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United States Department of the Interior

BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT

Las Vegas Field Office
4701 N. Torrey Pines Drive
Las Vegas, Nevada 89130-2301

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OCT 10 2003

DEPARTMENT OF ADMINISTRATION
OFFICE OF THE DIRECTOR
BUDGET AND PLANNING DIVISION

In Reply Refer To:
N-71466
3809
(NV-053)

October 10, 2003

NOTICE OF SCOPING Simplot Silica Products Mine Expansion Project

Dear Interested Party:

The Bureau of Land Management (BLM) is preparing an Environmental Assessment (EA) to assess a proposal by Simplot Silica Products to expand silica mining on public lands within their Silica Products Mine (SPM) approximately 50 miles northeast of Las Vegas, Nevada (Figure 1). Active mining has occurred in the area since 1929. Simplot acquired rights to the original claims and began extracting and processing silica products in 1955. Upgrades and/or expansions at the SPM occurred in 1981 and 1994. All existing disturbances have been permitted under previously approved Plans of Operation and National Environmental Policy Act documents.

The proposed expansion area (Project Area) is located in sections 2, 3 and 11, T.16 S., R.67 E., MDM (Figure 2). The Project Area covers approximately 167 acres of new surface disturbance, which excludes approximately 68 acres of land previously disturbed by an existing open pit mine and overburden dumps. The proposed project would involve construction activities (building support surface facilities, haul roads, access roads, erection of power lines, adding conveyers and pipelines) and operation activities (mining, including drilling/blasting and the establishment of stockpiles and overburden dumps). A Plan of Operations Amendment and a Reclamation Plan for the expansion project and proposed new surface disturbance has been prepared and submitted for approval.

The BLM, Las Vegas Field Office, will be the lead agency for this project.

As part of our EA preparation, we would appreciate receiving written comments regarding any issues and concerns you may have regarding the scope of this proposal. Comments will be accepted until November 10, 2003 and should be sent to:

Bureau of Land Management
Las Vegas Field Office
Attn: Adam Merrill, Geologist
4701 N. Torrey Pines Drive
Las Vegas, Nevada 89130-2301

To ensure that all issues related to this proposed project are addressed and any significant impacts are identified, comments and suggestions are invited from all interested parties. The Amendment to the Plan of Operations and the Reclamation Plan is available for public inspection and can be mailed to interested parties upon request. For further information on this project, contact: Adam Merrill, Bureau of Land Management, Las Vegas Field Office, 4701 N. Torrey Pines Drive, Las Vegas, Nevada 89130-2301, (702) 515-5000.

Comments, including names and street addresses of respondents will be available for public review at the BLM Las Vegas Field Office and will be subject to disclosure under the Freedom of Information Act (FOIA). They will be published as part of the EA and other related documents. Individual respondents may request confidentiality. If you wish to withhold your name or street address from public review and disclosure under the FOIA, you must state this prominently at the beginning of your written comment. Such requests will be honored to the extent allowed by law. All submissions from organizations or businesses, and from individuals identifying themselves as representatives or officials of organizations or businesses, will be made available for public inspection in their entirety.

Upon completion of the EA, a Decision Record will be issued by the BLM and sent to parties expressing interest. The decision would not be implemented until 30 days after issuance.

Sincerely,



Mark R. Chatterton
Assistant Field Manager
Non-renewable Resources
Bureau of Land Management

enclosures: Figure 1 - Project General Location Map
Figure 2 - Land Status/Site Map

