

GOLDEN QUEEN MINING COMPANY, INC.

SOLEDAD MOUNTAIN PROJECT
MOJAVE, KERN COUNTY, CALIFORNIA

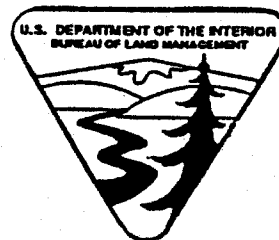
FINAL
ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT REPORT /
ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT STATEMENT

VOLUME 7
(Appendix XIII)

SEPTEMBER 1997



COUNTY OF KERN
PLANNING DEPARTMENT
BAKERSFIELD, CALIFORNIA



BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT
RIDGECREST RESOURCE AREA
RIDGECREST, CALIFORNIA

VOLUME 7 OF 7

BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT
PUBLIC MEETING

IN RE
THE GOLDEN QUEEN MINING)
SOLEDAD MOUNTAIN PROJECT)

LOCATION: ROSAMOND ELEMENTARY SCHOOL
1981 ROSAMOND BOULEVARD
ROSAMOND, CALIFORNIA

DATE AND TIME: TUESDAY, JUNE 24, 1997
7:00 P.M.

REPORTER: TIMOTHY SCOTT
CSR NO. 8517

**CERTIFIED
COPY**

SCOTT

COURT REPORTING

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Bakersfield, California 93305



REPORTER'S TRANSCRIPT of the PROCEEDINGS,
taken in re the above matter, on Tuesday, June 24,
1997, commencing at 7:00 p.m., at Rosamond Elementary
School, 1981 Rosamond Boulevard, Rosamond,
California, before Timothy Scott, a Certified
Shorthand Reporter, holding Certificate No. 8517.

SPEAKERS FROM BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT:

MR. AHMED MOSHEN
MR. GEORGE DEVERSE

SPEAKERS FROM AUDIENCE:

MONNA WAGNER
JOHN ROMBOUT
PATRICK CHIDO
KAREN BENSON
JAMES HOOPER
BARBARA RIGG
PAT BOETSCH
MANUEL ZAMORA
TERRY MURRAY
CURT SKELTON
SUE MATHIS
JERRY BOETSCH
GLENN A. SETTLE
JERRY BOETSCH, JR.
DEAN WEBB
OLAF LANDSGAARD
KEITH GAINNEY
DAN SPOOR
JEFF GUTIERREZ
MARY SHINEFLEW
JESS FARMER
KEN DALE
LEONARD GRIMES
JEFF ALFONSO

1 TUESDAY, JUNE 24, 1997

2 ROSAMOND, CALIFORNIA

3 7:00 P.M.

4
5
6 MR. MOHSEN: Okay. May I have your
7 attention, please.

8 We're going to probably begin right now.

9 It seems like we have most of the public
10 that has signed up front, and we're going to
11 initiate.

12 So at this stage, I'll direct my
13 comments to the court reporter, and we'll initiate
14 this public meeting.

15 This is a Bureau of Land Management,
16 Department of the Interior, public meeting regarding
17 the Draft Environmental Impact Statement/Draft Impact
18 Report for this Soledad Mountain gold project.

19 We have a court reporter today recording
20 the proceedings of this meeting so we can make it
21 part of the public record. That's why I'm going to
22 be speaking a little slower. I'm sure that the
23 children in the room will appreciate that.

24 The reason is, you want to make sure all
25 the comments and concerns are documented by the court

1 reporter. And the purpose of that is to make sure
2 that the issues that you have are part of the public
3 record.

4 When I close the meeting, that will
5 become the public record. Everything after the
6 meeting, we can still discuss things, but it will not
7 be part of the public record unless you resubmit it
8 formally through writing.

9 I want to let you know the way we run
10 the meeting today is we have opened it up for
11 discussions and your concerns and comments, and when
12 the meeting is closed, we'll still be available at
13 your discretion to discuss any issues that you may
14 have regarding the project.

15 First, I want to introduce the people
16 involved in this meeting today. We have
17 representatives from Bureau of Land Management from
18 the Ridgecrest office, and we also have
19 representatives from the proponent of the project,
20 the gold mining company, and we also the have the
21 environmental contractors who have assisted the
22 Bureau and Kern County in preparing the document.

23 Kern County has a representative here
24 today taking notes and making sure that any issues
25 and concerns that you folks have are also part and

1 shared with Kern County records.

2 The BLM is leading this meeting
3 regarding the compliance with the National
4 Environmental Policy Act, which is known as the NEPA.

5 NEPA requires the government to make
6 decisions in an open process, making sure we hear
7 your concerns and making sure these concerns are
8 addressed in the document we have prepared.

9 If you recall, back in April of 1996, we
10 also came here to Rosamond and opened up our public
11 scoping process, which is the first part of the
12 beginning to prepare the necessary permits for this
13 operation.

14 What we've done back in April of '96 is,
15 before we began to do anything at all, we asked you
16 what are some of the issues and concerns that you
17 have regarding this proposed project, and we
18 emphasized "proposed."

19 At the beginning of the process, it's
20 important to make sure that all the issues and
21 concerns that you folks have are addressed in our
22 document within the constraints allowed by law, which
23 is very important, also.

24 We are a country governed by laws, which
25 means the existing laws that we have will pretty much

1 lay the sideboards for what we can and cannot do.

2 So back in April of 1996, we asked you
3 what are the issues and concerns. We documented many
4 comments, and we have made sure that your comments
5 and concerns are part of the record.

6 We have published this information on
7 the worldwide web, and we made sure that access to
8 the issues was available to everyone, either through
9 libraries or through newspapers or through that
10 computer worldwide web internet access.

11 We felt that was important to make sure
12 that we let you know the progress of the project
13 because the project is very dynamic. We wanted to
14 make sure that any provisions of the project, you are
15 well aware, and any mitigations or any conditions
16 that we can attach to the permit will be well thought
17 of and well prepared for by the process, so we become
18 defensible and also become fair and equitable.

19 So as we promised, we're back again in
20 Rosamond to open up the public meeting again to
21 discuss the issues in the EIS, address the EIS/EIR we
22 have prepared.

23 The document has been available since
24 June 2nd, and if you have been part of our mailing
25 list, you have either have received notification of

1 its availability, or you have gotten the document
2 yourself.

3 We are going to hold two meetings, one
4 tonight in Rosamond, tomorrow in Mojave, to make sure
5 the local community has ample opportunity to
6 participate in the process.

7 Let me explain a little bit about the
8 project before we ask you for some of your comments.

9 The project is roughly 20 percent on
10 public lands, 80 percent on private lands. So a
11 fifth of the project is on public property managed by
12 the BLM on your behalf. The other 80 percent of the
13 project is on private land, managed by your county
14 and your state.

15 We have worked very closely with the
16 county and the state to make sure that the federal
17 and the state and the county process goes
18 hand-in-hand and does not reiterate and repeat
19 itself.

20 We made sure that all of the parties
21 were involved that were going to issue a permit to
22 the operation, are involved up front, so there
23 wouldn't be any future permits required that were not
24 foreseen by the agencies up front.

25 So, Kern County and BLM are really the

1 lead agencies who are required to coordinate with all
2 the other agencies that will issue permits for this
3 project. This project will have multiple permits
4 before it commences.

5 BLM and Kern County issue certain sets
6 of permits; other agencies do that also, but BLM and
7 Kern County are the lead government agencies in
8 making sure your concerns and comments are addressed
9 in the document and are communicated to the other
10 agencies in the state and local governments.

11 So what we have done in the last year or
12 so, is prepared what we believe is a defensible
13 document that addressed the needs of the public and
14 agencies regarding this project. We have done
15 environmental surveys on the grounds, have conducted
16 inventories of sensitive resources, have identified
17 these resources and have mitigated -- developed a
18 mitigation plan for avoiding or minimizing the
19 impacts to these resources.

20 We understand that there are concerns
21 from the community. We believe these concerns have
22 been addressed in this document. And we want you to
23 make sure that you've let us know if your concerns
24 are not addressed. If they are addressed, let us
25 know; if they are not addressed, let us know, also.

1 We'll make sure that we point you in the right
2 direction in the document where we believe the issues
3 have been addressed. We have documented your
4 concerns back in 1996 as far as the issues and
5 concerns.

6 So, before I open it up to you, I also
7 want to give you a little bit of ground rules about
8 how we're going to conduct the comments tonight.

9 I'm going to be asking you to come up
10 and state your name and speak slowly so the court
11 reporter can document your thoughts. And spell your
12 last name for him, and then I'll give you three
13 minutes to say your thoughts to the record. And then
14 I'll give you a minute warning after that, and I'll
15 ask you to allow someone else to make a comment.

16 I will go through everyone, and there's
17 still opportunity for more discussions. I'll be glad
18 to have you guys come up again for a second round.
19 But I would like to hear from everyone first; so I
20 would like you to keep it at three minutes. That's
21 the first ground rule, three minutes, and then I'll
22 give you an extra minute to wrap up.

23 The second ground rule is, I would like
24 it to be a civil discussion. We're all a
25 neighborhood, and we're all part of this great

1 country. And it's very important that we address
2 each other with politeness and respect, no matter
3 where our issues are or wherever you stand.

4 It makes for a great country that we
5 have the diversity and we have the freedom of speech
6 to discuss these issues. Let's not forget that we
7 are neighbors and we have families and we do have
8 lives, and we want to make sure that we go back to
9 them the same way we came in.

10 The third ground rule is, I would like
11 you to know that this is not a public-opinion polling
12 process. There is not a meter-reading of how many
13 people are for or how many people are against a
14 specific project. That's not the way the BLM
15 conducts its business.

16 We try as hard as possible to look at
17 our existing laws and regulations and get your
18 concerns and issues addressed in there. And we will
19 forward your comments to our management and to the
20 folks who will make the decision. But you have to be
21 aware that this is part of a long-term land-use
22 planning process, which started with the California
23 Desert Conservation Area Plan, if you all recall
24 that; if you haven't, I'll spend a few minutes on it.
25 I think it's very important that you all be aware of

1 it.

2 You all have houses in the area and you
3 all know zoning laws, what you can and cannot do on
4 your property, whether you can animals or whether you
5 can have a wind turbine or whether you can have a
6 solar panel.

7 BLM does it the same way, no difference,
8 really, except on a larger scale. We can say this
9 area is zoned for animals or it is zoned for plants,
10 it is zoned for recreation or it is zoned for mining
11 and development, or it is zoned for other uses. It's
12 a process that we took twenty-five years to complete.
13 We started in the early '60s and finished in 1979.

14 After extensive public comment, I think
15 40,000 comments were received by the BLM during that
16 process, \$12 million was spent in 1979 completing
17 this plan.

18 And what it basically does is, it zones
19 the desert based on its uses. If I may, I will go up
20 to this map and explain to you a little more what
21 that means, because I want to make sure when you are
22 providing us your comments, to keep that in mind.

23 The BLM basically zoned the desert into
24 four major areas. And it's twenty-five million acres
25 of public and private, but only twelve million acres

1 is public lands, which is really the color pattern
2 you see here.

3 The zoning that we've basically done is,
4 say, that some lands used should be zoned for no
5 development, and then some other lands be zoned for
6 extensive use, which is really the scale here. The
7 green means no development, which is our wilderness
8 areas, our areas that are off limits to road and
9 vehicle access, the pristine things that we
10 designated, and there are millions of acres of it all
11 over the desert.

12 The yellow areas are what we refer to as
13 Class L, which is a limited access, and there are
14 some roads there, but we're not going to allow any
15 new roads in the areas. It's a zoning concept,
16 again, that says no new roads except the existing
17 ones.

18 As you go down the list, obviously, it
19 gets less and less restrictive and more and more
20 permissive as far as access. So Class M means
21 moderate use, means that we will allow some access,
22 some roads and some development. And Class I is
23 intensive use, by definition means we allow a lot of
24 activities there, off-road racing, developments like
25 wind turbines.

1 By definition, intensive use means the
2 resource values are low; so we can allow a lot more
3 things to happen.

4 As we zone this area, the Soledad
5 Mountain fell in an area that had low-resource values
6 as far as habitat, and had existing mining
7 operations; so the area that it was zoned for did not
8 conform to the limited and the environmental
9 conservation zones.

10 So the zone was unclassified, which,
11 again, gives it the management restriction that we
12 can allow activities to happen there. And it's very
13 important because once we zoned it that way, we
14 allowed mining claims, we allowed investment in the
15 area, and now we are trying to make sure that the
16 operation can -- that it's consistent with the way we
17 zoned the land for years, can be permitted in a sound
18 environmental manner.

19 So, with that, I want you to make sure
20 your comments are focused on how can we make sure
21 that we can mitigate the impacts. Because the area
22 has been historically zoned for mining, and it's
23 going to probably continue in the future as part of
24 the land use, county zoning and federal zoning, to be
25 zoned for development.

1 With that, I will close my spiel and try
2 to now open it up for you folks.

3 As I said, I'll remind you again, please
4 come in and stand here and give us your name.

5 If you don't want to have to stand here
6 and give us your name, it's going to be hard for us
7 to document your public comments on the record.
8 Because the court reporter, again, has to be a part
9 of it.

10 Again, once the meeting is over, you can
11 approach any one of us. We will be hanging out here
12 for a few more minutes, if needed, and we'll be able
13 to answer any questions you might have without having
14 to state your name first, and go through all these
15 formalities. Okay?

16 So are we ready to go?

17 I'll open it up, and anyone who's
18 willing to come up, just raise your hand, and I'll
19 pick you out from the crowd, and ask you to come up.

20 Ma'am, please state your name for the
21 court reporter.

22 Thank you.

23 MS. WAGNER: My name is Monna Wagner.

24 The spelling on my name is M-o-n-n-a, W-a-g-n-e-r.

25 I am here at the invitation of

R-1-1

R-1-1

1 Mr. Wyman to read into the record Senator William J.
2 Pete Knight's support of the Golden Queen Mining
3 Company, Soledad Mountain Mining Project.

4 The senator directed duplicative
5 originals to Supervisor Steve Perez and the Kern
6 County Planning Department, and that's what I will be
7 reading into the record this evening with -- I have
8 several copies also available for BLM and for anyone
9 else who would be interested in a copy.

10 And it is directed to -- well, to
11 Supervisor Perez and to Mr. Barnhill from the
12 Planning Department.

13 "Please find this letter as an
14 endorsement of the proposed Golden Queen Mining
15 Company, Soledad Mountain Mining Project."

16 It's kind of a tongue twister.

17 "This project is vital to the economic
18 future of Kern County. It's anticipated that this
19 project will provide nearly 500 jobs over the
20 duration of operation. Jobs will vary from labor and
21 semi-skilled to clerical and supervisory. With the
22 mine conservatively projected to produce twelve to
23 sixteen years, Golden Queen Mining employees will
24 contribute to the economic base of Kern County well
25 into the next century.

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R-2-1

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"The company has also taken many necessary steps to ensure they meet all the environmental standards mandated by the State of California and the Federal Government.

"Issues have not impacted any threatened or endangered species, and meeting strict water and air quality standards have been addressed.

"Considering the economic benefit and the minimal environmental impact Golden Queen Mining would bring to Kern County, I urge the Board of Supervisors to enthusiastically approve this project.

"Warmest regards, William J. Pete Knight, California State Senator, Seventeenth Senatorial District."

Thank you.

MR. MOHSEN: Anybody else who wants it make a comment?

Sir.

MR. ROMBOUT: I would like to introduce myself. My name is John Rombout, I'm the mayor of the City of Tehachapi. We have a similar resolution that we passed at our city council meeting. I won't bore you with what it says, the "whereases" and "therefores."

I would like to urge us to support this

R-2-1

1 project. East Kern County and East Kern Alliance,
2 we're struggling in this area to provide jobs. We
3 need the economic benefit that this kind of
4 development can bring to our whole area.

5 As many of you know, we're sort of
6 considered the poor stepsisters of West Kern County,
7 and we sort of have to support ourselves out here.

8 And I think it's very important for us
9 to think that -- you know, we know that Ridgecrest is
10 having a hard time, the military bases are having a
11 considerable downsizing. And I think it's important
12 that we support projects which can make us
13 economically viable. And I would like to encourage
14 everybody to support the project.

15 We in Tehachapi, we feel that we will
16 benefit from this from people that work there, can
17 live in our community, shop in our community, and I
18 think that it will help our area.

19 Thank you.

20 MR. MOHSEN: Sir.

21 MR CHIODO: People, my name is Patrick
22 Chiodo, C-h-i-o-d-o, for the record. I'm a
23 professional safety engineer. I've been conducting
24 an investigation in the desert area over by the
25 Cactus Queen.

R-3-1

1 For the record, I was the individual
2 that set off of the first explosive charge at Cactus
3 Queen. I pulled the first explosives permit. And I
4 worked there for three months until I got tired of
5 them throwing dust in the air and mercury in the air.

6 Now, my investigation has come up with a
7 lot of mercury contamination out there, and it's not
8 mercury itself. All the government agencies go out
9 there and test for mercury vapor.

10 I found that the ponds out there, the
11 cyanide ponds, are out of balance. And I've been out
12 there many times with the Cal-OSHA inspectors.

13 The fumes from the cyanide combine with
14 the mercury vapors and make what they call mercury
15 cyanide -- or mercury cyanate. It got in the air and
16 blew all over the place.

17 I have samples of mercury and cyanide
18 combination in water coolers, swamp coolers.

19 How many of you people out here have
20 those little white crystals? Yeah? Those white
21 crystals are alkali and mercury cyanide together.
22 And it's from the emission of mercury and the
23 emission of the cyanide.

24 Now, don't get me wrong, I'm a miner.
25 Before I even started doing any of this stuff, I was

R-3-2

1 digging holes and blasting holes in the ground.

2 What you need to do is make sure that
3 these people put some form of mitigation, some form
4 of controls so that when they start blowing 100,000
5 pounds of dust in the air because some explosives guy
6 decides he wants to blast a rock to smithereens so he
7 won't have to crush it, and half of the ore goes in
8 the air along with the mercury compounds and
9 everything else.

10 Now, right here is the Environmental
11 Impact Statement, right here. And it says they won't
12 put in the air acetylide, arsenic, arsine, benzene,
13 beryllium, tanium, copper, formaldehyde, hydrogen
14 cyanide.

R-3-3

15 Now, hydrogen cyanide is not natural to
16 earth, it's man-made. So that means they will be
17 putting hydrogen cyanide out when their ponds get out
18 of balance. And how they get out of the balance is
19 when mercury gets in there from the center bar, and
20 throws the cyanide way out of whack. So they can't
21 put the mercury compounds into the pile; they have to
22 smelt them separately. And when they smelt them,
23 they blow the mercury in the air.

R-3-1

24 Now, it is documented by MSHA, Mine
25 Safety and Health Administration, and Cal-OSHA, that

R-3-1

1 the Cactus Mine was cited several times for blowing
2 mercury in the air weeks on end.

3 When the Cal-OSHA inspector Henry
4 McEntyre went out there, he found that the scrubber
5 was broke, and they were out there vacuuming mercury
6 off the ground. And people wonder why their teeth
7 are falling out.

8 Let me finish here.

9 MR. MOHSEN: One more minute.

R-3-1

10 MR. CHIODO: It also has lead,
11 manganese, mercury, naphthalene, nickel, PAHS's,
12 selenium and zinc.

13 Now, in the Environmental Impact it says
14 "air quality" and it also says "health hazards to
15 public safety."

16 Now, I do mean to chastise the Bureau of
17 Land Management. I have dealt with them for many,
18 many years. I have been mining for thirty-five
19 years. Some of you out here have mined for longer
20 than that.

R-3-4

21 They should have supplied these prior to
22 this meeting so that you individuals who were
23 intelligent enough to read this could have read it
24 and see what you're going to be breathing and see
25 what's going to happen and why your kids get the

1 shakes or why your kid can't think right.

2 I'm going to sit down and let you guys
3 talk, but you think about what I'm saying. Because I
4 am an investigator for a large attorney firm, and
5 we're bothering to drop the bomb on these people.

6 MR. MOHSEN: We have to try and -- I'm
7 going to put some of his thoughts down because I want
8 to explain to you how we're going to responding to
9 all the concerns you've had today.

10 One of the important documents we
11 produced is called a Final EIS/EIR, which this is the
12 draft portion of it. The Final EIS/EIR really is
13 taking every comment, just like the one that was
14 made, and responding to it item by item.

15 We're not going to go around it. We're
16 not going to dismiss it. We are not going to
17 disregard it. We are going to address it with a
18 response.

19 It will be very hard for me to
20 articulate that response today because it takes more
21 than just me to do it. The State of California has
22 one of the toughest environmental laws in the
23 country.

24 So we have to consult with the other
25 agencies and make sure that the response to the

1 comments that were made are by the appropriate
2 agency, whether it's for toxics or air quality or for
3 water quality, it will be done and documented in the
4 final EIS/EIR sent to you again for review, holding a
5 public meeting, if necessary, again, to hear your
6 concerns again.

