

SAMPLING AND ANALYSIS PLAN

Section 12.0

Present and Historic Land Use

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12.0 Present and Historic Land Use

12.1 Introduction and Background

The Roca Honda permit area encompasses all of Sections 9, 10, and 16 of Township 13 North, Range 8 West (T13N R8W), in McKinley County, New Mexico. Section 16 is owned by the State of New Mexico. The surface of Section 16 is leased to Fernandez Company, Ltd. (aka the Lee Ranch) as rangeland. The mineral estate is leased to Roca Honda Resources, LLC (RHR). Sections 9 and 10 are U.S. Forest Service (USFS) lands within the Cibola National Forest. RHR has the unpatented mining claims on these two sections. The three-section Roca Honda permit area totals approximately 1,920 acres.

The forest land (Sections 9 and 10) is open to the public and used for hunting, hiking, and other outdoor recreation activities. Forest land use also includes commercial logging and personal and commercial gathering of firewood. The Fernandez Company, Ltd controls a vast amount of range land through private ownership and leases of rangeland including the lease of Section 16. The long-term land use has been rangeland possibly since 1767 when the land grant was issued even when the grazers were not domestic livestock.

Section 6 of this SAP discusses the soil capability classifications on the Roca Honda permit area obtained from two separate soil surveys. Both studies use the nomenclature “good,” “fair,” and “poor”. The first survey was conducted by the USFS (Strenger et al., 2007) and covered Sections 9 and 10 of the permit area. The second survey covered Section 16 of the permit area and was conducted by the U.S. Department of Agriculture, Natural Resources Conservation Service (formerly Soil Conservation Service) in cooperation with Bureau of Land Management, the Bureau of Indian Affairs, and the New Mexico Agricultural Experiment Station (NRCS 2006). The results of the two surveys indicate similar capability classes. Class 6 soils are typically restricted to use for pasture, rangeland, forestland, and wildlife habitat.

Section 11 of this SAP contains evidence that the permit area was inhabited historically by Native Americans. A variety of archeological and cultural artifacts have been inventoried which amply demonstrate historic use of the site.

The general Land Use patterns in the surrounding area are similar to that of the permit area. It is a mix of state, private and federal ownership dominated by the Lee Ranch and the Cibola National Forest. The area is sparsely populated rural and undeveloped.

The town of San Mateo is located approximately four miles to the south east of the permit area. There are estimated to be less than 200 persons living there. The Lee Ranch headquarters and residence is also located approximately two miles southeast of the permit area. In addition, the Lee Ranch foreman has a residence approximately one mile west of the western boundary of the permit area on Section 17. Several other rural residences are located along the San Mateo Valley west of the permit area.

Rio Grande Resources, Inc. owns the Mt Taylor uranium mine located approximately four miles east of the project site. The mine is currently not operating and has been on stand-by status for a number of years. It operated from the late 1970's to the mid 1990's and is anticipated to recommence operations in the near future.

The Cibola National Forest administers most of the public land surrounding the permit area. Its responsibilities include general administration, management of timber resources, and development of specific land use management plans.

12.2 Sampling Objectives

No sampling is required.

12.3 List of Data to be Collected

There are no additional data needs beyond those discussed elsewhere in this SAP.

12.4 Methods of Collection

No additional data will be collected.

12.5 Parameters to be Analyzed

No further analysis will be performed.

12.6 Maps Providing Sampling Locations

No sampling will be performed.

12.7 Sampling Frequency

No sampling is required.

12.8 Laboratory and Field Quality Assurance Plan

No laboratory or field work will be performed.

12.9 Brief Discussion Supporting Proposal

The historical land use for Sections 9, 10, and 16 is discussed above and no additional field work is proposed.

12.10 References

NRCS (Natural Resources Conservation Service), 2006. *Soil Survey of McKinley County Area, New Mexico, McKinley County and Parts of Cibola and San Juan Counties*, U.S. Department of Agriculture, Natural Resources Conservation Service, in cooperation with U.S. Department of Interior, Bureau of Land Management and Bureau of Indian Affairs, and the New Mexico Agricultural Experiment Station.

Strenger, S., S. Sebring, W. Robbie, F. Escobedo, C. Vaandrager, V. Andrew, E. Brooks, C. Krasine, B. Nielsen, and R. Fletcher, 2007. *Terrestrial Ecosystems Survey of the Cibola National Forest and National Grasslands*, USDA Forest Service, Southwestern Region.