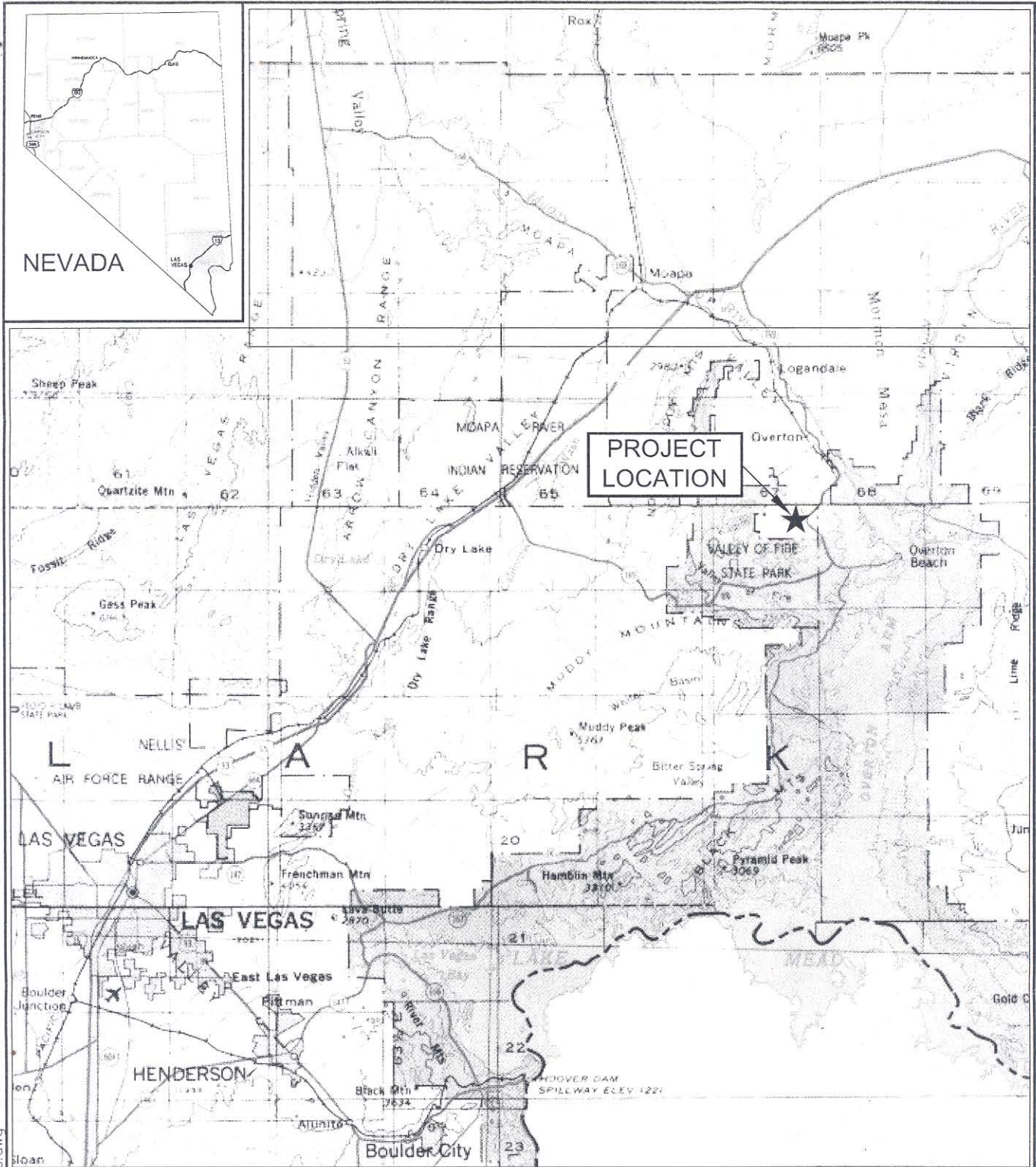
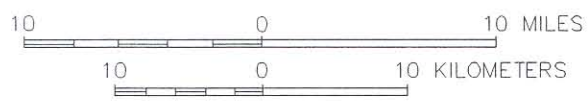


IMAGE SCANNED FROM USGS 1:500,000-SCALE NEVADA STATE MAP

SIMPLOT SILICA MINE PROJECT

FIGURE 1
PROJECT LOCATION MAP



environmental consultants, inc.