7 We're not going to exhaust this process
8 by one meeting. But comments such as the gentleman
9 just made need to be addressed, and it will be in due
10 time when we're ready to publish the document.

11 I will put some of his thoughts down
12 just to make sure if someone has additional ones,
13 that they can go ahead and state them, but if they
14 are repeating what this gentleman said, then,
15 basically it's already been documented and it's going
16 to be addressed in the final document.

17 The lady raised her arm earlier. Yes.
18 And then, sir you're right after her.

19 MS. BENSON: I'm Karen Benson, Vice
20 Mayor of California City and I have a Mayor's
21 proclamation from California City.

22 "Whereas, the combined Draft EIR/EIS has
23 been prepared by Kern County and the BLM for the
24 Soledad Mountain Mining Project and Golden Queen
25 Mining Company;

R-4-1

R-4-1

1 "And whereas, Soledad Mountain has a
2 land use designation for mining the riches for such
3 land use and purpose. The Golden Queen Mining
4 Soledad Mountain Project will appropriately continue
5 such land use;

6 "And whereas, the Soledad Mountain
7 Project will require the investment by Golden Queen
8 Mining of over \$40 million in construction costs,
9 will use Kern County suppliers for building and
10 construction materials and will employ over 250
11 initial employees for eight months;

12 "And whereas, the project will provide
13 permanent jobs for a projected 230 employees over a
14 lifetime of the project, estimating between twelve
15 and sixteen years. And Golden Queen Mining is
16 committed to hiring East Kern residents in supporting
17 Kern County's businesses;

18 "And whereas, the Golden Queen Mining
19 Company will be constructing and operating a
20 state-of-the-art mine and reclaiming operations while
21 being simultaneously committed to the preservation of
22 historical mining works and structures in the area
23 covered by the project;

24 And whereas, the Soledad Mining Project
25 will provide an important addition to the Kern County

R-4-1

1 tax base, and help meet infrastructure needs of
2 Southeast Kern County;

3 "Therefore, I Mayor Mary Adams by virtue
4 of the authority vested in me as mayor, do hereby
5 support the Golden Queen Mining Company in their
6 endeavors in East Kern, and recommend that approvals
7 required by local agencies be granted to allow this
8 project to go forth.

9 "In witness whereof, I hereunto set my
10 hand and cause the great seal of California City to
11 be affixed this 6th day of June, 1997."

12 The whole City Council of California
13 City supports this project. East Kern is considered
14 a depressed area. The benefit of jobs and the fact
15 that they will spend their money in the East Kern
16 region is enough to support this project.

17 Thank you.

18 MR. HOOPER: Hello everyone. Last time
19 I was in this building was forty-years years ago. I
20 went to elementary school here.

21 I have a long-term interest and I
22 cherish the desert, and I would like to see it remain
23 livable.

24 My name is James Hooper. I live at 3966
25 Backus Road. I have a home there and one in

1 California City.

2 I agree that California has a lot of
3 environmental protection laws, but the problem is
4 enforcement.

5 I have a couple of articles here, one
6 involving -- perhaps you saw them -- the burning of
7 tires -- the Kern County Air Pollution Control
8 District permitted the burning of tires, and then got
9 their hand caught in the cookie jar about the
10 environment and said basically, "Oops."

11 Therein lies a big part of the problem
12 is, who can we trust to tend the chicken coop, and
13 many times within the Environmental Impact Report
14 it's the mining company that turns in the
15 information. And that's a hard situation to trust,
16 folks.

17 This is another article regarding the
18 Lahonton Water District, which permitted sewage
19 dumping against -- well, in contrast to many of their
20 own rules about covering it, plowing it in and so on.
21 And they did not begin to comply until they were
22 pressured to by environmentally-conscientious people.

23 I also would like to say, I think this
24 is a great project. It's in the wrong place.

25 I live on Backus Road area. I belong to

P-5-3

1 a little group out there called Ancient Valley Civic
2 Association. For many decades I used to go there
3 with my parents.

4 And I have two maps of that area. Even
5 though these maps could be dismissed as clerical
6 error, if they are clerical error, they are gross.
7 Perhaps, some would say they are meant to be
8 deceptive. I wouldn't want to come to a conclusion
9 on it, but they are darn worrisome.

10 I have Map A here with dots, I don't
11 know that you can see them, where the folks who did
12 the environmental survey, recognized fifteen or
13 nineteen -- they say different numbers in different
14 places -- dwellings directly downwind, what I call
15 the "danger zone" for this mine.

16 If I lived in Mojave upwind, if I lived
17 in Cal City far away, or if I live Tehachapi far
18 away, I could say "jobs, wonderful," and wouldn't be
19 very worried about it.

20 But we live right there where the wind
21 howl brings this stuff down on us. And it's
22 frightening.

23 This map here has ninety-four red dots
24 on it. If you contrast that with the map that's in
25 the report with nineteen red dots -- these are

R-5-3

1 people, these are homes, these are families. This is
2 serious business when an error of this magnitude
3 happens. I'm sure you'll agree.

4 Again, who knows what the intent was,
5 but it's a frightening error.

6 I would like to emphasize the points
7 that the folks out there on Ancient Valley, Backus
8 Road, Kemper Road, Loneview Road are downwind, and in
9 a far different predicament, in a unique situation
10 relative to the pluses and minuses of this mine.

11 Now, I only have a few minutes, I'm sure
12 I'm doing the edge here.

13 I would like to compliment the mine
14 manager, Mr. Graeme. We have talked to him several
15 times. He's been conscientious. And he's really
16 tried to be up front with us people, Ancient Valley
17 Civic Association.

18 Again, I would like to say great idea,
19 great project; wrong place.

20 MR. MOHSEN: Again, as I mentioned
21 earlier, we will take his comments and respond to
22 them item by item. But I'm going to just take one to
23 respond to right now.

24 He said "The wrong place."

25 Again, this is why the land-use planning

1 process is very important. You as a public own these
2 lands, and if you determine through a land-use
3 planning process what is appropriate or not
4 appropriate, then it be zoned appropriately.

5 But back in 1979, when this area was
6 zoned, the mining and development seems to be the
7 zoning that the public had requested at that time.

8 And now only the government -- I mean
9 BLM and Kern County, are only responding to the
10 zoning laws that were handed over to us by the
11 democratic process, if you will.

12 So "wrong place," "right place," it's a
13 judgment, but it only needs to be done through the
14 land-use planning process. So we all as a community
15 determine what is appropriate and what is not
16 appropriate in the area. And after a mine comes in,
17 the land-use planning process is already concluded.

18 So the reason why I'm mentioning this
19 is, I hold a lot of public meetings. I do not see as
20 much participation at the land-use planning level as
21 I do at the project level.

22 Let me expand on that a little bit
23 because I'm seeing some eyes out there looking at me
24 like, "What are you trying to say?"

25 What I'm trying to say is: There's two

1 steps before anything happens to a land. Just like
2 when you buy a property, you first buy it because
3 it's zoned residential, and then you build on it.

4 Now, it would be very difficult if you
5 buy a property and come and build on it, and the
6 government says, "Wait a minute. That's not zoned
7 for residential areas."

8 Then why did you buy the property
9 initially in that area unless it was zoned for that?

10 That's why it's important to understand
11 that it's a two-step process. The first step is to
12 say whether this land should be zoned for development
13 or not. It doesn't matter if it's mining, it doesn't
14 matter if it's wind energy; development is
15 development. It means use of the resources of the
16 land.

17 And back in 1979/'80, the desert plan
18 determined that the Soledad Mountain is an area for
19 consumption, use and development. It's been going on
20 for twenty-five years.

21 "Wrong place," "right place" is very
22 hard to respond to that without, again, using our
23 land-use planning process saying you as a public have
24 asked for the government to manage the area based on
25 these zoning things.

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R-6-1

R-6-2

R-6-3

Ma'am, you want to come up.

MS. RIGG: My name is Barbara Rigg. And I've lived in the area for many, many years. And I was at the last meeting. When this map was set out, the mine was not being open-pit mined nor was it having cyanide ponds, nor was it dumping out all the poisons that they are dumping out today.

I would also like to say that I have only one question of these people: If they are going to mine the same way they have been assessing it, then their permits must say they can dump all over us, because you cannot pass that mine -- and four times a day I pass it, and I fall asleep or try to, I have to fight to keep awake. I can get a horrible odor that burns your nose and makes your throat sore and dry.

If they are going to be doing this on a larger scale, we're all going to suffer a whole lot more.

Also, my question number two is to the county and the people that live in this area that say we need employment. Why is it Kern County is giving East Kern, all the sick, dredged-up dump work? Why can't we have some decent employment over here? And keep the mines contained. They can mine. Keep it

R-6-3

1 contained on the property in the proper manner and
2 keep some decent industry coming in, not dirty.

3 We're tired of being dumped on in East
4 Kern.

5 MR. MOHSEN: Yes, ma'am.

6 MS. BOETSCH: Good evening. My name is
7 Pat Boetsch, it's spelled B-o-e-t-s-c-h. And I would
8 like to readdress this thing on employment in the
9 area.

R-7-1

10 They are talking about five hundred
11 people over sixteen years. That doesn't say we're
12 going to have five hundred people employed all the
13 time. You need to think about that. They may have
14 twelve people hired or lay them off and hire some
15 more.

16 That's all I have to say about that.

17 Thank you.

18 MR. MOHSEN: Yes, sir. Thanks for
19 stating your name to the court reporter. I
20 appreciate that.

R-8-1

21 MR. ZAMORA: Good afternoon, ladies and
22 gentlemen. My name is Manuel Zamora, I live in
23 Mojave. I used to work for twelve years in mining.
24 I worked in the Cactus Mine, Rand Mining Company in
25 Randsburg. And I try to tell -- for something, that

R-8-1

1 some people say about the cyanide and all the stuff.
2 The people less than a half mile are mining, and I
3 never hear anything happen to those people.

4 We are working in Cactus, and anything
5 that happens, I've been working twelve years, and I
6 never feel nothing in my system. So, I don't know
7 why the reason they say it's going to be dangerous.

8 And I don't know what that last lady is
9 talking about. We're not even started mining out
10 there, and she's talking about she feels dizzy and
11 passed out. I don't know why.

12 Thank you.

13 MR. MOHSEN: Yes, ma'am.

14 MS. MURRAY: My name is a Terry Murray.
15 I live in Lancaster.

R-9-1

16 I would like to address this gentleman's
17 statement. What do we have to be afraid of mercury?
18 Mercury has a fifteen- to twenty-year time of
19 incubation. At that time, will we know? It's only
20 been nine years since we had the massive mercury
21 release.

22 What we have to be afraid of are your
23 chemicals, the burning in our nose and our throats
24 when you're in active mines, the odors, but more
25 importantly, our children.

1 With all due respect to our elected
2 officials, I want to see our area grow, but not at
3 the risk of our children.

4 I have an eight-year-old who was
5 massively exposed when we had our little mercury
6 "oops." None of our elected officials did anything
7 to help us. Instead, they covered it up. They hid
8 it.

9 And enough is enough. We want this mine
10 to go somewhere else. Take it out by the truckload,
11 if you must, take down the mountain, but do not
12 expose our people, our children, anymore.

13 Thank you.

14 MR. MOHSEN: Yes, sir.

15 Make sure your comments are focused to
16 BLM and Kern County. We're the ones that have to
17 respond.

18 MR. SKELTON: I'm Curt Skelton, a
19 general contractor. I've had three projects with
20 Golden Queen Mining, remodeling their buildings.

21 I would like to speak about the
22 character of the men and ladies that I have worked
23 with.

24 They have treated me excellently. I
25 have pulled a number of building permits, if you

R-10-1

1 will. They have all been in order, they were on
2 older buildings. Some of you know what they get into
3 with older buildings. They were all commercial
4 permit.

5 They have treated me, again, very
6 kindly. I have Frank Hyder here somewhere. I call
7 him the safety officer. But he's back there. So
8 everybody turn around. He's the gentleman with the
9 striped shirt and glasses. Get mad at him if you get
10 a release.

11 But he has been concerned about little
12 nuts and bolts that somebody might scrape an ankle
13 on.

14 But anyway, these people have treated me
15 with decency. If you get a look at the project,
16 everything is spin 'n span up there.

17 The people are decent people. I've
18 never heard a hash word out of anybody. If you can't
19 get mad at your contractor, and if you don't get mad
20 at your contractor, you probably don't get mad at
21 anybody.

22 But anyway, you have excellent people
23 working up there. And you can talk to them. And
24 they haven't been harsh with me.

25 And anyway, I thank God for their

R-10-1

1 kindness and what I have seen up there.

2 MS. MATHIS: Hi. Good evening. My name
3 is Sue Mathis, and my family and I also live south of
4 the project. And I do want to thank Dick Graeme.
5 He's been awfully kind and has spoken clearly and
6 precisely and seemed very honest.

7 But my husband and I, after reviewing
8 the document, and it was quite a document, after
9 looking, there's a lot of inconsistencies.

10 Especially, we're most interested in the
11 water concerns. Your test wells as far as just show
12 the locations, doesn't say which particular ones
13 you're going to use -- that needs to be clarified --
14 for the ground.

R-11-1

15 Are you going to select people who live
16 south of the mine and use their particular wells that
17 actually they are drinking out of for test wells?
18 Sample it four times a year? We're asking that.

19 Make sure the check the depth because
20 the depth on your side of the mountain may not be the
21 depth on our side of the mountain.

R-11-2

22 The other thing is the inconsistency of
23 the number of residences. I think that's also
24 important. One part of the document says ten, one
25 says fifteen. On the chart, it shows nineteen.

R-11-2

1 Mr. Hooper counted ninety-six. It seems to be going
2 up.

R-11-3

3 Maybe it's that 200 percent error that
4 you guys brought up in your water. When you guys
5 talked about you were going to check the depth, and
6 if it went out 200 percent of what you guys were
7 estimating. Well, 200 percent is a big error. Some
8 wells won't even take 200 percent.

9 I think you need to go back and reassess
10 that 200 percent thing.

R-11-4

11 The other thing was the wind. We read
12 in depth about the wind. You had one active
13 thermometer that we could tell. It was sampled only
14 a couple of times, once at 1:00 o'clock in the
15 afternoon, I saw several times. There might have
16 been other times, perhaps they chose not very windy
17 days, but it was upwind. Anybody who is an
18 aerodynamcist can certainly tell upside of the hill
19 is going to be less windy than up and over the hill
20 and down and turbulent.

21 That's where you're going to have your
22 overburden piles. Are you telling me the particulate
23 matter, you know, PM-10, which is 10 microns. You're
24 not going to have any of that leaving the site?
25 Those of us who live down south of that mine tend to

R-11-4

1 disagree, and we find it hard to believe. I think
2 you need more data on that because we don't believe
3 it.

4 You're data isn't down south of there,
5 either. It's all up on the more calm side. And I
6 think that needs to be looked at and addressed.

7 Again, the health concerns of the
8 children. Two of my kids have been diagnosed with
9 asthma in the last three years. While you guys were
10 building those roads and blasting, I took pictures of
11 the dust in the air. It was really incredible. And
12 those were on non-windy days where it just sort of
13 dissipated up.

14 On a windy day anyone who lives in
15 Rosamond sees how the dust picks up where they have
16 disturbed the land. They aren't even trying to blast
17 that, they just cleared the brush, and you can see
18 the big dust storm.

19 I think that needs to be addressed. I
20 don't think that's been addressed in a manner that's
21 satisfactory for those of us who live down south.
22 Our arguments are not that it shouldn't be mined.
23 It's been mined as long as we lived there.

24 Our arguments are the way it's being
25 mined. Our arguments are that the issues that we

R-11-4

1 think are important are not being addressed clearly.

2 You know, I think really any good
3 engineering firm paid enough money could make
4 Chernobyl be less than a significant impact to the
5 people in the neighborhood. I think that's really
6 something to keep in mind.

7 It's how you gather the data. It's
8 where you place your instruments to collect the data,
9 and how you interpret that data. And all those
10 things are very, very important. And those people
11 who live in the area need to read that very
12 carefully, because I can guarantee you people in Kern
13 County may not. The engineering firm was paid to do
14 that.

15 So I'm not opposed to the mine, but I'm
16 opposed to being poisoned and getting away with it.

R-11-5

17 The other concern that I have is that
18 once this mine starts, we have concerns. They
19 blasted more than once a day. I think I read in
20 there that they are only allowed to blast once a day.
21 It didn't say how much it's gotten to yet.

22 But anyway, what if they blast twice a
23 day, who do we call? "Oh, we're busy. Oh, we don't
24 have anybody available to check on that."

25 These are very, very important issues

R-11-6

1 credibility and accountability. We need to know, as
2 the people in this area need to know, who we can
3 contact, who we can talk to, and that something is
4 going to be done about it if we are going to give
5 this our support. I think that all needs to be
6 addressed.

7 And there are certain issues as far as
8 Monolopia on the hill. I read through your plant
9 materials list, and I did not see that brought up.

10 If you say that you're going to address
11 all of the issues in the letters that were sent to
12 you, that one particular plant was mentioned in the
13 letter and was never listed on your plants list. I
14 don't know if you intentionally left it out or
15 whether it was an oversight. Again, I'm bringing
16 that to your attention. I think these things need to
17 be brought up.

18 You know, if you guys aren't going to be
19 open and up front with us, and I'm not saying it was
20 intentional, but I'm just telling you that we're
21 checking on you, and you need to follow-up on these
22 things.

23 Thank you.

24 MR. MOHSEN: Again, the court reporter
25 documented every single word. I tried to get the

R-11-7

R-12-1

1 best of it I could. We will take it item by item and
2 respond to them in the final document.

3 Thanks for bringing these issues up.

4 Sir.

5 MR. BOETSCH: My name is Jerry Boetsch,
6 B-o-e-t-s-c-h. I live straight east of the mine.
7 There are nights our house shakes in the wind it
8 blows so damn hard.

9 And my major concern, being in the
10 business I'm in, is the water.

11 You were talking about pumping 750
12 gallon a minute according to your report, seven days
13 a week, twenty-four hours a day. I would like to
14 know where you plan to get that water from.

15 There isn't that much water in that
16 valley. There are dry wells just east of the mine.
17 Two to three gallon a minute at 600 feet, that's all
18 the man's got, and it's loaded with arsenic.

19 So, that's my major concern. I want to
20 know where you plan on getting this water from. It's
21 not up there. It's a finite area. We haven't had
22 any recharge. Look at the amount of rainwater we've
23 had in the last five or six years. We had one good
24 snowstorm this winter, and that's all; it didn't even
25 last a day's time.

R-13-1

1 That's all I have to say.

2 MR. MOHSEN: Anyone else?

3 Sir.

4 MR. SETTLE: I'm Glenn A. Settle. And
5 I'm unusual. I'm a native son of Antelope Valley. I
6 have lived here for about eighty-five years and I
7 have seen what an important part mining has done to
8 our area. And I could go on and tell all night here
9 about the important things that mining has done.

10 We go back 120 years of mining been
11 going on in this area. The northeast end of Tropic
12 Hill, when you go by there, you will see that pit.
13 The clay from that pit helped build many of the Los
14 Angeles early brick buildings and the tile roof
15 buildings and some of the other things, like when
16 they had a pottery plant there.

17 Then when the mining boom happened when
18 Bower struck gold on Standard Hill just north of the
19 Golden Queen, and the Tropic, they all came into the
20 mining boom about one time, and we mined for a good
21 many years.

22 And then they finally got the low ebb
23 and they were not doing much mining until about 1934
24 when President Roosevelt raised the price of gold
25 from \$20.67 to \$35.00.

R-13-1

1 This immediately gave a big boost to
2 mining in the area. The gold field consolidated with
3 one of the largest mining companies in the world,
4 Tropicco Road; there was Silver Queen at that time,
5 and they changed the name of it to Golden Queen.

6 Until they were forced to close down
7 During World War II, they were a very important part
8 of the mining industry in our area, as was the
9 Tropicco and the Cactus.

10 During the depression, many of you -- I
11 don't know how many of you were here in Antelope
12 Valley during the depression. Times were really
13 rough. The only thing that kept Antelope Valley from
14 drying up and blowing away was the mines.

15 Before that, farming was a big industry.
16 When the farmers got where they couldn't get anything
17 for their crops, some were about ready to lose their
18 land; they couldn't pay the tax, they couldn't pay
19 anything else.

20 So the mines really saved the day
21 because they hired many hundreds of men here in this
22 area, the Cactus and Tropicco and the Golden Queen.
23 And I know, because I had a store here in Rosamond, I
24 know the rest of the country was really in kind of a
25 bad state, but in this area, we were booming because

1 of the mines.

2 One of things I heard you say about the
3 pollutants and a lot of things like that, the water,
4 we mined at the Tropicco for over sixty-five years,
5 and we had a large pond and we had our own well.

6 And not too long ago when everyone was
7 all worried about the pollutants and the water may be
8 bad and all that, we kind of took a survey, of
9 course, they did testing all around the mine, and
10 found everything was okay.

