



County of Lassen
Department of Planning and Building Services

• Planning • Building • Environmental Health • Code Enforcement • Surveyor • Surface Mining


January 6, 2021

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**NOTICE OF PREPARATION
OF A DRAFT
ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT REPORT**

Zoning & Building
Inspection Requests
Phone: 530 257-5263

Environmental Health
Messages: 530 251-8528
email: EHE@co.lassen.ca.us

TO: Responsible and Trustee Agencies
FROM: Maurice Anderson, Director 
Lassen County Department of Planning and Building Services
707 Nevada Street, Suite 5
Susanville, CA 96130
SUBJECT: EIR #2021-002, Hayden Hill Transmission Line

The County of Lassen will be the Lead Agency and will prepare a Subsequent Draft Environmental Impact Report (SDEIR) for the project proposal seeking to leave a 69-kV power transmission line constructed solely for the operation of the Hayden Hill Gold Mine in place for other uses. This Notice of Preparation (NOP) has been prepared to solicit comments from interested agencies as to the scope and content of the environmental information that is germane to your agency's statutory responsibilities in connection with the proposed project. When (and if) approved, your agency may need to use this EIR when considering permits or other approvals for the project.

The above-mentioned transmission line was acquired by Lassen Municipal Utility District (LMUD) from the mine operator of Hayden Hill Gold Mine, Lassen Gold Mining Inc. (LGMI), in December 2007. During the permitting process, prior to LMUD's purchase, a mitigation measure was adopted in the Environmental Impact Report (EIR) for the approval of the Use Permit and Reclamation Plan which required removal of the power line at the conclusion of mining activity. The transmission line was constructed specifically for operation of the mine, and was owned privately to lessen development and growth-inducing impacts. Mining activity concluded in 1997 and the line has not been energized for several years.

The applicant has submitted a Reclamation Plan Amendment application, and a General Plan Amendment application due to the Hayden Hill Resource Plan being adopted as an amendment to the Lassen County General Plan in 1991 which states that the transmission line "shall be removed as part of the reclamation process."

A Preliminary Review was conducted from September 2, 2021 through November 1, 2021 to assist in the identification of potential environmental impacts that should be addressed. The project description, location map, and comments received during the Preliminary Review are attached.

Due to the time limits mandated by State law, responses to this NOP must be sent at the earliest possible date, but no later than 30 days after receipt of this notice. Please send written responses to

Cortney Flather, Natural Resources Technician, Lassen County Department of Planning and Building Services, at the above address or via email to cflather@co.lassen.ca.us. Please provide a contact person for your agency in the written response.

This Notice of Preparation, attachments and the project file are available for review at the Lassen County Department of Planning and Building Services, located at 707 Nevada Street, Susanville, CA 96130. The department is open from 7 a.m. to 12 p.m. and 1 p.m. to 4 p.m., Monday through Friday, excepting holidays.

1.0 PROJECT LOCATION

The Hayden Hill Transmission Line extends from where Susanville Road intersects State Highway 139, 6 miles south of Adin, and continues south along State Highway 139 to the Hayden Hill Mine site (A.P.N. 015-120-013-000), 12 miles south of Adin. Access to the Hayden Hill Mine is by way of Hayden Hill Road off of Highway 139.

2.0 PROJECT DESCRIPTION

The project is a proposal seeking to leave a 69-kV power transmission line approximately 20 feet wide and 81,000 feet in length (approximately 17,000 feet of this line is on United States Forest Service (USFS) property) in place and turn the line over (transfer ownership) to Surprise Valley Electrification Corporation for energization.

The project parcels are zoned U-C-A-P (Upland Conservation, Agriculture Preserve Combing District), U-C-2 (Upland Conservation/Resource Management District), U-C (Upland Conservation District), U-C-2-A-P (Upland Conservation/Resource Management District, Agriculture Preserve Combing District), E-A-A-P/U-C-A-P (Exclusive Agriculture, Agriculture Preserve Combing District/Upland Conservation, Agriculture Combing District). Some of these parcels are currently under Williamson Act Contracts.

The parcels have a land use designation of Extensive Agriculture and for the portion of the transmission line within the Hayden Hill mining boundary, include Significant Mineral Resources Area, General Forest Environment, Grazing and Sagebrush Environment, and Prime Recreation Area.

3.0 PROJECT SITE CHARACTERISTICS

The project is located in an area of low volcanic hills along the eastern margin of the Modoc Plateau physiographic province. The project falls generally into the Upper Montane-lower Northern Coniferous Forest ecological zone typified by shallow, rocky soils, and vegetation communities which include Low Sage, Upland Shrub, and Jeffrey Pine/Mountain Shrub.

Wildlife typical of this region include greater sage-grouse (*Centrocercus urophasianus*), Golden Eagle (*Aquila chrysaetos*) and various other resident and migratory birds, reptiles, and mammals including mule deer (*Odocoileus hemionus*) and pronghorn antelope (*Antilocapra americana*).

The project area contains two sub-basins of the Willow Creek watershed, the Indian Spring sub-basin which parallels Hayden Hill Road east of the Hayden Hill Mine, and the Preston Canyon sub-basin,

located west and north of Hayden Hill. Surface waters in both sub-basins generally flow to the north into Willow Creek. The project site is designated as "Zone D" by the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) Flood Map Service Center meaning it is in an area with possible but undetermined flood hazards.

4.0 POTENTIAL ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACTS

During the preliminary review for this project, our Department sent out a Preapplication Consultation to various agencies to obtain comments concerning potentially significant impacts which could result from project approval. Please find the enclosed comments we received.