Salt Lake City, Utah Cedar City, Utah Reno, Nevada Reno, Nevada Boise, Idaho

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DATE	DRAWN	2/6/03
REVISION		

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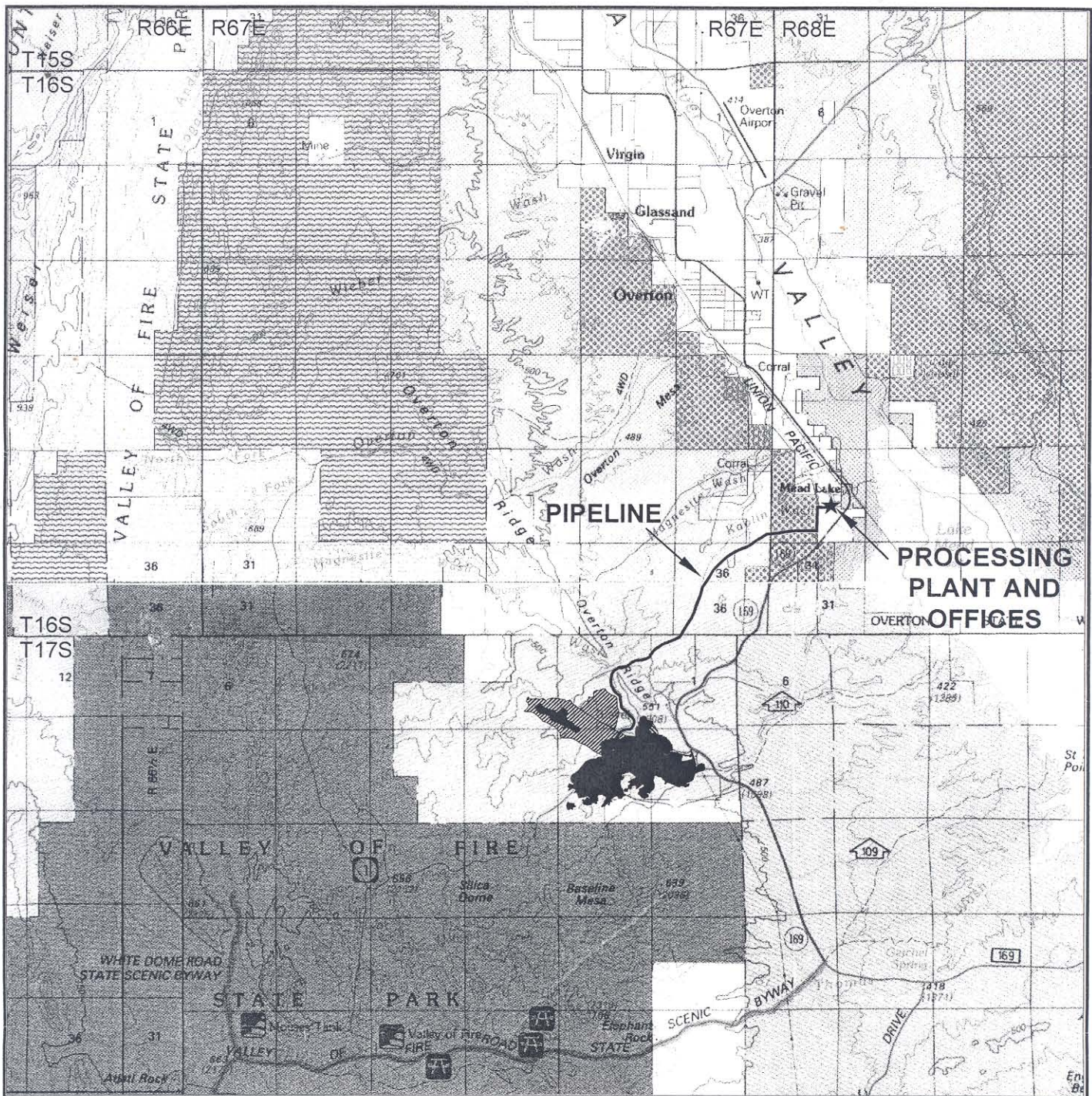










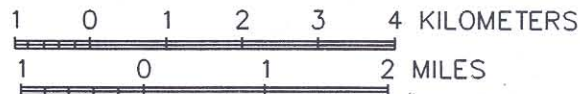
IMAGE SCANNED FROM 1:100,000-SCALE TOPOGRAPHIC MAPS, BLM EDITION: LAKE MEADE, NEVADA, 2000 AND OVERTON, NEVADA, 1989.

LANDSTATUS

-  EXISTING PROJECT DISTURBANCE
-  PROPOSED PROJECT DISTURBANCE

LANDSTATUS

-  PUBLIC LANDS (ADMINISTERED BY BLM)
-  NATIONAL PARKS AND MONUMENTS
-  PATENTED LANDS
-  BUREAU OF RECLAMATION
-  FEDERAL AGENCY PROTECTIVE WITHDRAWALS
-  STATE, COUNTY, CITY, WILDLIFE, PARK AND OUTDOOR RECREATION AREAS



SIMPLOT

SILICA MINE PROJECT

FIGURE 2
LAND STATUS MAP

jbr
environmental consultants, inc.

Salt Lake City, Utah Cedar City, Utah Reno, Nevada Elko, Nevada Boise, Idaho

DESIGN BY GB DRAWN BY CP CH'D BY SCALE 1:100,000

DATE DRAWN 2/6/03

REVISION 4/4/03