11 But we kind of took a testing of the
12 people that lived around the Tropicco for thirty and
13 forty years, maybe fifty, some were maybe all their
14 lives. And we found out that on the west end of the
15 hill, Dr. Norden, he lived to be over eighty.
16 Clarence Gerdwig and Joey McEnomy, they lived right
17 by the mine, they both lived in their eighties. Hank
18 Williams, he lived right there, he only lived to be
19 ninety. And Avery Quitt, he only lived to be
20 ninety-two. So you might think that land and that
21 water out there -- I'm just one of the new kids on
22 the block. I only lived up there about forty. But
23 I'll be eighty-six this year; so maybe that water and
24 the air around there has cut my life too short.

25 I don't know. But anyway, what I want

R-13-1

1 to say about the Golden Queen, I've met some of these
2 people, and the man I've talked to, this is the third
3 generation. He's the third generation of this mine.
4 So he knows what he's doing. He knows all about
5 mining. All of these people do. They've hired
6 top-notch people.

7 And what I can say is, the things the
8 way they are like the Plant 42 and Edwards closing
9 down, we should be thankful that we have this
10 industry coming in here because there's going to be a
11 lot of new jobs. And I, for one, am very glad to
12 hear that maybe the mining will be carried on into
13 the next century.

14 MR. MOHSEN: Sir.

15 MR. BOETSCH: Good evening. My name is
16 Jerry Boetsch, Jr., B-o-e-t-s-c-h.

R-14-1

17 And I do not doubt the importance that
18 the mining industry has had to the Antelope Valley,
19 but we must realize that Kern County is only a
20 section of the Antelope Valley, and the major
21 shopping in this area is L. A. County.

22 And we are not guaranteed that the
23 mining company is going to contract to only Kern
24 County suppliers. I mean, they are a business, they
25 need to make a profit. So they are -- they should

R-14-1

1 look for the lowest price for their products. So
2 what guarantees that this income is going to hit Kern
3 County, and it does not guarantee that the income is
4 going to be returned through the employees to Kern
5 County, whereas, the major shopping and the closest
6 is L. A. County.

7 Thank you.

8 MR. MOHSEN: Yes, sir.

9 MR. WEBB: My name is Dean Webb,
10 W-e-b-b.

11 I would also like to address the water
12 problem that some people have addressed.

13 The aquifer that we're talking about
14 probably extends from the Tehachapi mountains all the
15 way to the San Gabriel. So when you're talking
16 about, you know, 750 gallons per minute day and night
17 for fifteen years, you're also going to see a
18 subsidence of the land, even in Lancaster, and you
19 down in Palmdale. So, really, you should be looking
20 at the whole aquifer.

21 And also, how does the dust that you
22 will try to regulate, how does it affect flight
23 testing at Edwards Air Force Base, which is very,
24 very important? I don't remember seeing that looked
25 at also.

R-15-1

R-15-2

R-15-3

1 And getting to the re-vegetation
2 question. You know, how will it be done and who will
3 actually oversee and okay it, you know, after it's
4 already done. You know, this will take fifteen
5 years, and who's really going to be here to actually
6 say that it's done right?

R-15-4

7 And also, what happens if the company
8 backs out in a couple years? Who's going to rework
9 the mine? Will it be the taxpayers, or should the
10 company put up a large bond?

R-15-5

11 And my third comment is that we probably
12 should have a valley committee to monitor water, air,
13 historical preservation, re-vegetation, the Air Force
14 concerns, the different cities around, and Kern
15 County, and also L. A. County.

R-15-6

16 And maybe the mine could connect to the
17 aqueduct; you know, there might be a possibility
18 there.

R-15-7

19 And probably, you know, they should also
20 talk to the East Kern County Historical, you know,
21 East Kern County Historical Society to see about
22 building a permanent museum on the mountain.

23 Thank you very much.

24 MR. MOHSEN: We've heard lots of
25 excellent comments today. I'm very proud of what

1 I've heard today. I think you should be, too. Other
2 people are watching the boob-tube right now, and
3 you're sitting here participating in the democratic
4 process. So I want to commend you on your comments.
5 And we will address each and every one of them, and
6 they are very valuable to our process.

7 The government can't sit behind closed
8 doors and think about these things. We need to hear
9 what your concerns are. We'll try to handle it to
10 the best of our ability.

11 Again, we have to be responsive to the
12 laws and regulations that are there. If there is
13 information that needs to be added to the process, we
14 will be sure to go get it, if it's available to us.
15 If it's not available to us, we'll make the best
16 educated judgment on what is there, based on your
17 concerns, again.

18 So I want to tell you I'm very proud to
19 see this kind of turnout. When I go to public
20 meetings and I see only a few people show up, I see
21 what a great loss and opportunity it's been. It
22 takes two to tango in that process. We're only going
23 to be responsive based on what your concerns are.

24 So we've heard a lot of them today.
25 We're willing to stay all night, if you need to. And

1 when the meeting is over, you can get with us
2 individually and ask any questions you want. We'll
3 be glad to respond to them.

4 I've taken a lot of notes. We have
5 everything down documented. It will be on worldwide
6 web next week; so you can see each other's comments.
7 If you want to go back home, talk to your family
8 about it, you can pull it down from your computer or
9 go to a local library and pull it down from there.
10 We have all the diagrams, everything is there for you
11 to be able to read and make your own judgments about.
12 You don't have to believe everything we're saying,
13 it's all out there.

14 So again, I want you to be proud and go
15 home tonight and tell your neighbor "What did you do
16 tonight important in your life?" I think you guys
17 need to be commended for that.

18 Sir, you had another comment?

19 MEETING PARTICIPANT: What is the
20 worldwide web address?

21 MR. MOHSEN: We'll be glad to provide
22 you that. It's in the cover page of the document.
23 If it's not, I'll put it up here right now.

24 MEETING PARTICIPANT: Please.

25 MR. MOHSEN: I sure will.

1 Before we move on to the next phase of
2 this meeting, are there any more comments or
3 concerns? Sir, do you have something?

4 MEETING PARTICIPANT: I have a comment.

5 MR. MOHSEN: Sure. Come up.

6 And again, you don't have to have your
7 comment today. If you want to go home and think
8 about it, read over the document, have a chance to
9 absorb it, all feel free to submit written comments
10 to us by mail or by fax. We'll be glad to accept
11 them.

12 We will be closing the comment period on
13 July 16. However, we will allow a few days of mail
14 time after that, but we would like to be prompt and
15 timely so we can make sure it's addressed in the
16 final.

17 MR. LANDSGAARD: Good evening. My name
18 is Olaf Landsgaard, O-l-a-f, L-a-n-d-s-g-a-a-r-d.

19 I'm here to read the resolution from the
20 Rosamond Chamber of Commerce. I'm a director for the
21 Rosamond Chamber of Commerce. Before I do that, I
22 would like to say that the Rosamond Chamber is a
23 concerned body here in the community of Rosamond in
24 the high desert area.

25 We are concerned with the environmental

R-16-1

1 impact of any project. We have looked at that. I
2 just got through looking at the Schedule Number 7
3 over there, Appendix Number 7, dealing with the air.
4 I noted it said that everything there, all the things
5 that were going to be omitted, were going to be less
6 than the federally unaccepted levels of materials.

7 I think what we all heard tonight is a
8 lot of common sense, a lot of people concerned about
9 what's close to them, and a lot of high applauds for
10 the Golden Queen Mining Company itself for being a
11 responsible company.

12 Therefore, let me go ahead and read the
13 resolution dated June 5th, 1997; Resolution 97-01:

14 "Whereas the Golden Queen Mining
15 Company/Soledad Mountain Project environmental
16 studies have shown no plant or animal life will be
17 threatened, and that air and water quality will
18 remain healthy for all residents;

19 "And whereas, the Soledad Mountain
20 Project is committed to reclamation after mining;

21 "And whereas, the Golden Queen Mining
22 Company is committed to hiring East Kern residents
23 and buying Kern County products;

24 "And whereas, the Golden Queen Mining
25 Company will spend \$40 million in plant construction

1 and create 250 new construction jobs;

2 "And whereas, the Golden Queen Mining
3 Company will employ 230 permanent employees in East
4 Kern to mine the wealth of Soledad Mountain and
5 improve quality of life for all residents in East
6 Kern County, now therefore be it resolved that the
7 Rosamond Chamber of Commerce hereby endorses,
8 supports and welcomes the Golden Queen Mining Company
9 and the Soledad Mountain Mining Project.

10 "And be it further resolved and directed
11 all counties, State and Federal and other
12 governmental officials to record this resolution at
13 any and all further public meetings."

14 Signed, President Dan Spoor, attached,
15 Shirley J. Conrad, Secretary.

16 MR. MOHSEN: I have put the access to
17 the worldwide web site up here for you. It's pretty
18 easy: [HTTP://www.ca.blm.gov/goldenqueen](http://www.ca.blm.gov/goldenqueen). Pretty
19 simple. And it does have all the diagrams,
20 everything in hard copy that we have submitted to you
21 is on that site. And it does have the proceedings
22 from the last public meeting we had in April of 1996
23 word by word, attendance list. You can also
24 subscribe to us through the electronic -- this is the
25 first project that we actually made available to make

1 sure there's a wide distribution, that folks that are
2 not on the mail, can still get it through public
3 libraries, and also, their home access, if they have
4 it.

5 So, again, I'm going to conclude the
6 meeting if there's no further comments.

7 Further comment, sir? Sure.

8 MR. GAINNEY: Hi. My name is Keith
9 Gainney, G-a-i-n-e-y.

10 Folks, I happen to be an employee at the
11 mine, and I can tell you, I do the accounting. I
12 grew up in this area. I was born in Lancaster, grew
13 up in the Valley. I know Mr. Rombout from playing
14 golf out on the golf course. I know Olaf a little
15 bit. Actually, I went to school with his brother
16 Eric. I went to school in Rosamond for a year, went
17 all the way through high school, went to Antelope
18 valley College, got a scholarship, went to school in
19 Iowa, came back home.

20 Folks, I drove to L. A. for three years
21 straight because there's nowhere to work here. I'm
22 glad to have an opportunity to meet Mr. Graeme, the
23 vice president of the company, and all the folks that
24 are associated with the mine there. They are real
25 upstanding people. They are there to provide an

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R-17-1

1 opportunity for us.

2 And I'll be honest with you, I
3 appreciate all the comments that I'm hearing from the
4 people on the other side. I really do, because I may
5 not be thinking completely clearly; it's an
6 opportunity for me. And I appreciate you guys
7 raising the points, raising the comments that, you
8 know, coming from the other sides, that we need to
9 look at some issues and make sure that they are
10 addressed.

11 The young man who had mentioned driving
12 to Lancaster spending the money, that's a choice that
13 we all make in Kern County. We don't have to do
14 that. It's better if we spend the money here in Kern
15 County, and don't forget about Bakersfield. You can
16 go the other way just as easily as going to
17 Lancaster. It's not much further.

18 So, you know, let's keep all of that in
19 mind as well.

20 I'm pretty nervous up here, but my legs
21 are about to fall out from under me.

22 At any rate, I just appreciate the
23 opportunity and, you know, the jobs will never
24 happen, the economy will never boom if we don't take
25 the opportunity and let it ride -- not just let it

1 ride. Let's take a look at it, make sure everything
2 is taken care of, but keep an open mind in a positive
3 sense, rather than a negative sense. We need the
4 positive side around here.

5 Thank you.

6 MR. MOHSEN: That's very important that
7 we just follow up on a couple of the discussions he
8 just made.

9 We want to make sure we live in a good
10 community and good neighborhood, and all of us try
11 and be good neighbors. It's going to be up to us to
12 make sure the operation is conducted in that way;
13 that they are good neighbors to us. But they are not
14 going to do it without your participation and your
15 reasonableness in approaching the issues.

16 They are willing, the government and the
17 company are willing, to address any issues that you
18 highlight for us out there. We're not going to do it
19 if it's not reasonable and if there's not a community
20 approach to the issue.

21 We need to make sure that we talk
22 together and have dialog that's open. I'm sure from
23 the comments here today, the proponent of the project
24 has been open to dialog and open for discussion.

25 Let's take this opportunity and make

1 sure that we continue that kind of good neighbor
2 approach, because that's the only way we're going to
3 do it.

4 Let's show the world that we can do it
5 in California better than anywhere else and still
6 have a clean place to live and a good quality of
7 life. It's not easy, but anywhere it's going to
8 happen, it can happen here.

9 Is there anyone else that wants to make
10 a comment.

11 Sir, with the hat.

12 MR. SPOOR: My name is Dan Spoor,
13 S-p-o-o-r.

14 I'm a grading contractor here in
15 Rosamond. I've worked up at the Golden Queen Mine, I
16 think, three different times now, delivering products
17 or working up there on the mine.

18 I need to say that I appreciate the
19 people up there. They are good people. They come
20 across honest. They say what they mean. They mean
21 what they say. They are fair. I appreciate this,
22 Dick. I do.

23 In contracting business, you coming
24 across people, you begin to size them up and get
25 their number rather quickly, and you determine

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1 whether or not you can trust them or whether or not
2 you want to work with them. And I'm pleased with
3 these people up here.

4 I'm pleased with the comments that are
5 concerns also. These are good because I don't think
6 anybody wants to go out there and kill somebody and
7 ruin life. But I know for a fact that there's a lot
8 of wealth in this ground. And God put it there for
9 us, not just to sit there and rot.

10 Theirs is a fair way to go about and a
11 proper way to go about mining the riches of this
12 world, and in consuming it.

13 So, also I want to speak for the Chamber
14 of Commerce as the President of the Chamber. We have
15 many people in there, and they are for this project;
16 we support it.

17 I need to say that in my own business
18 it's the trickle-down system, that I go out there and
19 I earn, and I go by the Tire Barn and I go by R & J
20 Auto, and on, and on, and on. And the money
21 continues to move around. This is good. This is
22 good for America; that's what made us what we are.

23 I would love to be about eighty-six or
24 so, Glenn, it would just be fine.

25 Thank you.

1 MR. MOHSEN: I also put up here my phone
2 number, if anyone is having trouble getting any
3 information or needs a copy of the document, make
4 sure you get ahold of me, and I'll get your request
5 honored as soon as I can.

6 Sir.

7 MR. GUTIERREZ: My name is Jeff
8 Gutierrez.

9 This is another letter of support that
10 was written and submitted to Steve Perez, the County
11 Supervisor and Glenn Barnhill, a planner for Kern
12 County.

13 It he says, "Dear Mr. Perez, we submit
14 this letter of support for the Golden Queen Mining
15 Company/Soledad Mountain Project. The DeWalt
16 Corporation has been actively involved with providing
17 professional survey services to Golden Queen Mining
18 during the past three years.

19 "This project taps the unique
20 opportunities which are part of eastern Kern County
21 and represents a responsible investment in our local
22 economy, which, in turn, adds to our community.

23 "We support the orderly development of
24 mineral resources within the community and the
25 adherence to all applicable permitting and

R-19-1

1 regulations.

2 "We feel confident that the umbrella of
3 local, State and Federal guidelines for the
4 permitting and operation of such facilities will
5 ensure the safety and protection of our community and
6 environment.

7 "The patient and responsible attitude
8 Golden Queen Mining has shown throughout their
9 research and planning of the Soledad Mountain Project
10 is to be commended.

11 "Your support of this investment in our
12 community will benefit us all "

13 That is by Dennis DeWalt, President of
14 DeWalt Corporation.

15 MR. MOHSEN: Do you want that letter to
16 be part of the record?

17 MR. GUTIERREZ: I read it in. There are
18 copies.

19 MR. MOSHEN: You read it verbatim and
20 that will constitute the record.

21 Yes, ma'am.

22 MS. SHINEFLEW: My name is a Mary
23 Shineflew, S-h-i-n-e-f-l-e-w.

R-20-1

24 I'm your honorary mayor of Rosamond. My
25 opinions are my personal concerns.

R-20-1

1 When I moved here over twenty-three
2 years ago, the population was a little over 3,000
3 people. Now I'm told it's a little over 20,000
4 people.

5 Those 18,000 people came in here and
6 they changed the way our desert looked. Some of them
7 came and dumped in our desert, polluted our water,
8 polluted our air.

9 We have government agencies who oversee
10 these concerns.

11 We cannot control where the mine is.
12 And I'm sure the government will also control how
13 they pollute our land and our air and our town.

14 Thank you.

15 MR. MOHSEN: Yes, sir, in the back
16 there.

17 MR. FARMER: My name is Jess Farmer,
18 F-a-r-m-e-r.

19 A lot of you know me as the manager over
20 in disposal. I'm also the director on your Chamber
21 of Commerce.

22 I worked in mines several years ago.
23 It's been twenty-one years since I have worked there.
24 I worked in them for several years, I have had no ill
25 effects from it; I'm still here. I can't say nothing

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against it.

There has been some real legitimate concerns that I think need to be addressed, but I think one thing nobody has addressed is you're talking 230 people. How many people will support that 230 people? It's going to be a big boost to your economy. That's one thing I think we really need here in Rosamond. There's a lot of empty houses out there that need to be filled. You might give that some thought, too.

Thank you.

MR. MOHSEN: If there's anything that we haven't heard before, I would like to hear if someone has a comment that hasn't been either talked about today or hasn't been documented.

We're willing to wait as long as it needs to be if you have a concern that we need to address.

Again, the purpose of this process is to see how do we address these things, and how do we follow up on them. Because putting a document in writing is not the end; it's the beginning of a contract. The contract requires everyone be involved; since you are the shareholders of the land, you have a say in it.

1 And the proponent of the project and the
2 Federal government are going to be working with you
3 after the permit is done to make sure the things we
4 contracted out with the public is followed up on.

5 So your issues and concerns are now
6 documented so we can have enough information in the
7 document, so when we do permit the project, we can
8 follow up on some of the commitments that were made.

9 So, if no one has any comment, I would
10 like to maybe just have a -- do you have one more?
11 Okay. Yes, ma'am.

12 MS. RIGG: I have a question more than a
13 comment.

14 MR. MOHSEN: Hang on. Can you state
15 your name for the court reporter?

16 MS. RIGG: Barbara Rigg.

17 MR. MOHSEN: Go ahead.

18 MS. RIGG: If we couldn't trust them
19 back when the first mine started, how are we going to
20 trust them now? Because some of the same people own
21 this mine. And my concern is how do we trust what's
22 been betrayed before?

23 MS. MURRAY: How do you enforce the
24 trust?

25 MR. MOHSEN: Let me try and respond to

1 the lady's comments.

2 As far as trust, that's why we go
3 through a process, which is a legal document. That
4 legal document is the framework, just like our
5 constitution, it's a framework by which us as a
6 community are going to be talking about that, these
7 issues.

8 It sets up the schedule, the type of
9 agreements, everything is in one package. So, if we
10 move on to other areas, whoever is going to inherit
11 the project will follow up on the agreement. Just
12 like, again, just like our constitution. You don't
13 have to have the founding fathers present 200 years
14 from now to enforce it. But if it's a legal
15 framework that we all accepted, and it becomes a
16 legal document and approved by the officials, then it
17 becomes our framework. Anything that's not in that
18 document or is not followed by the document is
19 grounds for legal action, either by one party or the
20 other.

21 So again, it's all going to be as
22 important as how we as a community enforce it.

23 The gentleman made a comment earlier
24 about setting up a community group to discuss these
25 issues. I mean, that's a good comment.

1 You're going to have to get together as
2 a community and discuss these things as a
3 neighborhood, because it's not going to be one issue,
4 it's not going to be a short-term issue, it's going
5 to be a long-term, day-to-day process, just like
6 raising children, just like living in your community,
7 it's something you have to work on every day.

8 Yes, ma'am.

9 MS. MURRAY: For the record, again, my
10 name is Terry Murray.

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11 I would like to know for our
12 notification, when accidents do happen, Bakersfield
13 in '89 were notified, the residents, that there was a
14 massive release, yet, none of us on this side
15 downwind of the mine was ever told. We had to find
16 it out ourselves. I lay to guess anyone in this room
17 that was here in '89, again, was not told.

R-9-5
18 The other thing is, we need in-home
19 monitors so that we can detect mercury, hydrogen
20 cyanide, and hydrogen chloride and, also, the ammonia
21 base that's used in the cyanide pits. This is an
22 absolute must.

R-9-6
23 And more importantly, also, have it
24 totally contained, or totally gone, would be my first
25 wish.

1 MR. MOHSEN: Okay. She made some
2 comments that will be part of the record. We will
3 respond to them as far as notification of the
4 incidents.

5 The way our country is designed, there
6 is a balance of power. Not all the requirements are
7 vested in BLM or in Kern County. But by design, our
8 government has given different authorities. This
9 operation has to get more than a dozen permits. So
10 it depends on what permit the incident has triggered
11 for the response of the notification.

12 So we will outline exactly in the
13 document what permit is applicable to what agency, so
14 when there is an issue or concern, you can forward
15 that concern to the appropriate agency. They are the
16 only ones under the law that can enforce it. BLM has
17 limited authority. Kern County Planning has limited
18 authority. The requirements for the mine are handled
19 by more than a dozen agencies.

