box 539
Ely, NV 89301 (702) 289-3031

White Pine Dist

Item 90

REPLY TO: 2810, Minerals

Date: July 27, 1994

Dear Interested Party,

The Ely Ranger District of the Humboldt National Forest is conducting an environmental analysis for the Griffon Exploration Project proposed by Alta Gold Company. The purpose of this letter is to inform those who may be interested in the project and to solicit comments on issues, concerns, suggestions, and additional alternatives to help guide the environmental analysis process.

LOCATION - The Griffon Exploration Project is approximately located in the middle of the White Pine Range, White Pine County, Nevada. Specifically, it is located in Township 14 North, Range 58 East, Section 24 (see figures 1 & 2).

PROJECT DESCRIPTION - On July 22, 1994, Alta Gold Co. submitted a minerals plan of operations for the Griffon Exploration Project to the Ely Ranger District. Alta Gold proposes to drill up to 59 drill holes with a track mounted drill and construct 5140 feet of temporary access roads. Some overland travel will reduce the amount of road construction. Total proposed disturbance is estimated to be 2.9 acres. The project is proposed to start up September 1, 1994. It is expected to take up to 2 months to drill.

Reclamation would involve recontouring the roads to blend into the existing topography, plugging the drill holes according to the State regulations, seed disturbed ground with a mixture designed for deer and elk forage, and pull woody debris back onto seeded areas to create microsites for vegetation to take hold. Reclamation from past mineral activities in the area has shown that revegetation of disturbed sites is very successful.

The project will be close to some ground disturbance from past mineral exploration activities. The amount of disturbed ground that has not yet been reclaimed within a 1/2 mile radius of this project is approximately 4.8 acres. All of the existing disturbances are permitted under mineral plan of operations with a different company and has reclamation requirements the same as proposed under this project.

ISSUES - Preliminary issues that have been identified by an interdisciplinary team are:

- What would be the impacts to wildlife, especially sensitive, threatened, or endangered species?
- How many acres would be allowed to be left open for future exploration activities before reclamation would be required?





- Would the access to the exploration roads be closed off after drilling was completed?

ALTERNATIVES - Preliminary alternatives that have been identified are:

A. **NO ACTION** This alternative is required but is not considered a viable alternative.

B. **PROPOSED ACTION** This is Alta Gold Company's proposal as submitted.

C. **PROPOSED ACTION WITH MITIGATION** This incorporates mitigation measures that modifies the proposal as submitted. Mitigation measures would be developed by Forest Service specialists in consideration of site specific resources and conditions.

DECISION TO BE MADE - The environmental analysis will assist the Authorized Officer in making the decision as to how the project proposal will be permitted. The alternative chosen for the permitting of the project will most likely combine changes to the original proposal that would avoid or mitigate issues.

Preliminary review of the proposal by an interdisciplinary team has not identified any significant impacts that cannot be mitigated. In addition, the project fits into a category that may be categorically excluded from documentation in an Environmental Assessment if there are no significant issues raised during scoping.

RESPONSE NEEDED - To assist us in this environmental analysis process, we would like to hear what concerns, issues, suggestions, or alternatives you may have concerning this project proposal. Should you wish to comment on this project, please send your comments to the Ely Ranger District, PO Box 539, Ely, Nevada 89301. To be most helpful, all comments should be received by this office no later than August 29, 1994.

If you should have any questions or would like additional information, please contact Loretta Cartner, Ely District Minerals Management Specialist or myself at (702) 289-3031.