Relevant issues that may cause significant environmental impacts associated with keeping the transmission line in place include but may not be limited to:

- Scenic Resources
- Agriculture and Forestry Resources
- Cultural and Tribal Cultural Resources
- Biological Resources
- Land Use and Planning
- Energy
- Hazards and Hazardous Material
- Population and Housing
- Utilities and Service Systems
- Wildfire

An Environmental Impact Statement was prepared during the Special Use Permit process for the portion of the transmission line within the Modoc National Forest. Electrification is not authorized under this Special Use Permit and the permit is not transferable. Therefore, the transmission line would be subject to planning under the National Environmental Policy Act if the line were to transfer ownership and/or be energized.

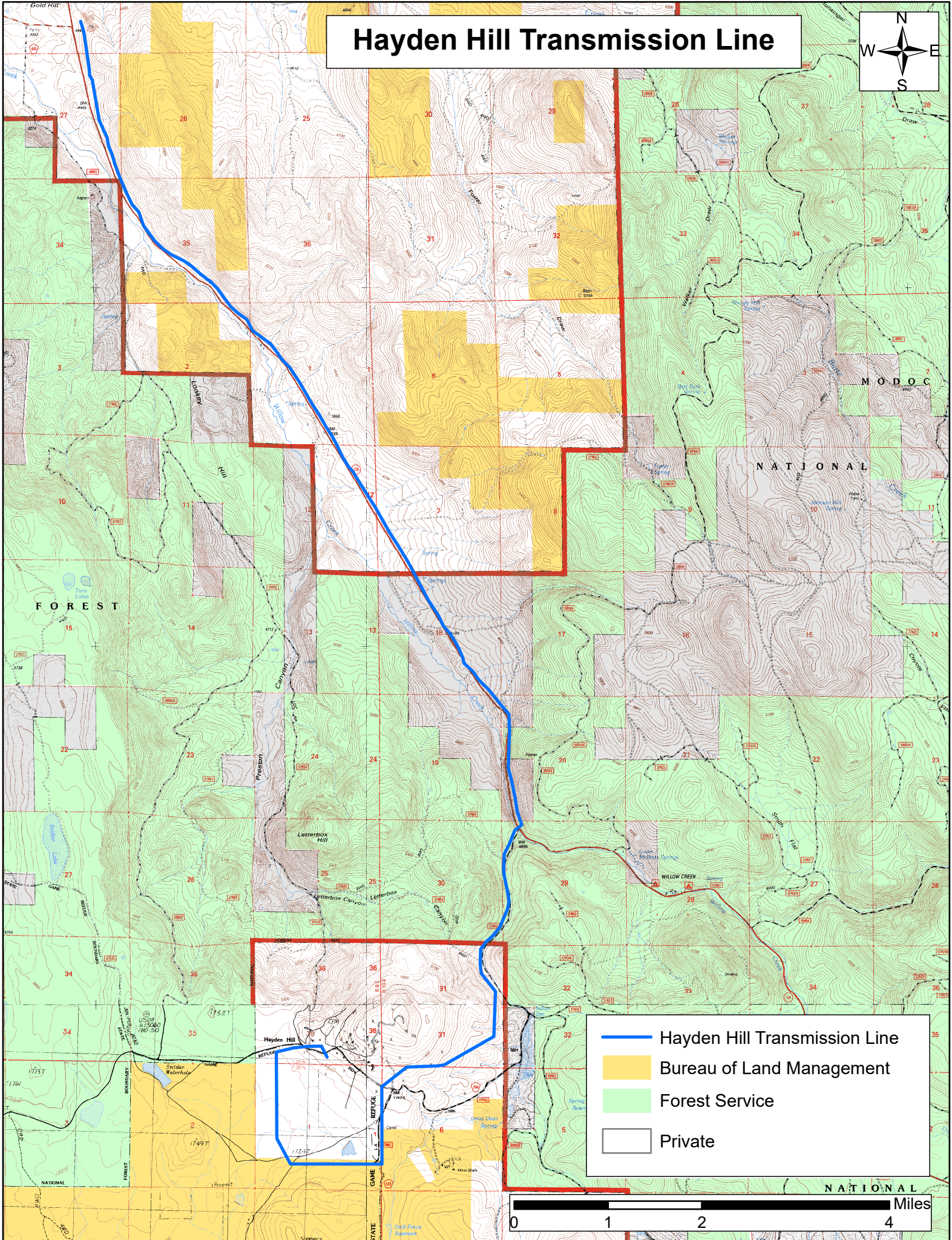
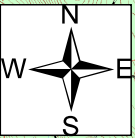
No environmental studies pertaining to the transmission line have been conducted thus far. Again, any comments germane to your agency's statutory responsibilities in connection with the above-mentioned project would be helpful in determining the scope and content of environmental information needed to reduce any of the above-mentioned potentially significant impacts to a less than significant level.




MLA:clf

Distribution: Supervisor Albaugh (4); Lassen Municipal Utility District (applicant); Co. Assessor's Office; County Counsel; Co. Fire Warden/CAL FIRE; Co. Environmental Health Dept.; County Public Works; Co. Public Works/Road Div.; Lassen Co. Fish & Game Commission; CA Dept. of Fish & Wildlife (Redding/Wendel); California Public Utilities Commission; Caltrans, District 2; California Energy Commission; State Water Resources Control Board, Central Valley Regional Water Quality Control Board; Department of Conservation, Division of Mine Reclamation; Department of Water Resources; Modoc National Forest; Bureau of Land Management-Applegate; Surprise Valley Electrification Corporation; Pit River Tribe of California; Native American Heritage Commission; Air Resources Board; Co. Air Pollution Control Officer

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Hayden Hill Transmission Line



-  Hayden Hill Transmission Line
-  Bureau of Land Management
-  Forest Service
-  Private