20 The Lahonton Water Board deals with the
21 water issues. And if there's an incident with a
22 spill, they are the appropriate agency and the legal
23 agency with jurisdiction to be able to enforce
24 whatever action they need to.

25 So we will outline -- it's very

1 difficult to understand all these things. That's why
2 we will outline them in the document, to make sure
3 the appropriate agencies -- that you are aware of the
4 appropriate agency that is required for the permit
5 for water or air or access or safety. There are more
6 than a dozen agencies that are involved in permitting
7 this project.

8 BLM and Kern County, as I mentioned, are
9 the lead agencies. We will make sure that other
10 agencies are aware of their requirements, so you
11 folks are also aware of their commitments. So if
12 there is an incident, we can go back and say this
13 agency issued the permit, here's the conditions of
14 the permit, is the operator complying with the permit
15 as it's written or not.

16 Again, it's a legal document, it's not a
17 handshake, it's not a verbal commitment, it's a legal
18 commitment based on what is part of the record.

19 Yes, sir. State your name again.

20 MR. CHIODO: My name is Pat Chiodo. I'm
21 a safety engineer.

22 I want to bring up an example. In
23 Hollywood they were digging that tunnel for the Metro
24 Rail. They had all the safeguards in place, all the
25 contract documents, all the agencies were running

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1 around. They still sunk the boulevard because the
2 contractor got greedy.

3 What safeguards are you going to make so
4 that if somebody decides that they are getting a lot
5 of gold out of the deposit, what safeguards is there
6 to keep them from going crazy and not doing it right?

7 And my second part of this is, dust that
8 is ten microns or smaller, which your EIR states, ten
9 microns or smaller of any kind of dust, is ten
10 microns or smaller, and it takes several hours to
11 drop out of the air.

12 I've had tests all the way down to
13 Avenue B, that on an atomic absorption test, shows it
14 came from Cactus Mine because of the nitrates from
15 the explosives identifying it.

16 So you have to keep in mind, people in
17 California City do not get dust. People in Mojave
18 don't get the dust. People in Tehachapi don't get
19 the dust; they get the money.

20 The people that work in this project
21 aren't going to be from the area that's contaminated.
22 The gentleman with the ninety houses that were on the
23 thing, actually, it's 115. I've counted them. I've
24 walked every one of them. And they are all within
25 downwind of this project.

1 And the funny part about the project is
2 they put the anemometer, which is the wind-measuring
3 device upwind of the project so that they weren't
4 testing anything down below it.

5 So, people, you may want the money, and
6 I myself, I like a check, too, but twenty-five years
7 down the line, you be like this gentleman right here,
8 dying from poisoning, from benzene poisoning. He had
9 to have triple bypass surgery because his heart went
10 out attributed to benzene because he was in the
11 mines. Two of his friends just died recently from
12 mine contamination, cancer. And it all comes from
13 the ground. And if there are no safeguards,
14 everybody here will not benefit.

15 Thank you.

16 MR. MOHSEN: Yes, we got his comments
17 right here as far as safeguards.

18 Let me address a couple of the issues
19 real quick. The document explains it further, but
20 there is bonding for reclamation required as part of
21 this project. Every acre that's disturbed has a
22 bonding dollar amount attached to it that's held by
23 the Kern County BLM and Lahonton Water Board for
24 reclamation, fifteen years from now when it begins.

25 That bond is for the cost to the

1 government, not to the operator. In other words, if
2 the government has to go out and contract a third
3 party to conduct the work, that's the cost based on
4 that; it's not based on what it will cost the current
5 operator to do it.

6 The bonding is a real financial security
7 to assure the reclamation will be done according to
8 the law.

9 Now, mitigation monitoring is the
10 interim process, reclamation and bonding is the
11 final-closure process, but mitigation monitoring is
12 the interim process. In other words, if we say
13 you'll get, like the lady mentioned, you'll be
14 blasting one time a day. Part of our monitoring is
15 to make sure mitigation -- to make sure one blast a
16 day is followed. An annual report will be submitted
17 to Kern county and BLM on how these mitigations have
18 been followed. These are public documents. You're
19 welcome to them anytime you want.

20 But it's going to require due diligence,
21 participation in the process after it begins, because
22 the mitigation is a long list, and the report will be
23 about an inch thick when it's done. So it requires
24 some reading, some following up on what mitigation
25 was done, when and where and how much and whether it

1 is effective or not effective.

2 That's part of us saying, yes you can do
3 it, but now we're going to make sure we monitor our
4 estimation, so we make sure we mitigate the impacts.

5 After every year, if the mitigations are
6 not working, we look at other ways to do it, or to
7 tighten it up a little more. If it's a monthly
8 reporting, we may want to go to a weekly reporting.
9 If it's a yearly report, we might go for a quarterly
10 report. It all depends on how we monitor the impact.

11 You're dealing with this thing, it's
12 kind of like everybody knows there's going to be
13 impacts, but nobody knows how much and what is really
14 how much, and is it okay or not okay, like everyone
15 says. I lived with mining all my life, or I did.

16 We all as a community need to know what
17 is the impact. We all know there's going to be an
18 impact. But is it a reasonable impact? Is it one we
19 can live with? It's only going to be dependent on
20 how we work together on that.

21 Mitigation and bonding puts a big dent
22 into the impact. If we identify impacts and say
23 you're going to have to reduce that, that's a
24 commitment. Now, I have to follow up on that
25 commitment. And we are willing to do that.

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Yes, sir.

MR. DALE: My name is Ken Dale. I'm new to the Rosamond community.

I just have some questions that probably could use some answering. I've heard several people talk about the various surveys that have been done, the safety monitoring, the impact studies that have been done around the mine.

Who is responsible for setting up the criteria for the testing, this initial testing? Who pays for it? We expect the mine to pay for a fair qualification of the land? Basically, that's what -- who sets the test criteria?

MR. MOHSEN: That's a very good question. Let me spend a few minutes explaining this to you folks.

The government is responsible for everything that's in this document, whether it's Kern County, BLM or the other appropriate agencies. So no matter who collects the information, no matter where it's done, what criteria, the government is responsible. The buck stops right here.

So it's the responsibility of the government to collect information, to publish information, to analyze the information, to develop

1 the criteria; it's all up to us.

2 Now, we utilize a lot of expertise, and
3 we try as much as possible to use scientific bases
4 for some of our decisions. So some of the
5 inventories that were done on the ground were
6 conducted by professional biologists, professional
7 archeologists, professional geologists that we
8 maintain a list of. They have some credibility and
9 integrity with the government. If they don't, they
10 wouldn't get another permit from us.

11 So there is a check and balance in the
12 process. I'll tell you right now, I'm adamant as far
13 as making sure there is objectivity in this process,
14 because only the government can be responsive to the
15 shareholders, which are you folks. Everyone else has
16 an interest in the project except the Federal
17 government and the county government.

18 We want to make sure there is an
19 integrity of the process. So any information that's
20 provided to us, any surveys, any impact studies,
21 either we adopt it or we change it, but we don't have
22 to accept it if we cannot support it.

23 It's very important to know that
24 everything in this document is a government decision,
25 whether it is done by a third-party contractor or

1 paid for by another entity, it's only submitted to
2 the government based on the criteria we set up.

3 So if they go out and collect
4 information that we cannot support, we will not
5 accept that information, and vice versa. If they can
6 provide less information than we need, we will ask
7 them to go back and get some more, because ultimately
8 the buck stops with us. It's not going to be
9 something we pass on to the third-party contractor or
10 the proponent. So anything in this document you
11 don't like, you can come and blame us because we are
12 responsible for it, I'll tell you that right now, no
13 matter who collected that information.

14 Yes, sir. In the back.

15 MR. GRIMES: My name is Leonard Grimes.

16 MR. MOHSEN: Spell the last name,
17 please.

18 MR. GRIMES: G-r-i-m-e-s-

19 MR. MOHSEN: Thank you.

20 MR. GRIMES: Each mine worker that comes
21 on is required to take a numerous amount of safety
22 precautions and area classes; is that not true?

23 MR. MOHSEN: State that question again,
24 please.

25 MR. GRIMES: When a new employee goes on

1 for mine work, is he not required to take a
2 pre-employment safety requirement course?

3 MR. MOHSEN: George is our BLM geologist
4 who also deals with safety issues, and I'll let him
5 respond to that question for you.

6 MR. DEVERSE: Yes, it is true that when
7 you come on board with probably any organization, any
8 business, that you would be required to take a
9 variety of safety training, handling training, job
10 training; that's true.

11 MR. GRIMES: Then if an employee, say,
12 goes down in the mine and chooses not to observe
13 those safety precautions, then he would incur the
14 certain types of infections or diseases, yes?

15 MR. DEVERSE: Most likely he would
16 probably have an accident, or else his supervisor
17 would draw him aside and try to straighten him out.

18 If you're referring to some sort of,
19 let's say, inhalation of dust, sure, workers are
20 supposed to, in the right environments, they are
21 supposed to wear some sort of a mask or other types
22 of protection. But it would be up to his supervisor
23 to make sure that he always adhered to these
24 standards.

25 MR. GRIMES: So each mine has its own

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1 safety officer?

2 MR. DEVERSE: That's true.

3 MR. GRIMES: I ask these questions
4 because I took that course, and it's very extensive
5 and it's very deep, and it was very beneficial and
6 awaking to me to be in such a course as to what
7 actually happens in a mine, and the dangers and the
8 good things that come out of it.

9 I was -- you know, I was in awe that the
10 safety instructors knew so much about what happens in
11 the mine. And it was a three-day course, twenty-four
12 hours of straight safety.

13 And if those that are interested in what
14 precautions, believe me, they really get down deep
15 into the precautions and down in the safety part of
16 the work in the mine.

17 And as an employee, you have to actually
18 go in and commit your own demise by not following
19 safety regulations.

20 And for those that would like to go, I
21 suggest that you find out who he is, and the
22 gentleman that teaches the course is very
23 knowledgeable in that. And like I said, it's three
24 days long, and they have an annual renewal clause,
25 you have to do it yearly.

R-23-1

1 So I know that there was some gentleman
2 that was poisoned, triple bypass, that was brought
3 out, but the fact still remains that the new mines
4 have new safety regulations regulated by the State
5 and Federal government. And if we follow those
6 regulations, it reduces the fact, the possibility of
7 injuries and to life.

8 I work in Mojave also with Mojave High
9 School. I experience the wind in Mojave, as well as
10 in Rosamond. I've been on the mine. It blows.
11 Today, for example, it was not blowing at all.

12 That is not the only place that is going
13 to feel the impact. It's going to do as part of its
14 own share, but if the mine does its part, the safety
15 precautions specify that we will be protected
16 throughout the entire process of the mine.

17 MR. MOHSEN: I guess the short answer
18 would have been, there is a whole federal agency
19 called, MSHA, M-S-H-A, Mine Safety and Health
20 Administration.

21 MS. MURRAY: Who protects the residents?

22 MR. MOHSEN: The Mine Health and Safety,
23 MSHA, M-S-H-A, is responsible for everything within
24 the mine site. Outside of the mine site, it's the
25 responsibility of EPA and your state, water and air

R-9-7

R-9-8

1 representative in the county level and the state
2 level. Within the mine site it is the responsibility
3 of that federal agency, but outside of that mine site
4 is the responsibility of the state agency in
5 Sacramento or the agency in Bakersfield.

6 MS. MURRAY: How about strip-mining?

7 MR. MOHSEN: Mine Health and Safety
8 Administration, every mine has to have a safety
9 officer like the gentleman mentioned, and it's
10 subject to the Federal laws under mines, which are
11 specific.

12 There is another agency called the
13 Occupational, if you're familiar Occupational Safety
14 and Health. It's completely separate, and maybe --
15 it may answer some of the issues regarding other
16 employment in the community. But specifically for
17 mining, the Federal government set up the specific
18 safety agency just to address some of the issues that
19 gentleman mentioned, to make sure the mine has
20 specific safety concerns that must be addressed
21 separately, and people must be getting training,
22 because lives depend on it, and it's one of the most
23 rigorous I know of in the safety industry. Just to
24 follow up on the comment that the gentleman made.

25 Yes, sir, in the back. Name again,

1 please.

2 Why don't you come up here.

3 MR. CHIODO: Pat Chiodo. Please don't
4 misconstrue what I'm saying. I agree with you
5 totally.

6 But MSHA has an agreement, Memorandum of
7 Agreement with the California government -- MSHA has
8 an agreement with the Federal government and the
9 State of California as a Memorandum of Agreement that
10 they do not oversee any mines in the State of
11 California except for the shore or longshoreman. The
12 State of California Cal-OSHA, mining and tunneling is
13 what takes care of this here, and they are supposed
14 to have thirty-two employees, and they only have
15 eight. They are very shorthanded.

16 I don't mean to contradict the gentleman
17 here. He's absolutely right in any other state but
18 California.

19 MR. MOHSEN: Thank you for that
20 clarification. You learn something every day.
21 You're a wealth of information.

22 Yes, sir.

23 MR. WEBB: Yeah, my name is Dean Webb.
24 I just have one theoretical.

25 MR. MOHSEN: Come up here because the

1 lady up front is very anxious to listen.

2 MR. WEBB: Okay. Would it be possible
3 to backfill the whole mountain back again? I mean,
4 is this a possibility? I mean, to sort of recreate
5 it after you've mined it? I don't know.

6 MR. DEVERSE: During the analysis of
7 this project, we did look at that very question. And
8 the answer is no, because largely much of the ore is
9 going to be taken from, you might say, high places,
10 the sides of the mountain, the ridge lines, areas
11 that are really above grade. In other words, you
12 don't have a hole in the ground that you can fill up,
13 you simply have -- you're taking your ore from this
14 mountainside, this ridge line and distributing it,
15 and you're taking some of it and putting it over in
16 waste piles; some goes to ore.

17 At the end of mining, however, you will
18 have some depressions in the ground, and we looked at
19 the possibility of backfilling some of that. And
20 what we found out is that there would be about
21 forty-four acres in the bottom of the open pit that
22 could be reclaimed and re-vegetated. And if we were
23 to fill up all of the ground depressions that were
24 left at the end of mining, we could increase that
25 amount of acreage to about oh, ninety-six acres. So

1 a gain of fifty acres of re-vegetated land.

2 In short, we decided that the impacts
3 that would result from the effort to refill this
4 would exceed the benefits of gaining this extra fifty
5 acres. And that also we could through other means of
6 mitigation try to compensate for that fifty acres
7 that would not be reclaimed through backfilling.

8 Is that good?

9 MR. MOHSEN: Thank you.

10 It's important to know in the EIS we
11 looked at a range of alternatives. It's very
12 important to understand that alternatives are what
13 drives the government to make decisions. We don't
14 want to make decisions in a vacuum. We don't want to
15 make decisions based on one proposal, because then we
16 are locked up into that proposal without looking at
17 all the options.

18 So what BLM and Kern County did was look
19 at a range of proposals, dozens of ways they can mine
20 this operation.

21 The cut on what is a reasonable
22 alternative and what is not is based on laws and
23 regulations. In other words, we can say go mine
24 somewhere else. Is that a reasonable alternative?
25 If you put it through the check of our environmental

1 process, that would not meet the reasonableness
2 standard, because gold is a geologic thing that
3 happens only locally, and it does not happen
4 everywhere, it's not like sand and gravel or other
5 rocks that are available.

6 So the reasonableness of the alternative
7 is determined by this criteria that it has been
8 reasonable.

9 And what George has mentioned regarding
10 the backfilling, we have determined that backfilling
11 is a reasonable alternative. We did not say it
12 wasn't. We said it was a reasonable alternative.
13 Now let's do the cost-benefit analysis. Let's see if
14 the cost of backfilling fifty acres outweighs the
15 benefits.

16 And we've done our analysis, and our
17 conclusions in the document have led us to believe
18 that backfilling would not be necessarily better for
19 the soils and the vegetation because, remember, it
20 would increase operations for many more months.

21 So after operations are concluded, there
22 can still be existing air quality impacts and
23 existing operations that are extended beyond the mine
24 life.

25 So we've done our analysis, and we've

1 done it diligently. It would be very hard for me to
2 explain it here, but I would be glad to go through it
3 in a document with you if you are interested.

4 We determined backfilling was a
5 reasonable alternative, but not the best alternative
6 in the end because it did not necessarily always
7 meet -- if you look at the bigger picture, always
8 meet the required standards.

9 So we did consider backfilling,
10 seriously consider it. And we did give it the
11 adequate review in the document, but we did not
12 necessarily select it as our preferred action.

13 Does anybody want to make any more
14 comments or ask any questions. This is the purpose
15 of these meetings, is to clarify things, to make sure
16 to respond to some of your issues. You may not go
17 home any more convinced of our responses, but we were
18 hoping that you would think some more about them, and
19 if you need to you can either contact us directly or
20 write, and we will be glad to respond to it formally
21 in the final document.

22 When we get the final document together,
23 you will all be notified that it is available to you
24 for review for thirty days before we can make a
25 decision on that.

1 So you have three separate opportunities
2 to participate. In April of '96, today in June of
3 '97, and we're hoping in the next few months with the
4 final product again.

5 I saw a hand come up.

6 Yes, sir.

7 MR. ALFONSO: My name is Jeff Alfonso.
8 I also represent an earth-moving contractor.

9 I saw the word "trust" up there earlier,
10 and I thought I would make a quick comment to address
11 that.

12 I think that the answer is that is
13 quality. You know, we are an earth-moving contractor
14 that travels all over the state in order to maintain
15 our business, we do mining projects, we do landfills,
16 we do golf courses.

17 I think the golf course is a good
18 analogy where you have a variety of standards. You
19 can build a pitch-and-put, you can build a municipal
20 golf course, or you can build a championship golf
21 course, depending on the market that you're after.
22 But in a mine, in a project of this size, this high
23 profile, you've got to build a mining equivalent of a
24 championship course.

25 My capacity and involvement in this

R-24-1

1 project, I haven't met any of the people in Golden
2 Queen with the exception of Mr. Graeme. But I have
3 been talking to the engineers who are designing this
4 project. We worked with them on a number of
5 projects. And I would also like to say that that is
6 a major international design firm with hundreds of
7 employees that would never stake their good
8 reputation or good credibility on any amount of money
9 they would make on a single project.

10 In working with them, I have helped put
11 together some preliminary budget numbers, and I
12 called the engineer and I asked them on a number of
13 cases why they were building something that looked to
14 me like overkill as opposed to what the standard
15 design was. "Why are we going with this type of
16 fitting on the pipe coupling? Why are we going with
17 this sodium bentonite clay that can only be found in
18 very remote states, it's far more expensive?"

19 And the answer in all these things is
20 these people want the best. This is a high-quality
21 project. And I just, again, thought that might be an
22 appropriate comment

23 Thank you.

24 MR. MOHSEN: Thank you for your
25 comments.

R-25-1

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Again, it's going to be as good as the community wants it to be. And we all can trust each other, and we are all innocent in our own books until otherwise proven. That's the American way.

Is there anyone else that wants to say something on the record?

Mr. Dick Graeme.

MR. GRAEME: I thank all of you, those who support us, those who want to know more, and those who have real concerns.

I think that many of you have come to learn that Golden Queen is going to be an integral part of this community. I've had a real pleasure of working with the Bureau of Land Management. They held us, as everyone, to a very high standard.

We talked about the internet. I think we're on the leading edge -- no, I know we're on the leading edge in terms of beginning by using the internet.

We have made an honest, diligent effort to bring the information to those who otherwise wouldn't even know the project, worldwide, because we're not afraid of what we're putting out there. We know it's going to be done correctly. We know it's going to set a new standard for that often-used term,

R-25-1

1 "State of the Art."

2 This is a project that is good in all
3 aspects for East Kern County. We're doing a lot of
4 things, and we're doing them well.

5 And, Mr. Webb, you suggested a
6 historical museum. It's already under construction.

7 Some of the people in the audience can
8 tell you. We have allocated a substantial amount of
9 money for this because we, too, believe the past and
10 the future are important parts of this project, and
11 we want to be part of both.

12 Thank you very much for your
13 participation in this important process.

14 MR. MOHSEN: All right. Thank you very
15 much, Dick.

16 Anyone else before we close?

17 It's very informative, very educational.
18 Thanks for taking the time to come in.

19 We will be touching base with you in a
20 few months, taking your comments item-by-item and
21 responding to them item-by-item.

22 With that, I will, again, thank you.

23 You're welcome to hang around for some
24 more minutes if you want to ask anyone specific
25 questions on the side. We'll be glad to talk with

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you.

Thanks for coming over.

With this, I conclude the public
meeting.

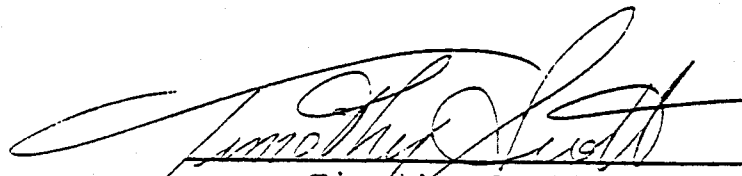
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(Public meeting concluded at 8:55 p.m.)