Sincerely,

Loretta Cartner

for

JERRY L. GREEN
District Ranger

cc: Humboldt National Forest, Elko
cc: other publics
attachments



Figure 1

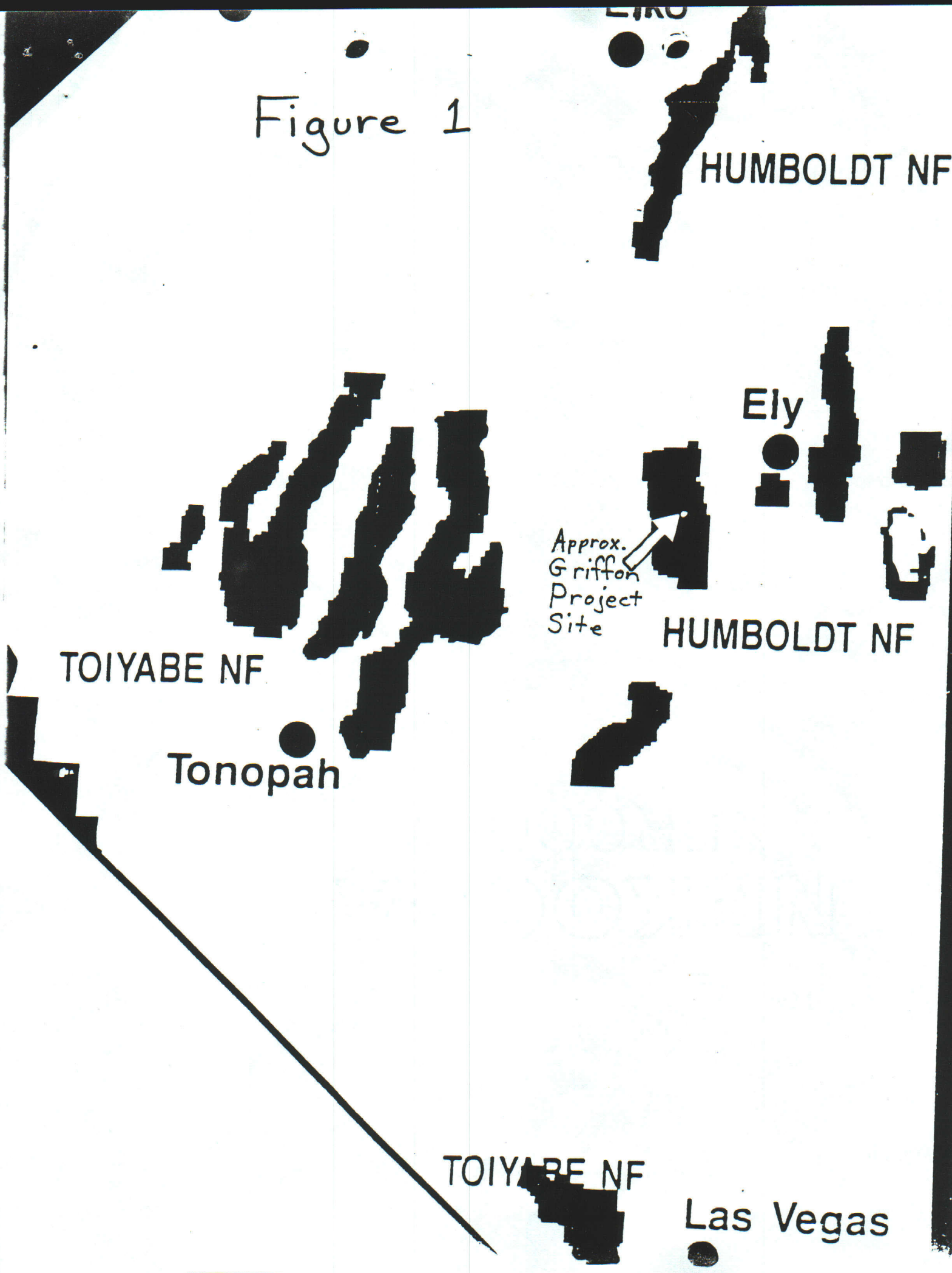
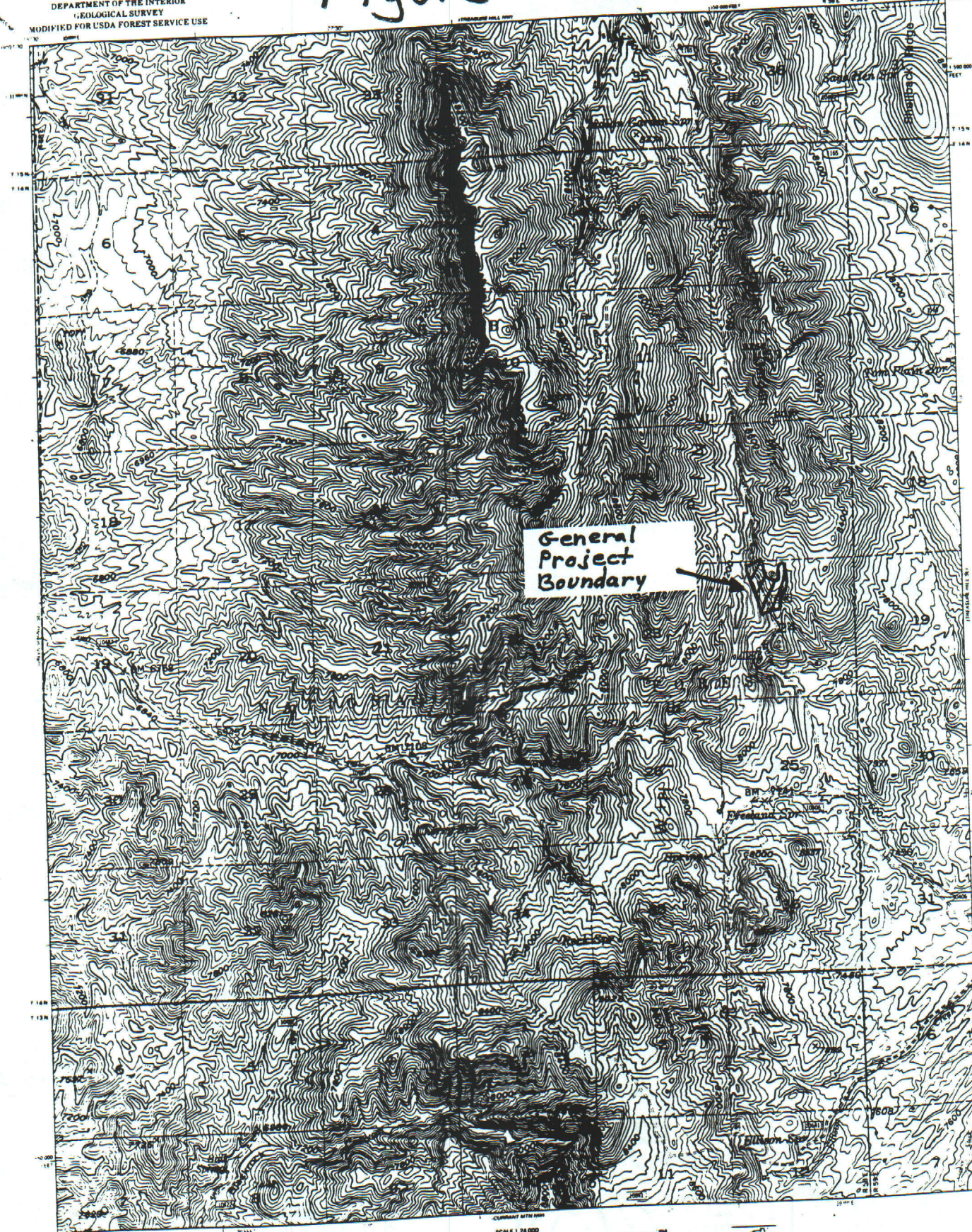


Figure 2

UNITED STATES
DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
GEOLOGICAL SURVEY
MODIFIED FOR USDA FOREST SERVICE USE

TREASURE HILL SW QUADRANGLE
NEVADA—WHITE PINE CO.
7.5 MINUTE SERIES (TOPOGRAPHIC)
4961 4962



General
Project
Boundary

SCALE 1:24,000

CONTOUR INTERVAL 40 FEET
Elevations in feet above sea level

LEGEND

Primary Highways

Secondary Highways

Improved Light Duty

Unimproved Dirt

Trail

400 LUMP

Interstate Highways

U.S. Highways

State Highways

County Road

Forest Road

Project Log

HAUBOLD NATIONAL FOREST
MANAGER OFFICE

TREASURE HILL SW, NEV.