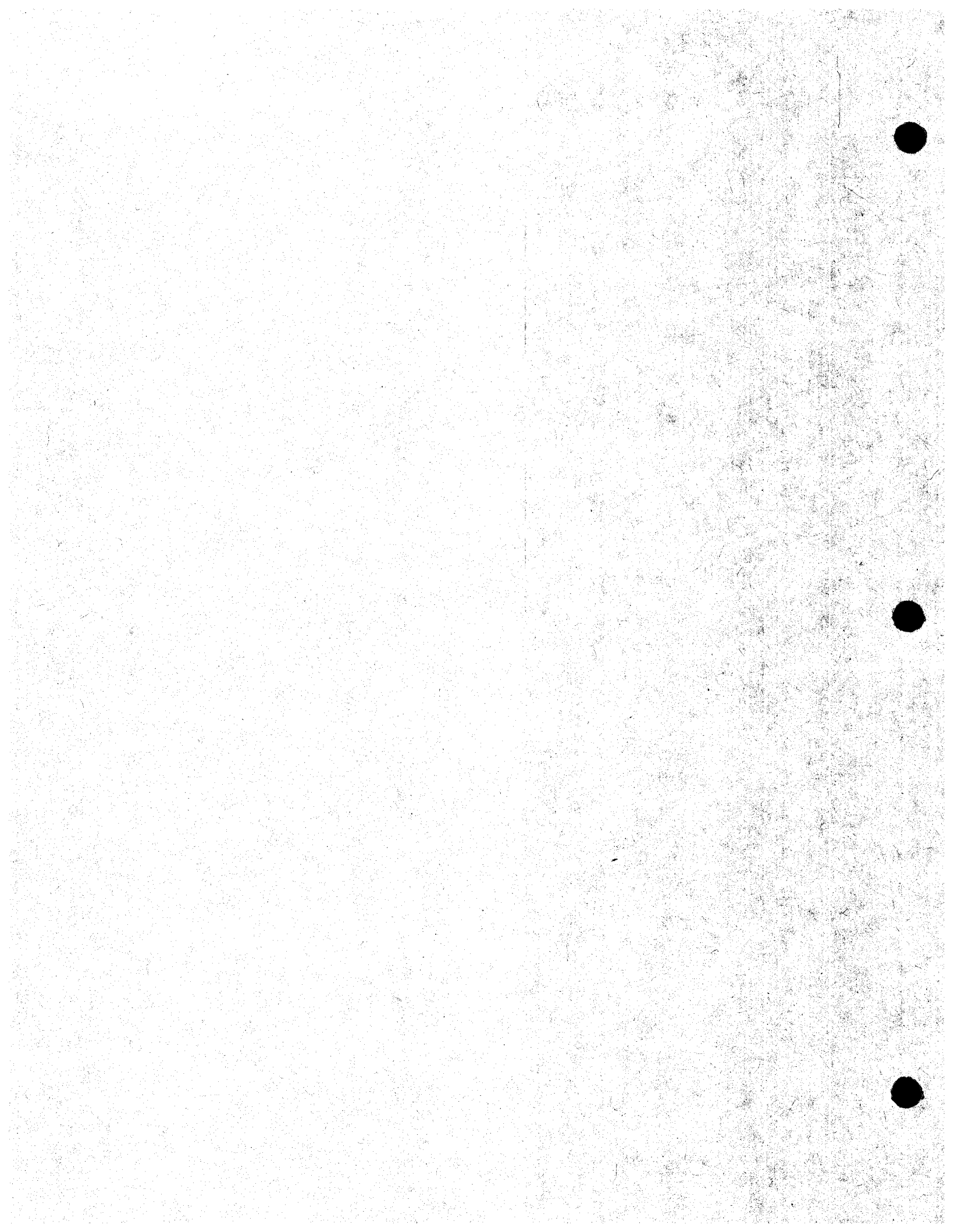
1 STATE OF CALIFORNIA)
2 COUNTY OF KERN) ss.
3)

4 I, Timothy Scott, a California Certified
5 Shorthand Reporter, holding Certificate No. 8517, do
6 hereby certify that I was present and took down
7 correctly in stenotypy all the proceedings in the
8 foregoing-entitled matter on the 24th day of June,
9 1997; and I further certify that the annexed and
10 foregoing is a full, true and correct transcript of
11 such proceedings, and a full, true and correct
12 transcript of my stenotype notes thereof.

13 IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereunto set my
14 hand at my office in Bakersfield, California, this
15 3rd day of July, 1997.

16
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19 Timothy Scott,
20 California CSR No. 8517
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BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT
PUBLIC MEETING

IN RE
THE GOLDEN QUEEN MINING)
SOLEDAD MOUNTAIN PROJECT)
)
)
)

LOCATION: MOJAVE ELEMENTARY SCHOOL
15800 O STREET
MOJAVE, CALIFORNIA

DATE AND TIME: WEDNESDAY, JUNE 25, 1997
7:00 P.M.

REPORTER: TIMOTHY SCOTT
CSR NO. 8517

CERTIFIED
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REPORTER'S TRANSCRIPT of the PROCEEDINGS,
taken in re the above matter, on Wednesday, June 25,
1997, commencing at 7:00 p.m., at Mojave Elementary
School, 15800 O Street, Mojave, California, before
Timothy Scott, a Certified Shorthand Reporter,
holding Certificate No. 8517.

SPEAKERS FROM BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT:

MR. AHMED MOSHEN
MR. GEORGE DEVERSE

SPEAKERS FROM AUDIENCE:

KATHY HANSEN
MELVIN BAKER
CHRIS BABCOCK
KAREN BENSON
JIM HOOPER
SUE MATHIS
ROGER PHILLIPS
JESS FREDERICK
DON STOWELL
CYNTHIA HODGKINSON
JACK STEWART
BUFORD LAND
BILL TUCKER
SANDY GAETA
MANUEL ZAMORA
DAVID MARKIEWITZ
MARLENE HOOPER

1 WEDNESDAY, JUNE 25, 1997

2 MOJAVE, CALIFORNIA

3 7:00 P.M.

4
5
6 MR. MOHSEN: Okay. We'll initiate the
7 public meeting. This is an official Bureau of Land
8 Management, Department of the Interior --

9 MR. BAKER: Raise the mic up. This
10 audience can't hear you; I can't.

11 MR. MOHSEN: We'll do that. Can you
12 hear me now?

13 MR. BAKER: Yes.

14 MR. MOHSEN: Okay. Like I said, this is
15 a Department of the Interior, Bureau of Land
16 Management, public meeting.

17 The purpose of this meeting is to hear
18 public comments on the proposed Soledad Mountain
19 Project, EIS/EIR, Environmental Impact
20 Statement/Environmental Impact Report.

21 We have a court reporter who's recording
22 the proceedings today. The public comment will be on
23 the record, and we'll allow you an opportunity to
24 comment on the proposed project.

25 Before we do that, I would like to set

1 up some ground rules and some discussions that will
2 frame the way we would like to participate today in
3 our comments.

4 The proposed gold mine is a
5 thousand-acre project that's roughly 80 percent on
6 private land, 20 percent on public land.

7 For the project to begin, there's a
8 requirement for getting permits and conducting
9 environmental studies and public involvement.

10 We started this process back in April of
11 1996, where we've held public meetings together on
12 what needs to be addressed in the environmental
13 documents. So we began this process back in early
14 1996, BLM and Kern County jointly together, to
15 present the EIS/EIR to the public from the first day
16 on. So, initially from April of 1996, we made sure
17 before we began anywhere on the project, that we
18 asked the public to give us their input on what are
19 the issues and concerns that the project would create
20 as a result of the permitting process.

21 Today we have BLM and Kern County
22 representatives in the meeting. They will be here to
23 answer any questions. We also have the proponent of
24 the project, and we have the third-party
25 environmental consultant that assisted BLM and Kern

1 County to prepare the document.

2 I will be relying on those folks during
3 the meeting if I need them to answer any of your
4 questions.

5 However, this public meeting is not for
6 tallying how many people are for the mine or how many
7 people are against it. This is not the way public
8 land management and environmental land management is
9 conducted.

10 We would like to hear your issues and
11 concerns that can be addressed in the document within
12 the framework of the existing laws and regulations.

13 In other words, we would like to gather
14 your concerns so we can properly address them. We
15 held a public meeting yesterday at Rosamond; we had
16 almost a hundred people or so show up. We gathered
17 lots of their issues and concerns, most of which are
18 issues and concerns, I'm sure, you're familiar with.

19 We have documented them two ways.
20 First, the court reporter has documented all the
21 individual comments, and we're also taking a few
22 notes on the flip chart so we can remind ourselves
23 along the way that these are the issues that folks
24 have brought forward to us.

25 We had some air-quality concerns

1 relating to cyanide and mercury vapor exposures, and
2 also some water-quality impacts relating to quality
3 of water and quantity of water. We also had some
4 discrepancies that were pointed out to us, and we
5 appreciate that. We want the document that's
6 presented to be a legal defensible document. So any
7 clarifications or discrepancies that you can see in
8 there, we will be glad to address them and clean them
9 up.

10 We also documented concerns regarding
11 who to contact in case there is problems down the
12 road, who are the responsible officials, and we will,
13 again, respond to each comment item-by-item and
14 publish it in what we refer to as our Final Document.

15 So we have three opportunities for the
16 public to participate. At the beginning, and middle,
17 and towards the end. The beginning was April of '96,
18 and the middle, which we are today, and the final,
19 that we hope will respond to every item that we have
20 here.

21 The EIS/EIR process is, again, not an
22 event, it's a process that we began back in early
23 1996. We go gather environmental data from the
24 grounds, and publish this information in a document
25 so we can address all the impacts that are potential

1 for the project.

2 We've taken your concerns back in April
3 and addressed them in the document. We believe the
4 document we presented June 2nd for public review
5 addressed all the concerns that were brought to BLM
6 and to Kern County, through the Notice of Preparation
7 and through the public scoping process back in 1996.

8 To set up the ground rules for your
9 comments today, we are really interested in hearing
10 what you have to say, but we have to frame it in a
11 way that becomes constructive and productive to the
12 process.

13 If there's any mitigation that needs to
14 be added to the project, we will be glad to discuss
15 it with you. Any concerns we haven't addressed,
16 please point them out to us.

17 I'm going to allow you three minutes to
18 put your thoughts on the public record, and then I'll
19 give you a minute warning after that to give you to
20 kind of wrap up; so you have a total of four minutes
21 to present.

22 I would like to give this opportunity so
23 everyone will have a chance to voice their concern
24 and put their comments on the record.

25 When we are done with everyone and you

1 need a second chance to add some more comments, we
2 will be glad to allow you to come back on. This is
3 your public meeting. We will be here as long as you
4 need us to, to tell us what you need. But, please,
5 let's discuss these issues in a civil and in a
6 neighborly way, because these are all our neighbors
7 and we need to make sure our comments are not
8 personally directed to anyone, or if you have a
9 concern about an issue or a resource that's affected,
10 please voice it to us politely, and we'll make sure
11 it's down in the record and we respond to it.

12 We would like to have a productive
13 meeting. We had a very productive meeting yesterday.
14 And we would like to have another one today.

15 Before I open it up to you, I want to
16 explain a few things about our California desert.

17 Our California desert has been one of
18 the most intensively studied, environmentally studied
19 areas in the country. In 1975, Congress mandated the
20 BLM to prepare a land management zoning plan. And
21 this plan started in 1976 and concluded roughly
22 around 1979, '80.

23 What the plan did was allocate the
24 twelve million acres in the desert to different land
25 management zoning areas, just like your county can

1 zone an area for industrial, for residential, for
2 schools; BLM does the same thing with your land. We
3 zone them in the same way, but, rather, when we zone,
4 instead of for schools or residential or commercial,
5 we zone for either conservation or for investment.

6 The Soledad Mountain Project within the
7 twelve million acres in the desert was under the
8 development and the unclassified area for zoning. In
9 other words, it was managed in the past and in the
10 future for allowing development and allowing land
11 transfer from public ownership to private ownership.
12 That's why you notice the BLM is a very small acreage
13 as part of this project. We have less than 20
14 percent of the project on public land, because our
15 long-term management strategy for the area was to
16 transfer Federal lands to private lands to other
17 Federal lands in the more sensitive and
18 conservation-oriented areas.

19 What this map does is basically points
20 out how the desert was zoned, with colors. If I can,
21 I'll spend a few minutes on that to explain it to you
22 because I think it's important if you're making the
23 comments, to understand the way BLM manages your
24 land.

25 The areas that were zoned for

1 conservation, if you will, or for no development, was
2 the green areas. These areas exhibited high-resource
3 value, whether they are mountain tops or whether they
4 are habitats for species, or they exhibit very
5 sensitive culture resource.

6 Millions of acres were set aside for
7 this zoning concept, which is conservation.

8 As you go down the zoning scale, your
9 lands are managed towards more development-oriented
10 actions. So, if it's in yellow or orange, then the
11 lands have been designated for development and use.
12 It doesn't mean the values there are not going to be
13 protected; it means we can allow more use on that.

14 This plan went through 40,000 comments
15 and millions of dollars of public monies spent on it.
16 It's been our framework and our bible as far as
17 guiding what BLM does in the desert.

18 Soledad Mountain is right in the
19 southwest corner of this map. And again, the
20 direction BLM has been mandated to do for the area
21 was to exchange the lands for future private land,
22 Federal lands transfer.

23 So what I'm trying to say is, the land
24 use for the area in the past and in the future will
25 probably be to continue to be mining.

1 So now we need to make sure how the
2 mining be permitted within environmentally-sound
3 practice, and we want to make sure that if the mine
4 is going to coming into the neighborhood, that you
5 folks have a say about the operation. And this is
6 one of the opportunities we have.

7 The public document we produced June 2nd
8 is comprehensive. It has five appendices and
9 thousands of pages.

10 We tried to make it as simple as we can,
11 but it's very hard to discuss all these technical
12 terms, but we did put a summary together, and a table
13 that will guide you through some of the major issues.

14 We also made the document available
15 since March of '96, over sixteen months now, on the
16 worldwide web for anyone to comment and provide input
17 on it.

18 With that, I will, again, ask you to
19 come up, state your name and spell it for the court
20 reporter so that he can adequately document it. We
21 are not going to publish these names to anyone or
22 make a wide distribution of them. It's just for our
23 personal use, and we'll keep them in our files. So
24 feel free to provide us that information.

25 So, state your name for the court

1 reporter and please give us your comment in a concise
2 way so he can make sure he documents everything so we
3 don't paraphrase any of your words. We want to make
4 sure we get it right.

5 After the comment period is over, we're
6 going to close the public meeting, and then we'll
7 offer you, again, an opportunity informally to share
8 any thoughts you have with us or to discuss any
9 things you want with us. That may not be part of the
10 public record unless you choose it to be that.

11 So, there's ample opportunity to comment
12 either today orally, or through writing. If you want
13 to go home and wait a few days to write us and put
14 your thoughts down after this meeting, we'll be glad
15 to receive your comments by writing in the mail.

16 However, we do have a time period that
17 we need you to be aware of, which is July 16th, which
18 we are going to try to get all our comments by then.
19 We will allow a few days mail time after that, but
20 we're still interested in getting your comments.

21 So with that, I'll open it up and --
22 excuse me. July 14th is the date for closing
23 comments. Again, we're going to allow a few days for
24 mail time, and we're not interested in meeting a
25 deadline, but we're interested in getting your

1 comments, because we would like this document to be a
2 defensible and enforceable document that we can hold
3 as a contract between the proponents of the project,
4 the government, and the shareholders, which are the
5 People.

6 Ma'am, you want to come up first?

7 MS. HANSEN: Thank you.

8 Greetings. My name Kathy Hansen,
9 H-a-n-s-e-n. And I have been a member of the Mojave
10 Chamber of Commerce for many years. I write for the
11 Mojave Desert News, and I also serve on the East Kern
12 Airport District Board.

13 I have been asked to read a letter from
14 Sam Whitman, Keith Olberg of the 34th District. This
15 letter is to supervisor Steve Perez, Chairman of the
16 Kern County Board of Supervisors.

17 "I am writing to express my support for
18 the economic benefit to this region that would be
19 created by the proposed Golden Queen Mining Company,
20 Soledad Mountain Project.

21 "The 34th Assembly District, including
22 Kern County, has lost thousands of primary jobs as a
23 result of the defense draw-down.

24 "In a time of military insulation
25 downsizing and resulting business flight, the Soledad

1 Mountain Project will provide much-needed jobs.

2 "Specifically the Golden Queen Mining
3 Company estimates that the Soledad Mountain Project
4 will cost over \$40 million to construct and will
5 create over 250 temporary jobs.

6 "When completed, the company projects
7 that 230 permanent employees will be needed to fill
8 labor, semi-skilled, clerical, supervisory
9 positions.

10 "Local businesses and the economy can
11 only benefit from the influx of dollars that will
12 augment the local tax base, new employment
13 opportunities, and the regional economy.

14 "I urge your favorable consideration of
15 this very important project.

16 "With my personal regards, I am
17 sincerely, Keith Olberg, Assemblyman, 34th District."

18 I had a statement also from Dan Senovich
19 of the Mojave Airport. And I think I'll just go
20 ahead while I'm up here.

21 Mojave Airport general manager Dan
22 Senovich asked me to make a statement on his behalf
23 concerning the Golden Queen Mining Project.

24 He sends his regrets that due to a
25 previously meeting commitment, he is unable to attend

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M-1-2

1 the public hearing tonight.

2 Mr. Senovich said Mojave Airport has no
3 problem with the gold mine. The blasting will not
4 affect the visibility for aircraft flying from the
5 airport. He also said that the cement plant west of
6 town blasts from time to time, and other mines in the
7 area have set off charges.

8 The dust clouds are minimal, and never
9 seem to change the quality of the sky for aircraft
10 flying in the area.

11 There's no opposition to this project
12 from the Mojave Airport.

13 Thank you very much.

14 MR. MOHSEN: Sir --

15 Again, let me remind you that we want to
16 make sure we get your thoughts. So -- I'm having
17 trouble today. I'll be putting down their thoughts
18 on the flip chart as they are making their comments,
19 if the issue needs to be documented.

20 Sir.

21 MR. BAKER: I'm Mel Baker.

22 The two ladies who sandbagged me two
23 years ago while I was away playing a football game,
24 and maybe present, are here sitting in this audience.
25 So they requested that I be up here to speak. Their

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request was not gentle.

Mr. Steve Perez, Chairman, Kern County Board of Supervisors, i.e., the Golden Queen Mining Project:

Mining has been present in California since the days of the ancient ones back in 1100. The southern mines operated from 1865 to 1935. Mine operators stripped the land, took their gains, and left the workings so that they became life-threatening problems for those who used the land in later years.

Modern gold and silver mines have to be brought up productive, work-safe, and environmentally effective. Good operators leave the properties in better condition than they received it. They leave new job -- new opportunities and new jobs.

The East Kern and Historical Museum Society has been briefed and briefed in-depth, by the way, as to the proposal set forth by the Golden Queen operators.

They noted that existing machinery and artifacts will be saved, renovated, and placed on display.

Following a comprehensive discussion -- and I have people in the club who are high-rock

M-2-1

1 miners, prospectors, and mine owners -- they know the
2 business -- following a comprehensive discussion, the
3 Society noted to vote it to strongly support the
4 Golden Queen Project. They believe the proposal is a
5 win/win situation.

6 Melvin S. Baker, President.

7 Thank you.

8 MR. MOHSEN: Anyone else want to come?
9 Sir.

10 MR. BABCOCK: Good evening. My name is
11 Chris Babcock, B-a-b-c-o-c-k.

12 I'm here tonight wearing two hats. I
13 would like to read you two letters. The first letter
14 comes from Mojave Town Council, addressed to Steve
15 Perez, Chairman Kern County Board of Supervisors.

16 Dated June 18th of this year:

17 "The directors of the Mojave Town
18 Council voted last night to support Golden Queen
19 Mining Company's proposal to operate a gold mine on
20 Soledad Mountain.

21 "Golden Queen's proposal will bring
22 needed jobs and business to our community without
23 significant negative effects on the environment.

24 "We urge your support of this project,
25 which is so important to our community."

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The second letter, and being a member --
actually, this letter was signed by myself as Vice
President of Mojave town council. Second letter is
from Mojave Chamber of Commerce, which I'm a member
of, dated June the 12th, to Steve Perez, Chairman
Kern County Board of Supervisors.

"At a board meeting today the directors
of the Mojave Chamber of Commerce voted to support
Golden Queen Mining Company's proposal to mine gold
on Soledad Mountain.

"We believe this project will enhance
the economy of our community, provide much-needed
employment, and will have no measurable negative
effect on the environment.

"We urge you to review this project
carefully and consider our views in your
deliberations."

This is signed by Pete Sturn, President
of the Mojave Chamber of Commerce.

Thank you.

MS. BENSON: Good evening. I'm Karen
Benson, Vice-Mayor, California City, and the
representative to the East Kern Alliance.

As a representative to East Kern
Alliance, I have been asked to read a letter signed

1 by the mayor from the City of Ridgecrest.

2 And it's addressed to Kern County
3 Planning Department, Ted James.

4 "I support the efforts of Golden Queen
5 Mining Company to develop the Soledad Mountain
6 Project near Mojave. The project-permitting process
7 will address the required environmental issues. I'm
8 confident that Kern County and the Bureau of Land
9 Management are sensitive to the environment.

10 "I particularly endorse the prospect of
11 230 new jobs for the Eastern Kern County area. New
12 jobs for any of the communities in the area help the
13 economy in general, and we all receive some spinoff
14 benefits.

15 "I wish the project every success."

16 Signed William Lalor, Mayor, City of
17 Ridgecrest.

18 MR. MOHSEN: Anyone else that wants to
19 make a comment on the record?

20 Sir.

21 MR. HOOPER: Good evening. My name is
22 Jim Hooper. I grew up in this area down on Backus
23 Road with my parents.

24 We went to meetings, we're a civic
25 association called Ancient Valley Civic Association

1 begun, started by Mr. O. J. Backus. His name is on
2 the gym over here, the road is named after.

3 We are committed to a unique situation,
4 and that is looking at this project from a different
5 point of view. If I were a member of a city council
6 at a distant area where this project is out of sight,
7 out of mind, I would probably be thinking with my
8 wallet instead of compassion for the folks who are
9 directly downwind from this endeavor.

10 If you remember, the old saying that
11 "Fool me once, shame on you; fool me twice, shame on
12 me."

13 That's what we're into here. We have
14 been through an environmental impact study just like
15 this one. It was stumped on by mine management; some
16 of it is quite persuasive, quite charming, they have
17 barbecues, and government officials saying, "Here's
18 it all written down, you're protected."

19 Well, we weren't protected. There is
20 all sorts of documentation about spills of poisonous
21 substances, people getting sick in the area. Last
22 night, we had people in the audience -- I'm here by
23 myself -- who had their husbands deathly ill and
24 suffered with this stuff -- I have to think of my
25 family -- who was getting the symptoms of mercury

M-5-1

1 poisoning.

2 No one will deny there was a huge
3 release in 1989. It was just irresponsibly handled.
4 And the agencies that were supposed to be looking
5 after the welfare of the citizens down there, simply
6 didn't answer the phone or didn't respond in any way
7 that you could call conscientious.

8 Again, I ask you to walk a mile in our
9 shoes. We're on Backus Road, a little corridor.
10 Backus Road is a soft-road area, and we have suffered
11 through this before.

12 We are not against jobs. That would be
13 like being against Santa Claus. We are not against
14 development, that would also be goofy.

15 What we are for is a healthy environment
16 which we've enjoyed for many, many years. I would
17 like to state that, also, a lot of people say mining
18 is usual for this, but sure it is, but not on this
19 scale.

20 This is a far different horse of a
21 different color, what's going to be going on with
22 this; it's massive.

23 You might ask if in the meeting the
24 other day, "Hey, this is a great project, well
25 designed. I have a lot of respect for people who

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designed it."

You say it does belong; where does it belong?

A few months ago, I was on vacation, driving through an area called Death Valley. I don't mean to make a point of the title, but what they have out there is a huge heap-leach mining operation just like this, north, south, east, and west, and there are no souls that are going to be breathing and have their children, you know, eating food that -- or perhaps something has blown in through the window that will make them ill.

So, again, we're in a unique situation, we are what I call the danger zone, far closer to the negative aspects.

There will be spills. It's the old Murphy's Law, if something can go wrong, it will. In spite of the fact I have great respect with Mr. Graeme. He has been really conscientious, cooperative, knowledgeable. I couldn't ask for a finer man to put my trust in, but that's not the total picture.

One of the responses to what I had to say last night, I said it was the right project at the wrong place was -- and the response was logical.

1 You have to put the mine where the minerals are. No
2 question about that, that's perfectly right and
3 reasonable. But we all know that the underlying
4 concept behind zoning and land management and so on,
5 is that some things belong in some areas and others
6 don't. And there is a conscientious right-thinking,
7 responsible place for things like this.

8 I think we've had our share of fumes
9 from the cement plant, fumes from two mines, fumes
10 from the gravel pit. We have the cumulative effect
11 from all this. I don't think you can find another
12 place nearby or maybe anywhere where we've been
13 hammered again, again and again by such operations.

14 I appreciate your time. Again, I think
15 jobs are wonderful and important, but there are other
16 values here; compassion.

17 Good night. Thank you.

18 MS. MATHIS: Hi. Good evening. My name
19 is Sue Mathis, and I also live on Backus Road.

20 I've met with Dick Graeme many times,
21 and he is a fine man. He is very honest and up
22 front, from what I can tell.

23 I also have talked to him about how long
24 he's going to be on the project. When I spoke to him
25 a year ago, he said only about a year. I'm sure that

M-6-1

1 has changed, but obviously, he's not going to be
2 there the whole fifteen years. He's the man that has
3 sold this project to the community, and the man that
4 has made promises that we don't know if the people
5 behind him are going to keep.

6 You know, promises are one thing, but
7 it's really easy to call us and say, "Oh, he doesn't
8 work here anymore." I'm sure everybody in this room
9 has run into that situation.

M-6-2

10 Everybody here supporting the jobs, I
11 want to read to you, quoting out of this EIR document
12 on page 270, if anybody cares to read it, it says,
13 "The project is not deemed gross-inducing because the
14 jobs created would in all likelihood replace those
15 being eliminated by the closure of a similar facility
16 in the area."

17 I don't think anybody is paying
18 attention to the words that are written in the
19 document. Again, there are contradictions from all
20 these wonderful jobs they are claiming to try to sell
21 this project.

22 As I talked last night -- and most of
23 you probably weren't in Rosamond -- there was a
24 larger turnout, more people who were concerned about
25 the environment because they are a little downwind

M-6-3

1 than the people in Mojave.

2 There's a lot of inconsistencies as far
3 as the number of residences, and Ahmed doesn't have
4 to put this on the record, because we talked about it
5 last night. People in Mojave need to know the
6 document says in one place that there's approximately
7 fifteen residences, another place approximately ten.
8 We need to go back and double-check their numbers
9 because they are not right.

10 Where else are they misleading in that
11 document? It's six volumes. Anybody who sees it up
12 here, how many people have honestly read the whole
13 document? I don't think that any of you in this room
14 has. But it's up to us as individuals for our peace
15 of mind and our health and our safety to read it and
16 double-check them, because they aren't going to do
17 it.

18 They want to make sure this mine goes
19 through no matter what we think. And it's up to us
20 to be the double-check for them. For example,
21 calling: People say, "Oh, call Kern County
22 Environmental Health Services if you have any
23 questions."

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24 I did that yesterday, and you know what,
25 the phone has been disconnected. I don't know what

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to say for that. Convenient, isn't it? That's still a current phone book. I didn't use one from four years ago.

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The other thing is loss in property value for those of us who live directly downwind. How are we going to be compensated for that permanent loss?

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PM-10. I suppose most people in this room don't know what I'm talking about. That's the particulate matter, less than 10 millimeters has to do with the requirement both by state and federal.

I do not believe that the wind in this area, that they have measured on uphill, the up-wind side, we're downwind. It escalates when you go over that mountain.

I do not believe that they have shown adequate documentation that those overburden piles that they are going to build are not going to release below the minimum required by the state and federal government.

And they need to go back and show us that it's going to stay, and say that they are going to put more toxins and they are going to spray with more chemicals, that's stuff that's going to blow downwind on the rest us and get in our water system.

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The ground water is another problem. In the document it says that up to 200 percent error they are going to allow themselves. I haven't read in the document yet what they have used as a model. If they are going to say a hundred feet is the draw-down before that's what they figured on, well, 100 percent error would be down 200 feet. 200 percent error; well, how many people's wells south of town have dried up? The people in Mojave don't have to worry, because they are community water. The people south of town are going to be dry.

These are things that we need to double-check and make sure that they do their homework, instead of just blatantly start digging.

I'm certainly for mining. It's always been mining. It was mining when we bought the property. But it wasn't for strip-mining, and it wasn't for dumping toxic waste on our family, our air, and our water.

Please think about this carefully. Remember what I said about jobs and what the document says.

Thank you.

MR. MOHSEN: Anyone else.

Sir.

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MR. PHILLIPS: My name is Roger Phillips. I live just south of the mountain here.

Going back onto the water, you're going to draw 750 gallons a minute out of that well. Plus, they are not even going to use it for drinking water; they are going to bring in bottled water. Why?

And who is going to replace my well when it dries up?

Let's see. They talk about sonic booms in this document. This is very few, very few sonic booms around the area, probably one a month.

They talk about the increase on vehicle traffic on the roads around here. If anybody has been on Silver Queen, any kind of increase is going to tear that road up more.

That's my --

MR. MOHSEN: Thank you, sir. Thanks for your comments, and we would like to hear from you if you have any concerns.

Sir, you want to add some more.

MR. PHILLIPS: Yeah. One more.

Again, Roger Phillips.

And in here, I got this, started looking at the volumes, and there's one missing. It says it's confidential. Why? Can you explain that one?

1 A mine is a mine, why do they have to have anything
2 that is confidential? It's not anything to do with
3 the government or national security. Volume five.

4 MR. MOHSEN: Thank you, sir.

5 I would like to respond to his comment
6 before I ask the other gentleman to come up.

7 Confidential: I know, when it comes to
8 the government, this is your public record. This is
9 your information, it belongs to you. The only reason
10 we're keeping it confidential is to protect the
11 resource, not necessarily to protect it from you.

12 Appendix 5 is our cultural resource
13 report, which means the archeology reports on the
14 ground, all the historical, Native American. We're
15 not going to publish this information because it
16 could be put to some bad use by some unscrupulous
17 people.

18 So it is available in our office. If
19 you really are interested in looking at what is in
20 it, we'll be glad to share it with you. But we're
21 not going to publish it for anyone out there to be
22 able to go find out that these important sites are
23 out there, and they will be vandalized.

24 So it is not to keep anything from you,
25 sir. As a matter of fact, we, from day one, with the

1 help of Golden Queen and Kern County, we've tried to
2 make this process as open as we can be. We've made
3 ourselves available through public meetings, we've
4 made ourselves available through the worldwide web
5 publication of the document. We also made ourselves
6 available through telephone and field visits with any
7 interested party. And I'm sure Golden Queen has done
8 the same in response to anyone who has brought a
9 request of them.

10 So, from day one we have made sure that
11 there was no confidentiality. This is your land,
12 this is your process, this is your meeting. But
13 there are some information that we have to keep close
14 at bay so it doesn't become put to some bad use.

15 So, it's the archeology reports, it's
16 the Native American reports that we are not
17 publishing. But if you are interested in this
18 information, you can come to Ridgecrest BLM office
19 and I'll be glad to spend as much time as you need
20 to, to go through it with you to make sure that any
21 information you are requesting can be obtained from
22 this appendix.

23 So, we are not going to make it
24 available to the whole world out there, unless
25 someone has specific need for it. It's just for

1 protection purposes.

2 MR. FREDERICK: What agency was it
3 made --

4 MR. MOHSEN: State your name for the
5 record, please.

6 MR. FREDERICK: Jess Frederick.

7 MR. MOHSEN: Your question again.

8 MR. FREDERICK: What agencies was it
9 made available to?

10 MR. MOHSEN: It was made available to
11 the federal and state agencies who will issue the
12 appropriate permits; in this case, the BLM and State
13 Historic Preservation Office; also, Kern County has
14 that document available.

15 So it is put in a good place for you.
16 If you need to see it, we will be glad to share it
17 with you. We need to make sure to keep it close to
18 our files. Okay?

19 Sir, back there, you have some more
20 comments?

21 MR. STOWELL: Good evening. My name is
22 Don Stowell, S-t-o-w-e-l-l. I'm the President of
23 Mojave Desert Bank here in Mojave, also I'm a member
24 of the Mojave Town Council, Mojave Chamber of
25 Commerce, on their Board of Directors.

1 We recently had a town council meeting
2 in which we had probably forty to fifty citizens from
3 Mojave. We took a vote of the audience in Mojave as
4 to their position on the mine, and we received a
5 unanimous aye vote; there were no negative votes in
6 the audience from Mojave opposing the mine.

7 With the potential of the bypass coming
8 to Mojave in the year 2002, Mojave is going to be
9 losing some of its traffic, some of its tourist
10 dollars to other communities.

11 With Cal City currently in the doldrums
12 and having virtually no building permits issued in
13 almost a year, I believe, I'm not sure. I don't
14 think there's been a new house built out there in a
15 year. One of the realtors today approached me about
16 financing a home, a three bedroom, two-bath home, I
17 believe, that sold for \$26,000, a very nice home.

18 We have a problem out here. Edwards Air
19 Force Base downsizing. The lady back here that lives
20 on, I believe, Backus or Silver Queen, mentioned that
21 these jobs would be replacing jobs at another mine
22 that's closing down. That's good news to me. I
23 don't want to see those people leave this market. I
24 don't want to see them moving out of Kern County, out
25 of Southern California. So many other business

M-8-1

1 people have.

2 I also have had inquiries from people
3 who have been miners in the Mojave area, who want to
4 come back to this area and work at the Golden Queen
5 Mine.

6 The people that work in Mojave, the
7 biggest part of them that work in the airport
8 especially, do not live in Mojave.

9 Keith Gainey, who is now working for the
10 mine, is a graduate of Mojave High School, I believe.
11 He was working down below somewhere, down in, you
12 know where that place is down below. And he had the
13 opportunity to move back to Mojave and go to work for
14 Golden Queen Mine as their dollars guy, their
15 treasurer.

16 I know that several of our local people
17 are currently working at the mine. I believe they
18 already have a work force of about forty people up
19 there. That's significant.

20 I personally live about two miles from
21 that mine. I hear the comments over here. I live
22 closer to the cement plant than anybody that's made
23 comments so far. I'm downwind from the cement plant.
24 The total view out of our bedroom and our living room
25 is that mountain. It's the north face of that

1 mountain. That will be the side that will be most
2 disfigured by this mine.

3 I support this mine 100 percent.

4 Thank you.

5 MR. MOHSEN: Again, let me remind you
6 that the BLM is taking all your issues and concerns
7 and making sure that they are part of the
8 decision-making process. BLM and Kern County do not
9 necessarily make the decision based on jobs or
10 economic positive impacts or environmental or
11 negative impacts. We look at the whole picture.
12 That's why it's very difficult to do, to balance all
13 of the trade-offs and look at the long-term and the
14 short-term impact.

15 No one is saying that the mine wouldn't
16 have an impact, but the impacts can be managed. And
17 I can tell you, from my own experience, mining
18 companies, if approached with a reasonable proposal,
19 will respond, and they can be good neighbors, but it
20 takes more -- in this case, it takes more than two to
21 tango. We would like to get more of the community
22 and the agencies and the company involved together
23 after the project is completed so we can continue
24 working once the permit is done, not just before it.
25 The hard work begins once the contract is completed.

1 The EIS/EIR is a contract between BLM,
2 Kern County, the public and the operator. The
3 contract begins after that contract is signed, not
4 before. We can plug in as many information as we
5 want, as many protection measures as we want. It's
6 going to be as good as we all make it work.

7 I'm looking forward to it because I
8 think Golden Queen has proven so far to the BLM and
9 Kern County that they are willing to do what's needed
10 to make sure that the public is aware of what are the
11 issues out there, and they have been cooperative with
12 BLM and Kern County from the initial outset.

13 And the comments made yesterday by the
14 public is also evidence of that, that they have been
15 trying to be good neighbors. All we need to do now
16 is take them up on it. And we are in agreement with
17 them that we can all live together on it.

18 This EIS/EIR, again, is just an
19 informational document. It's not to say it's going
20 to happen or it's not going to happen. It provides
21 information to the decision-makers. We have more
22 than a dozen agencies, federal, state and local, will
23 issue a permit for this operation. So you don't have
24 just one government entity, you have a federal
25 government involved, you have the state government

1 involved. BLM and Kern County has taken the lead to
2 coordinate with all the other agencies, and state and
3 federal and local agencies with regards to the
4 permit, whether it's a health issue, or a safety
5 issue, or a waste water issue. The state and the
6 local agencies who have jurisdiction over issuing
7 that permit are involved in this process, and will be
8 accountable for whatever permit they issue.

9 So if there is an -- in the contract in
10 the future, if there is an issue that needs to be
11 addressed, we will identify the appropriate agency by
12 jurisdiction over that matter, and we will make sure
13 we have a reporting process for that.

14 So, is there any more comments on the
15 record regarding -- sir?

16 MR. HOOPER: I wanted to reinforce what
17 you said.

18 MR. MOHSEN: Will you come up here so
19 the court reporter will put it down.

20 MR. HOOPER: You bet.

21 We have had the privilege of talking to
22 Richard Graeme in the name of our tiny civic
23 association out there about the concerns about the
24 water table and about housing values. And I can say
25 that even though we didn't form up any agreement,

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M-5-3

1 that he recognized that there's some responsibility,
2 substantial responsibility for loss there.

3 I was really surprised that he was that
4 up front and willing to make an effort to put
5 together something to ease the mind of folks that
6 live down on Backus Road and have for so long.

7 I would also like to point out there are
8 a whole great number of people, we have 218
9 signatures here, names of many of you will recognize
10 of folks who oppose this operation.

11 Again, this is not a popularity contest,
12 as pointed out; I recognize that. But there are a
13 substantial number of citizens who are very
14 concerned.

15 Thank you.

16 MR. MOHSEN: Ma'am, would you like to
17 come up. State your name for the reporter.

18 MS. HODGKINSON: Hello. My name is
19 Cynthia Hodgkinson. And I'm just a tax payer and
20 resident of Mojave.

21 However, I am third generation of
22 Mojave. My grandmother came here in 1913, my father
23 was born here, and I was born here. My children were
24 born in Lancaster, unfortunately, because we didn't
25 have any hospitals here.

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1 I think the concern is that we need
2 jobs, we need businesses, or we're going to become a
3 ghost town.

4 With the bypass that's coming through,
5 we may turn out to be like Boron. Boron was fine for
6 a couple years after the bypass went in, and now
7 businesses close up on a weekly basis. I don't want
8 to see that happen in Mojave.

9 And I want my children to live here. I
10 have two daughters, nineteen and sixteen, and the
11 only thing they can think of is going to the big
12 city. I don't want Mojave to be a big city, but I
13 would like them to have some of the luxuries and
14 entertainment centers and stuff that the big cities
15 have that these kids want to leave for. I want them
16 to stay here and have family values that we have. I
17 don't want to see Mojave get really big, but I don't
18 want to see it die.

19 That's about all I can say right now.

20 Thank you.

21 MR. MOHSEN: I don't know about you, but
22 I'm pretty proud of this process, and I'm grateful
23 that you took time out of your personal life to
24 attend this. I know your neighbors are probably
25 sitting there watching TV or doing something else.

1 But you need to be commended for taking the time to
2 come out and participate in this. This is how it
3 really works.

4 The government cannot sit in our offices
5 and read your mind. We can only do it by hearing
6 your concerns and your voice. And I appreciate that,
7 ma'am.

8 Sir.

9 MR. STEWART: My name is Jack Stewart,
10 spelled S-t-e-w-a-r-t.

11 I am wearing two different hats tonight.
12 I've been asked to read a letter from Senator George
13 Runner to Steve Perez, regarding the mine project
14 here.

15 "Supervisor Perez: I'm pleased to offer
16 this letter in support for the Golden Queen Mining
17 Company, Soledad Mountain Mining Project. While the
18 project is located just outside my district, I
19 recognize that this project will benefit the entire
20 Antelope Valley Economic Region.

21 "Not only will a significant amount of
22 construction jobs be created, this project will
23 create over 200 well-paid permanent positions.

24 "The Golden Queen Mining Company has
25 worked closely with both BLM and your county staff to

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1 ensure it meets California's environmental standards.

2 "Once again, I support the project and
3 its economic benefits for the region.

4 "Sincerely, best wishes, George Runner,
5 Assemblyman."

6 The second comment I have: Personally,
7 I have a small consulting company, which most people
8 don't know about, called Tehachapi Valley Research
9 Center, which has been in operation in East Kern for
10 the last ten years. I've been involved in economic
11 development, environmental studies, both as a
12 consultant and as a technical reviewer.

13 I've also been involved in four mining
14 projects in San Bernardino and Kern County, including
15 Viceroy and Rand Mountain, as a technical consultant
16 involved in it.

M-10-2

17 I had the pleasure of many nights of
18 reading, going down and meeting with Glenn Barnhill
19 and getting copies of the EIR, which the Economic
20 Development Corporation had at their office in
21 Cal City, which I also serve as president.

22 I reviewed the document, all of the
23 appendices, the technical reviews for it. And having
24 been involved in this area for over the last fourteen
25 years, I believe the document to be exceptionally

1 well written, and compliment both BLM and the county
2 staff.

3 I would say to the audience that the
4 insurance policy here for getting the jobs and
5 everything, the environmental insurance policy is
6 this project must go through fifteen permit agencies
7 and must obtain twenty-seven separate permits, with
8 every one of the agencies having an ongoing
9 responsibility for making sure that this project
10 complies on a yearly basis, plus the closure
11 documents when the project is completed.

12 I understand the concerns of those who
13 live in the area, those who are concerned about
14 economic value, water, and so forth.

15 In the document, AVEK has committed
16 additional water resources to the project.

17 I think that if you go back and read the
18 document, point by point, you will get a feeling that
19 it's a decent document, and it's going to be up to
20 the permit agencies to make sure the project is run
21 right.

22 And I endorse the project. I also
23 endorse all of you try to read the agreement -- or
24 the document if you can. I know there's two copies
25 in Cal City at the library. There's additional

1 copies available.

2 Thank you.

3 MR. MOHSEN: Thank you, sir.

4 MR. LAND: Buford Land, L-a-n-d,
5 President of the California City Chamber of Commerce,
6 I'm also on the Board of Directors of the California
7 Aerospace Museum, and on the Board of Directors of
8 the Economic Development Corporation of California
9 City.

10 California City Board of Directors voted
11 at their last board meeting to endorse the concept of
12 the Golden Queen Mine, with a letter sent off to
13 Supervisor Steve Perez. I do not have a copy of it
14 with me tonight, but there was a letter mailed to him
15 in which we endorse the concept of this.

16 Again, with the various agencies that
17 are involved with permits and licensing, and so on,
18 like this, and if you go back again, as Mr. Stewart
19 expressed, read the copies of the EIR, and things
20 like this, it can put you to sleep if you're not
21 careful with it, but it can also keep you awake when
22 you go through and find many exciting things in
23 there.

24 Really, I've only been in the area about
25 seven years, but I found out some knowledge that I

M-11-1

M-11-1

M-12-1

1 didn't know about and haven't gained in that seven
2 years.

3 So go back and read the EIR and reports.
4 It's very interesting to find out these various
5 things and what you do have to go through before you
6 reach a final decision on doing something like this.

7 So, again, I support the concept of
8 this.

9 MR. MOHSEN: After this gentleman, you
10 can come up, ma'am.

11 Thank you.

12 MR. TUCKER: My name Bill Tucker,
13 T-u-c-k-e-r.

14 It's a pretty difficult act to follow
15 when you listen to all the expertise that's gone on
16 here on both sides of the fence. Very difficult to
17 follow that particular act.

18 I've had some experiences looking at
19 what goes wrong in various and sundry kinds of big
20 endeavors. When they go wrong, it's always somebody
21 else's fault.

22 However, when you take a look at this
23 particular project, you look at the permitting
24 process, you look at the EIR process, and you look at
25 how each one of those components add or detract from

1 the overall product.

2 I have had the good opportunity to
3 listen to several different, on several different
4 occasions, the people in management of the project.
5 And people can say, "Well, I don't trust them." You
6 can say it about most anything if you really want to
7 get down to that; however, when you start looking at
8 the track record of the people proposing the product
9 and -- excuse me, proposing the project -- then you
10 will come to realize that there are some things that
11 are different than yesteryear.

12 Yesteryear, when the Dupont Company
13 flowed all kinds of toxins because land was
14 immediately available to do that.

15 When you look at those kinds of things,
16 you can say right away that, yeah, it was a terrible
17 mistake. You don't have to go back to Dupont; go
18 right down to the metal companies nearby, and you can
19 hear that argument.

20 However, times have changed, processes
21 have changed, and we feel that there is a way within
22 the permitting process, within the community process
23 right here, of people raising issues and those issues
24 being addressed. And that's the real bottom line;
25 when the issue is addressed, and it's anticipated,

M-12-1

M-12-1

1 then it is addressed, and you have some way to follow
2 that up.

3 So I support the project. I support it
4 dearly because I know that in East Kern there's a
5 need for jobs, there's a need for a better quality of
6 life, and there's a need for more economic growth.

7 For the last six years, I've spent a lot
8 of time proposing going through that particular
9 ritual to come up with a motion to say, "What are we
10 going to do to make the quality of life better?" And
11 it always involved jobs, it always involves getting
12 the communities involved.

13 So, consequently, this community is
14 involved, and I really do not feel very good about
15 missing the meeting last night because I would like
16 to have been there, but I wasn't. But I'm here
17 tonight, and I'm here to support the project. And I
18 have a letter to Supervisor Perez that voices these
19 concerns.

20 Thank you.

21 MR. MOHSEN: Thank you, sir.

22 Let me remind you again, these are not
23 just for comments. The purpose of this meeting is to
24 ask any questions, ask for any clarifications about
25 the document. Ask any questions you want from BLM.

1 And you don't necessarily have to have a comment. If
2 you have a question like this lady has, feel free to
3 approach. You can ask as many as you want.

4 MS. GAETA: My name is Sandy Gaeta,
5 G-a-e-t-a, Sandy with a Y.

6 I live in Tehachapi. So this is a
7 potential job prospect for me. I am a single parent.

8 My question is: Those of you who live
9 on Backus Road, does California not have mineral
10 rights and water rights, so that if they tap into
11 your well, they have to pay you residuals? Like in
12 Oklahoma and down in L. A., when they go for the
13 oils, they have to go so far down, and they have to
14 pay residuals.

15 My second question is: When this mine
16 is completed and they are through, are they going to
17 help the displaced workers find other jobs? And how
18 long does this last? Is it ten years? Fifteen
19 years? I understand it's supposed to be between
20 twelve and fifteen years, permanent and temporary.
21 What happens to those workers? What happens to the
22 mine when it's over with?

23 MR. MOHSEN: There's about three
24 questions that the lady made. We made them part of
25 the record and we will respond to them in our final

M-14-1

1 document, question by question.

2 Sir.

3 MR. ZAMORA: Good evening. My name is
4 Manuel Zamora, M-a-n-u-e-l, Z-a-m-o-r-a.

5 I was talking about and trying to answer
6 some questions about the guy, Mr. Hooper, says about
7 things, what's going on about the mine, and the lady,
8 Miss Sue.

9 We have somebody over here who is living
10 over there near Backus Road for most of his life,
11 he's eighty-three years old. What happened to him
12 when the Cactus was in operations? He's still in
13 good health.

14 I mean, what about the people who lives
15 in Randsburg? Not even a mile away from the mine,
16 the fumes, cyanide or all the blasts and everything,
17 they never affected them. I never hear about it.
18 You not hear from people that live from Ridgecrest to
19 answer. They want to visit, and I see them on the
20 weekends, but you guys don't see over there in
21 Randsburg, it's a lot of trailers, a lot of
22 weekenders going over there to Randsburg, California.
23 It's not even a mile away from the Rand Mining
24 Company, who's doing the same thing while with this
25 mine is going to do over here. The same thing as

M-14-1

1 Cactus Gold Mine is doing it right now. The people
2 from Rand.

3 Backus Road, they are still living
4 healthy, and I don't know what's going on with this
5 mine.

6 California been working for over twenty
7 years. The wind is blowing from east to west. We
8 going to receive the same wind, the same thing. It's
9 going to be the same direction, going to come from
10 Golden Queen to Mojave.

11 Thank you.

12 MR. MOHSEN: There was a hand back there
13 earlier. I saw a hand up. Is there someone that
14 wanted to come from back there?

15 Sir, you want to come up.

16 MR. MARKIEWITZ: I'm David Markiewitz,
17 D-a-v-i-d, M-a-r-k-i-e-w-i-t-z. I'm from Tehachapi.

18 I was born here in Mojave, reared here,
19 went to school here. My father was a miner here in
20 the 1930s through the 1950s. And I'm proud to say
21 I'm a second-generation miner. That's not what I do
22 for a living, however; it's what I do for fun.

M-15-1

23 I have spent fifteen years working
24 underground, drilling and blasting, and sending ore
25 to different smelters all over the west.

M-15-1

1 And I want you to all know that this
2 town needs another big mine. This town has had two
3 phases of gold mining. Twenty years, from 1914 back
4 to 1894; and the second phase from 1933 to 1941, and
5 those two booms really helped the economy of Mojave.

6 We need it again. With the bypass, this
7 town is going to suffer dramatically.

8 The health concerns that were raised
9 about the dust pollution, one thing or another. Hey,
10 my father is ninety. No silicosis, because he paid
11 attention. He protected himself.

12 Today, MSHA requirements are such that
13 protection is mandatory.

14 People downwind can be fairly well rest
15 assured, rest assured that you're not going to be
16 subjected to major amounts of dust. Look at that
17 Cactus Mine. It did very well controlling a lot of
18 the dust down there. I was out there. I worked out
19 there, and didn't have any problems.

20 The major problems I have encountered
21 dust was when California Portland Cement was hauling
22 the Golden Queen mill tailings up to Oak Creek. This
23 was in the 1980s. And when they did that, they
24 created a tremendous amount of dust for my father and
25 me working on the north side of Soledad Mountain

M-15-1

1 directly downwind from the dust pile.

2 Today, we're still both healthy. We
3 paid attention.

4 You people just have to recognize the
5 potential of this mine. This area, as has been said
6 before, is designated for development. Mining is why
7 we're here.

8 The railroad came and the railroad is
9 gone. This town is not surviving due to the railroad
10 anymore.

11 The airport can only provide so much
12 employment.

13 I've been very, very fortunate to have
14 lived in Tehachapi where the ability of the people to
15 allow new economic development to occur has been
16 excellent; present expansions: Cal Portland,
17 Monolith, and now, Calaveras.

18 Mojave needs the same idea. You got to
19 do something to preserve the economy here. If all of
20 the environmental concerns can be addressed, the dust
21 pollution, one thing or another, I say go for it.

22 Earlier tonight, why, a comment was made
23 about mercury contamination coming from the Cactus
24 Mine. Well, I never heard about a mercury spill out
25 there. They encountered mercury at depth. They had

M-15-1

1 to install the required machinery to extract the
2 mercury from their ore to ensure that, in fact, it
3 wasn't just thrown out onto the desert floor.

4 But I don't know of any mercury in this
5 ore, anyway. That can be better addressed by the
6 geologist out here on this particular Soledad
7 Mountain Project. If there is mercury in this ore,
8 I'm sure it will be easily collected.

9 That's all I have to say.

10 MR. MOHSEN: Thank you, sir.

11 MS. HOOPER: My name a Marlene Hooper,
12 H-o-o-p-e-r.

13 And because someone has not heard about
14 a mercury spill, does not mean that Terry Murray and
15 Barbara Rigg did not sue Cactus Mine and win. They
16 agreed not to talk about or publish the results of
17 their suit. They proved they had mercury in their
18 home. They proved their family members were
19 poisoned. And there are other people who had great
20 problems who are now trying to sue Cactus Mine, as
21 well.

22 I do feel this situation is different,
23 but please don't say no one was hurt by Cactus Mine.
24 We know better.

25 Thank you.

M-16-1

1 MR. BAKER: I used to be Chief Executive
2 Officer of the Antelope Valley Board of Trade. I
3 came up here one day to speak at New Year's time, and
4 they asked me to speak on the windmills up in the
5 hills. When I spoke in favor of them, half of the
6 group got up and walked out.

7 The windmills are up in the hills. They
8 are making money for you. They will continue to do
9 so.

10 Now, I picked my seat earlier this
11 evening. Those people are sitting next to me, I know
12 one of them, I heard him speak. I want him to come
13 up -- this is not prepared -- and answer two
14 questions for me.

15 Please, Dick Graeme. I'm one of the top
16 racquetball players in the world, and I reached a
17 point before I had my heart attack that I didn't like
18 to play with amateurs.

19 Dick, could you come here a minute.

20 You gave a speech to the historical
21 museum; am I correct?

22 MR. GRAEME: That's correct.

23 MR. BAKER: How many mining books -- I'm
24 going to prove to you that I listened -- how many
25 mining books do you have in your library?

1 MR. GRAEME: Approximately 11,000.

2 MR. BAKER: Repeat that.

3 MR. GRAEME: Approximately 11,000.

4 MR. BAKER: How many mining companies
5 have you managed?

6 MR. GRAEME: I've been general manager,
7 or better, of -- one, two, three, four, five, six --
8 seven or eight.

9 MR. BAKER: Third question:

10 Are you a professional?

11 MR. GRAEME: I regard myself as
12 professional, both from education and experience.

13 MR. BAKER: In high school, I learned
14 the words, quote, "demonstrata." I've proven my
15 case.

16 Thank you.

17 MR. MOHSEN: Is there anyone else that
18 wants to come up and comment on the record? We would
19 love to hear from you.

20 Let me, again, reiterate our process.
21 We began this process back in March of 1996, April
22 1996, where we held public scoping meetings before we
23 drafted a single page of this document.

24 We went out to you and asked you, "What
25 do you want to see in it?"

1 And we have prepared this in the last
2 fourteen months based on your comments. And we have
3 prepared a document that we believe meets your
4 concerns and every single law and regulation that
5 this operation is subject to, federal, state and
6 local.

7 We can assure you that the document has
8 been prepared objectively and impartially by the
9 federal and the state agencies, Kern County and BLM.

10 And from this point on, we will take
11 your issues and concerns and itemize them
12 issue-by-issue and item-by-item, and respond back to
13 them appropriately.

14 And we will publish this information in
15 what we refer to as a "Final Environmental EIS/EIR."

16 If you want a copy of this document, we
17 will be sending out postcards asking you, would you
18 want a summary or you want the full text, so we can
19 make sure that the appropriate copy goes to you.

20 We will make that Final available,
21 again, thirty days before we issue a final decision
22 on the project.

23 BLM and Kern County will make the
24 document available again for review and comment
25 before we make a final decision.

1 The decisions will be made by Kern
2 County and BLM separately. They may not be on the
3 same day or the same week, but they will be
4 concurrent with each other.

5 So the operator will be getting the
6 appropriate response from the agencies at the same
7 time.

8 There will be a hearing for the Board of
9 Supervisors for Kern County regarding this matter in
10 August.

11 So, again, we will be publishing the
12 Final document in the response to the comments that
13 we have. And we really want to take this opportunity
14 to thank you for taking the time and participating in
15 this process. It cannot work without your
16 participation. And we hope that when it's all said
17 and done, that it continues to be the kind of
18 cooperative relationship we can do.

19 Again, I'll open it up for one last
20 request. If anyone has any comments, we would love
21 to hear from you; if not, we will close the public
22 meeting at 8:15 p.m.

23 And after we close it, you're welcome to
24 walk around and chat with us. If you have any
25 specific questions or comments, we will be hanging

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out for a few more minutes to talk to you if you need to.

Again, you need to commend yourself for taking the time to come down.

So thank you very much.

MR. BAKER: Hold it a minute. You two guys, stand up, please.

Give them a hand. Good job.

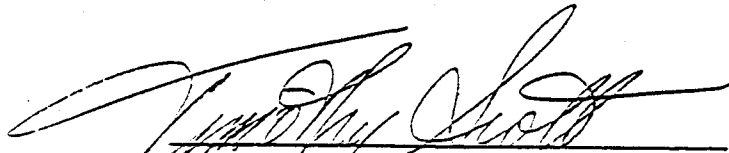
* * *

(Public meeting concluded at 8:15 p.m.)

1 STATE OF CALIFORNIA)
2) ss.
3 COUNTY OF KERN)

4 I, Timothy Scott, a California Certified
5 Shorthand Reporter, holding Certificate No. 8517, do
6 hereby certify that I was present and took down
7 correctly in stenotypy all the proceedings in the
8 foregoing-entitled matter on the 25th day of June,
9 1997; and I further certify that the annexed and
10 foregoing is a full, true and correct transcript of
11 such proceedings, and a full, true and correct
12 transcript of my stenotype notes thereof.

13 IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereunto set my
14 hand at my office in Bakersfield, California, this
15 4th day of July, 1997.

16
17
18 

19 Timothy Scott,
20 California CSR No. 8517

JUNE 24, 1997
PUBLIC COMMENT MEETING HELD IN ROSAMOND, CA
SOLEDAD MOUNTAIN PROJECT
GOLDEN QUEEN MINING COMPANY

Letters:

The City of California City-Mayors Proclamation
California State Senate-endorsement of Senator Pete Knight
Tehachapi City Council-Resolution

The City of California City

MAYOR'S PROCLAMATION

WHEREAS, a combined Draft EIR/EIS has been prepared by Kern County and the BLM for the Soledad Mountain project of Golden Queen Mining Company; and

WHEREAS, Soledad Mountain has a land use designation for mining and a rich history of such land use and purpose, and the Golden Queen Mining Soledad Mountain Project would appropriately continue such land use; and

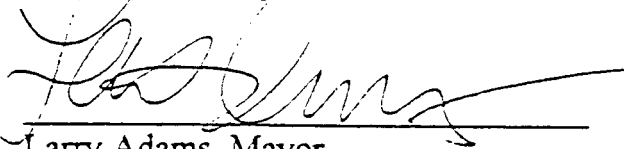
WHEREAS, the Soledad Mountain Project will require the investment by Golden Queen Mining of over \$40 million in construction costs, will use Kern County suppliers for building and construction materials, and will employ over 250 initial employees for eight months; and

WHEREAS, the project will provide permanent jobs for a projected 230 employees over a lifetime of the project estimated between twelve and sixteen years, and Golden Queen Mining is committed to hiring east Kern residents and supporting Kern County businesses; and

WHEREAS, the Golden Queen Mining Company will be constructing and operating a state-of-the-art mine and reclaiming operation, while being simultaneously committed to the preservation of historical mining works and structures in the area covered by the project; and

WHEREAS, the Soledad Mining Project will provide an important addition to the Kern County tax base and help to meet the infrastructure needs of Southeast Kern County;

THEREFORE, I, Mayor Larry Adams, by virtue of the authority vested in me as Mayor of California City, do hereby support the Golden Queen Mining Company in their endeavors in East Kern, and recommend that approvals required by local agencies be granted to allow this project to go forth. In witness thereof, I hereunto set my hand and caused the Great Seal of California City to be affixed this 6th Day of June, 1997.


Larry Adams, Mayor
City of California City



California State Senate

SENATOR
WM. J. "PETE" KNIGHT

SEVENTEENTH SENATORIAL DISTRICT



June 19, 1997

Supervisor Steve A. Perez, Chairman
Kern County Board of Supervisors
1115 Truxtun Ave. #502
Bakersfield, CA 93301

Dear Supervisor Perez:

Please find this letter as an endorsement of the proposed Golden Queen Mining Company Soledad Mountain Mining Project.

This project is vital to the economic future of Kern County. It is anticipated that this project will provide nearly 500 jobs over the duration of operation. Jobs will vary from labor and semi-skilled to clerical and supervisory. With the mine conservatively projected to produce 12-16 years, Golden Queen Mining employees will contribute to the economic base of Kern County well into the next century.

The company has also taken many necessary steps to ensure they meet all the environmental standards mandated by the State of California and the Federal Government. Issues of not impacting any threatened or endanger species, and meeting strict water and air quality standards have been addressed.

Considering the economic benefit and the minimal environmental impact Golden Queen Mine would bring to Kern County, I urge the Board of Supervisors to enthusiastically approve this project.

Warmest Regards,

A large, stylized handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Wm. J. 'Pete' Knight".

Wm. J. "Pete" Knight
California State Senator

WJK:cs

ANTELOPE VALLEY OFFICE
1008 W AVE M-14
SUITE C
PALMDALE, CA 93551
(805) 274-0188

SANTA CLARITA VALLEY OFFICE
23709 RYE CANYON ROAD
SUITE 105
SANTA CLARITA, CA 91355
(805) 294-8184

VICTOR VALLEY OFFICE
15278 MAIN STREET
SUITE 0
HESPERIA, CA 92345
(619) 244-2402

RESOLUTION NO. 19-97

A RESOLUTION OF THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF TEHACHAPI
SUPPORTING THE GOLDEN QUEEN MINING COMPANY

WHEREAS, a combined Draft EIS/EIR has been prepared by Kern County and the Bureau of Land Management for the Soledad Mountain Project of the Golden Queen Mining Company; and

WHEREAS, Soledad Mountain has a land use designation for mining and a rich history of such land use and purpose, and the Golden Queen Mining Soledad Project would appropriately continue such land use; and

WHEREAS, the Soledad Mountain Project will require the investment by Golden Queen Mining of over \$40 million in construction costs, will use Kern County suppliers for building and construction materials, and will employ over 250 initial employees for eight months; and

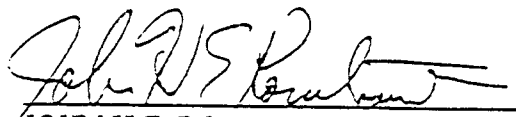
WHEREAS, the project will provide permanent jobs for a projected 230 employees over a lifetime of the project estimated between twelve and sixteen years, and Golden Queen Mining is committed to hiring east Kern residents and supporting Kern County businesses; and

WHEREAS, the Golden Queen Mining Company will be constructing and operating a state-of-the-art mine and reclaiming operation, while being simultaneously committed to the preservation of historical mining works and structures in the area covered by the project; and

WHEREAS, the Soledad Mining Project will provide an important addition to the Kern County tax base and help to meet the infrastructure needs of Southeast Kern County;

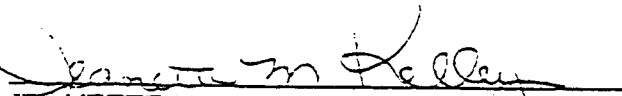
THEREFORE, the Tehachapi City Council, do hereby support the Golden Queen Mining Company in their endeavors in East Kern, and recommend that approvals required by local agencies be granted to allow this project to go forth.

PASSED, APPROVED AND ADOPTED by the City Council of the City of Tehachapi at a regular meeting this 16th day of June, 1997.



JOHN H.E. ROMBOUITS, Mayor of the
City of Tehachapi, California

ATTEST:



JEANETTE M. KELLEY, City Clerk of the
City of Tehachapi, California



JUNE 25, 1997
PUBLIC COMMENT MEETING HELD IN MOJAVE, CA
SOLEDAD MOUNTAIN PROJECT
GOLDEN QUEEN MINING COMPANY

Letters:

City of Ridgecrest-signed by William Lalor
California State Assembly-signed by Assemblyman, George Runner
Mojave Town Council-signed by Chris Babcock
Mojave Chamber of Commerce-signed by Pete Stern



CITY OF RIDGECREST

PHONE 619-371-3700
100 WEST CALIFORNIA AVENUE • RIDGECREST, CALIFORNIA 93555-4054

June 17, 1997

Kern County
Planning Department
Ted James, AICP, Director
2700 'M' Street, Suite 100
Bakersfield, Ca. 93301-2323


Re: CUP #22, Map #214
CUP #41, Map 213
213-63098 Streets and Highways

Dear Mr James:

I support the efforts of the Golden Queen Mining Company to develop the Soledad Mountain Project near Mojave. The project permitting process will address the required environmental issues. I'm confident that Kern County and the Bureau of Land Management are sensitive to the environment.

I particularly endorse the prospect of 230 new jobs for the Eastern Kern County area. New jobs for any of the communities in the area help the economy in general and we all receive some spin off benefits. I wish the project every success.

Sincerely,


William R. Lalor

Mayor

97-164/mc

STATE CAPITOL
P.O. BOX 942849
SACRAMENTO, CA 94249-0001

Assembly California Legislature

GEORGE RUNNER
ASSEMBLYMEMBER, THIRTY-SIXTH DISTRICT

DISTRICT OFFICE
709 W. LANCASTER BLVD.
LANCASTER, CA 93534
(805) 723-3338
FAX (805) 723-3307

June 25, 1997

Supervisor Steve Perez
Kern County Board of Supervisors
1115 Truxtun Ave., #502
Bakersfield, CA 93301

RE: Golden Queen Mining Company Soledad Mountain Mining Project

Dear Supervisor Perez:

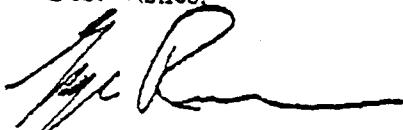
I am pleased to offer this letter of support for the Golden Queen Mining Company Soledad Mountain Mining Project.

While the project is located just outside my district, I recognize that this project will benefit the entire Antelope Valley economic region. Not only will a significant amount of construction jobs be created, but this project will create over 200, well paid permanent jobs.

The Golden Queen Mining Company has worked closely with both the BLM and your county staff to ensure it meets California's rigorous environmental standards.

Once again, I support this project and the economic benefit it will provide our region.

Best wishes,



George Runner
Member of the Assembly

GR/gm

Mojave Town Council

P.O. Box 999
Mojave CA 93502-0999
805-824-3417
Fax: 805-824-8213

June 18, 1997

Honorable Steve Perez
Chairman
Kern County Board of Supervisors
1115 Truxtun Avenue
Bakersfield CA 93301

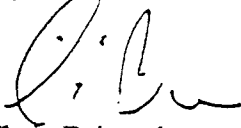
Dear Steve:

The directors of the Mojave Town Council voted last night to support Golden Queen Mining Company's proposal to operate a gold mine on Soledad Mountain.

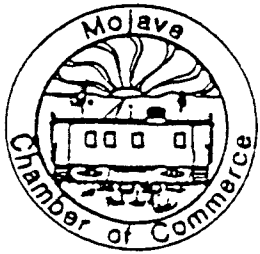
Golden Queen's proposal will bring needed jobs and business to our community without significant negative effects on the environment.

We urge your support of this project which is so important to our community.

Sincerely,



Chris Babcock
Vice President



Mojave Chamber of Commerce

15836 Sierra Highway • Mojave, CA 93501 • (805) 824-2481

June 12, 1997

Honorable Steve Perez
Chairman
Kern County Board of Supervisors
1115 Truxtun Avenue
Bakersfield CA 93301

97 JUN 13 AM 9:31
FILED BY CLERK OF
THE BOARD OF SUPERVISORS
BY _____ DEPUTY

Dear Steve:

At a board meeting today, the directors of the Mojave Chamber of Commerce voted to support Golden Queen Mining Company's proposal to mine gold on Soledad Mountain. We believe this project will enhance the economy of our community, provide much-needed employment, and will have no measurable negative effect on the environment.

We urge you to review this project carefully and consider our views in your deliberations.

Sincerely yours,

Pete Sturm
President

Code No. _____
BY ORDER OF THE BO/SUPV.
Referred To _____
_____ *Planning* _____
Copies Furnished _____
Each Supervisor And CIO, Co-Counsel
FILED BY BO SUPV. 6/13/97
SUE DAVIS
Clerk of the Board of Supervisors
By: *Sue*

PUBLIC NOTICES FILED BY KERN COUNTY FOR THE DRAFT EIR/EIS

PROOF OF PUBLICATION

STATE OF CALIFORNIA
COUNTY OF KERN

I AM A CITIZEN OF THE UNITED STATES AND A RESIDENT OF THE COUNTY AFORESAID: I AM OVER THE AGE OF EIGHTEEN YEARS, AND NOT A PARTY TO OR INTERESTED IN THE ABOVE ENTITLED MATTER. I AM THE ASSISTANT PRINCIPAL CLERK OF THE PRINTER OF THE BAKERSFIELD CALIFORNIAN, A NEWSPAPER OF GENERAL CIRCULATION, PRINTED AND PUBLISHED DAILY IN THE CITY OF BAKERSFIELD COUNTY OF KERN, AND WHICH NEWSPAPER HAS BEEN ADJUDGED A NEWSPAPER OF GENERAL CIRCULATION BY THE SUPERIOR COURT OF THE COUNTY OF KERN, STATE OF CALIFORNIA, UNDER DATE OF FEBRUARY 5, 1952. CASE NUMBER 57610; THAT THE NOTICE, OF WHICH THE ANNEXED IS A PRINTED COPY, HAS BEEN PUBLISHED IN EACH REGULAR AND ENTIRE ISSUE OF SAID NEWSPAPER AND NOT IN ANY SUPPLEMENT THEREOF ON THE FOLLOWING DATES, TO WIT:

June 2, 1997
ALL IN THE YEAR 1997

I CERTIFY (OR DECLARE) UNDER PENALTY OF PERJURY THAT THE FOREGOING IS TRUE AND CORRECT.

Ann. Teste
SIGNATURE

DATED AT BAKERSFIELD CA

June 2, 1997

PROOF OF PUBLICATION

Draft Environmental

Impact Report

DRAFT ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT REPORT NOTICE OF AVAILABILITY FOR PUBLIC REVIEW
This is to advise that the Kern County Planning Department has prepared an Environmental Impact Report for the project identified below. As mandated by State law, the minimum public review period for this document is 45 days. The document and documents referenced in the Draft EIR are available for review at the Planning Department, 2200 "M" Street, Suite 100, Bakersfield, CA 93301.
A public hearing has been scheduled with the Kern County Board of Supervisors to receive comments on the document on: August 25, 1997 at 2:00 p.m. or soon thereafter. Chambers of the Board of Supervisors, First Floor, Kern County Administrative Center, 1115 Truxtun Avenue, Bakersfield, California.
The comment period for this document closes on July 14, 1997. Testimony at future public hearings may be limited to those issues raised during the public review period either orally or submitted in writing by 5:00 p.m. the day the comment period closes.
Project Title: CUP 41, Map 213; CUP 22, Map 214; Streets and Highways Nonsummary Vacation, New Eagle Road.
Project Location: Soledad Mountain, S/S of Silver Queen Rd.; 1/2 mi W of St Rt 14, approx 5 mi SW of Mojave.
Project Description: A Conditional Use Permit to allow a surface mining operation and reclamation plan on private and federally administered lands in accordance with the Surface Mining and Reclamation Act of 1975 and the nonsummary vacation of a portion of New Eagle Road. The proposed action would use conventional heap leach processing to recover disseminated gold from ore recovered from an open pit excavation. Ore would be processed at a rate of approximately six million tons annually for approximately ten years. A total of 930 acres of land would be disturbed by the project activities. Reclamation of disturbed areas would occur at the completion of operations. The total project life would be about 15 years. Five alternatives to the proposed action are analyzed in detail in the draft EIR: (1) No action; (2) Increased mining and processing rate; (3) Decreased mining and processing rate; (4) Reduced project size; and (5) Partial backfilling. Other alternatives were considered and eliminated from detailed consideration. Issues identified through the scoping process and evaluated in this Draft EIR include mineral resources, topography, geology, and soils, hydrology, vegetation, wildlife, air quality, land use, visual resources, cultural resources, trans-

portation, noise, socioeconomic, and public health and safety. Regulatory requirements and mitigation measures incorporated by project design would result in impacts that are less than significant for soils, hydrology, air quality, vegetation, wildlife, visual resources, noise, land use, socioeconomic, public health and safety, and traffic and transportation. Additional mitigation measures are recommended in this Draft EIR to reduce significant cultural and historical resources to less than significant. Anticipated Significant Impacts on Environment: Impacts to topography and mineral resources are significant and unavoidable adverse. For further information, please contact Glenn A. Barnhill, Special Projects Division Chief, (805) 862-8606 TED JAMES, AICP, Director Planning Department June 2, 1997 (20732)

DRAFT ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT REPORT
OF AVAILABILITY FOR PUBLIC REVIEW

This is to advise that the Kern County Planning Department has prepared an Environmental Impact Report for the project identified below. As mandated by State law, the minimum public review period for this document is 45 days. The document and documents referenced in the Draft EIR are available for review at the Planning Department, 2700 "M" Street, Suite 100, Bakersfield, CA 93301.

A public hearing has been scheduled with the Kern County Board of Supervisors to receive comments on the document on: August 25, 1997 at 2:00 p.m. or soon thereafter, Chambers of the Board of Supervisors, First Floor, Kern County Administrative Center, 1115 Truxtun Avenue, Bakersfield, California

The comment period for this document closes on July 14, 1997. Testimony at future public hearings may be limited to those issues raised during the public review period either orally or submitted in writing by 5:00 p.m. the day the comment period closes.

Project Title: CUP 41, Map 213; CUP 22, Map 214; Streets and Highways Nonsummary Vacation, New Eagle Road

Project Location: Soledad Mountain, S/s of Silver Queen Rd, 1 1/2 mi W of St Rt 14, approx 5 mi SW of Mojave

Project Description: A Conditional Use Permit to allow a surface mining operation and reclamation plan, on private and federally administered lands, in accordance with the Surface Mining and Reclamation Act of 1975 and the nonsummary vacation of a portion of New Eagle Road. The proposed action would use conventional heap leach processing to recover disseminated gold from ore recovered from an open pit excavation. Ore would be processed at a rate of approximately six million tons annually for approximately ten years. A total of 930 acres of land would be disturbed by the project activities. Reclamation of disturbed areas would occur at the completion of operations. The total project life would be about 15 years. Five alternatives to the proposed action are analyzed in detail in the Draft EIR: (1) No action; (2) Increased mining and processing rate; (3) Decreased mining and processing rate; (4) Reduced project size; and (5) Partial backfilling. Other alternatives were considered and eliminated from detailed consideration. Issues identified through the scoping process and evaluated in this Draft EIR include mineral resources, topography, geology and soils, hydrology, vegetation, wildlife, air quality, land use, visual resources, cultural resources, transportation, noise, socioeconomics, and public health and safety. Regulatory requirements and mitigation measures incorporated by project design would result in impacts that are less than significant for soils, hydrology, air quality, vegetation, wildlife, visual resources, noise, land use, socioeconomics, public health and safety, and traffic and transportation. Additional mitigation measures are recommended in this Draft EIR to reduce significant cultural and historical resources to less than significant.

Anticipated Significant Impacts on Environment: Impacts to topography and mineral resources are significant and unavoidable adverse.

For further information, please contact Glenn A. Barnhill, Special Projects Division Chief (805) 862-8606.

TED JAMES, AICP, Director
Planning Department

Published In The Mojave Desert News
June 5, 1997

AFFIDAVIT OF PUBLICATION

{ County of Kern
State of California

Barbara Schultheiss

of said county, being duly sworn says that he or she is over the age of eighteen years; that he or she is associated with the publication of *THE MOJAVE DESERT NEWS*, an adjudicated weekly newspaper printed, published and circulated in the said county and state. The notice, of which the annexed is a true printed copy, was published in the above named newspaper on the following dates, to wit:

June 5

I declare under the penalty of perjury (under the laws of the State of California) that the above is a true and correct copy.

June 6, 1997

Date: _____

Signature: B. Schultheiss

PUBLIC NOTICES FILED BY THE BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT



U.S. Department of the Interior
Bureau of Land Management
News Release

For Immediate Release: May 28, 1997
Contact: Public Affairs Staff, (909) 697-5215

CA 060-97-27

**Proposed Soledad Mountain Project Draft EIS/EIR Available for Public Review
Public Meetings to be Held**

The Bureau of Land Management (BLM) and County of Kern have released a joint federal-county Draft Environmental Impact Statement/Environmental Impact Report (EIS/EIR) for the proposed Soledad Mountain Project open pit, heap leach gold mine for public review and comment.

The Draft EIS/EIR analyzes the alternatives, BLM's preferred action, and the potential environmental impacts of the proposed project, including geology, water resources, vegetation, wildlife, air quality, visual resources, cultural resources, land use, mitigation, and reclamation.

Copies of the Draft EIS/EIR will be available for review at most local libraries, BLM's Ridgecrest Resource Area Office, 300 South Richmond Road, Ridgecrest, CA 93555, and California Desert District Office, 6221 Box Springs Blvd., Riverside, CA 92507, and the Kern County Planning Department, 2700 M Street, Bakersfield, CA. 93301. The Draft EIS/EIR, project description, resource inventories, and public meeting information also is available on the Internet at the following address: <http://www.ca.blm.gov/GoldenQueen>.

BLM has scheduled two public meetings at the following locations to provide the public an opportunity to comment on the Draft EIS/EIR:

Tuesday, June 24, 7 p.m.
Halsey Auditorium
Rosamond Elementary School
1981 Rosamond Blvd.
Rosamond, CA

Wednesday, June 25, 7 p.m.
Mojave Elementary School Auditorium
Mojave Elementary School
15800 "O" Street
Mojave, CA

The site for the proposed Soledad Mountain Project is located five miles south of the City of Mojave in Kern County. The proposed project area would encompass approximately 1,690 acres, which includes 1,219 acres of private land and 471 acres of public lands administered by BLM. Approximately 930 acres would be disturbed, including 735 acres of private land and 195 acres of public land.

The proposed open pit, heap leach gold mine project would be operated by the Golden Queen Mining Company. Once approved, the Soledad Mountain Project would operate for approximately 15 years.

Written comments regarding the Draft EIS/EIR may be submitted through July 15, 1997, to the Bureau of Land Management, Ridgecrest Resource Area, Attention: Ahmed Mohsen, 300 South Richmond Road, Ridgecrest, CA 93555. For more information contact Mohsen at (760) 384-5421.

-BLM-



U.S. Environmental Protection Agency

[\[EPA Home\]](#) [\[Federal Register Home\]](#) [\[Comments\]](#) [\[Search\]](#)

Federal Register Document

[Federal Register: June 2, 1997 (Volume 62, Number 105)]
[Notices]
[Page 29736]
From the Federal Register Online via GPO Access [wais.access.gpo.gov]
[DOCID:fr02jn97-97]

DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR

Bureau of Land Management

Notice

AGENCY: Bureau of Land Management, Interior.

ACTION: Notice.

SUMMARY: Notice is hereby given that the Bureau of Land Management (BLM) and the County of Kern, State of California have prepared a Draft Environmental Impact Statement/Environmental Impact Report for the Soledad Mountain Project, a proposed gold mining operation on public and private lands in Kern County, California.

DATES: Comments on the Draft Environmental Impact Report/Environmental Impact Statement must be postmarked no later than July 15, 1997.

ADDRESSES: Written comments should be addressed to Bureau of Land Management, Ridgecrest Resource Area, 300 S. Richmond Road, Ridgecrest, California 93555, Attention: Ahmed Mohsen, EIS Coordinator.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Ahmed Mohsen-EIS Coordinator (760) 385-5421.

PUBLIC MEETINGS: Public meetings are planned for:

Date: Tues. June 24, 1997.

Time: 7:00 p.m.

Place: Halsey Auditorium, Rosamond Elementary School, 1981 Rosamond Boulevard, Rosamond, California.

Date: Wed. June 25, 1997.

Time: 7:00 p.m.

Place: Mojave Elementary School Auditorium, Mojave Elementary School, 15800 'O' Street, Mojave, California.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

The purpose of the Draft EIR/EIS is to present BLM and Kern County's comparative analysis of the impacts of the Proposed Action and Alternatives on the physical, biological, social and economic resources of the area. The Proposed Action is a mining proposal to extract minerals from the subsurface, process the ore using chemical leaching methods and place the waste rock adjacent to the processing and mining areas. Alternatives to the Proposed Action include variations on the duration and placement of waste rock. After careful consideration of the impacts of the Proposed Action and all the alternatives, BLM has identified a Preferred Action in response to regulatory requirements, issues raised, resources present, impact analysis results and the effectiveness of mitigation and reclamation measures.

A public scoping process was initiated by the BLM and Kern County to identify issues and concerns relating to the proposed mining operation and assist the lead agencies in formulating alternatives to the Proposed Action. The scoping process was designed to provide an opportunity for receipt of verbal and written comments from the public organizations and government agencies. This was achieved through two public meetings, newspaper publications, Federal Register notice and notice of preparation of an EIR/EIS, Project description, resource inventories and public meeting proceedings were made available on the world wide web. Site can be reached with the following address:
<http://www.ca.blm.gov/GoldenQueen>.

The project area includes approximately 1,690 acres of which 1,219 acres are privately owned land and 471 acres are unpatented mining claims on public lands administered by the BLM. The proposed surface disturbance is 930 acres of which 735 acres are on private land and 195 acres are on public land.

Five alternatives to the Proposed Action are analyzed in detail:
(1) No Action, (2) Increased Mining and Processing Rate, (3) Decreased Mining and Processing Rate, (4) Reduced Project Size, and (5) Partial Backfilling.

Lee Delaney,
Area Manager.

[FR Doc. 97-14222 Filed 5-30-97; 8:45 am]
BILLING CODE 1990-01-M

AGENCY: Bureau of Land Management, Interior

ACTION: Notice

SUMMARY: Notice is hereby given that the Bureau of Land Management (BLM) has prepared a Draft Environmental Impact Statement for the Soledad Mountain Project, a proposed gold mining operation on public and private lands in Kern County, California.

DATE: Comments on the Draft Environmental Impact Report/Environmental Impact Statement must be postmarked no later than July 14, 1997.

ADDRESSES: Written comments should be addressed to Bureau of Land Management, Ridgecrest Resource Area, 300 S. Richmond Road, Ridgecrest, California, 93555, Attention: Ahmed Mohsen.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Ahmed Mohsen (700) 385-5421

PUBLIC MEETINGS: Public meetings are planned for:

Date: June 24, 1997

Time: 7:00 P.M.

Place: Halsey Auditorium
Rosamond Elementary School
1081 Rosamond Boulevard
Rosamond, California

Date: June 25, 1997

Time: 7:00 P.M.

Place: Mojave Elementary School Auditorium
Mojave Elementary School
15800 "O" Street
Mojave, California

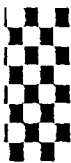
SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: Golden Queen is proposing to construct and operate the Soledad Mountain Project, an open pit precious metals (gold and silver) mining and cyanide heap leaching operation. The project is located at the Soledad Mountain project area approximately five miles southwest of the town of Mojave in Kern County, California. The proposed mine would include two lined heap leach pads designed and constructed in support and contain the ore heap and to collect process fluid from the ore heap for precious metals recovery.

The project area includes approximately 1,500 acres of which 1,218 acres are privately owned land and 471 acres are unpatented mining claims on public lands administered by the BLM. The proposed surface disturbance is 300 acres of which 735 acres are on private land and 195 acres are on public land.

Five alternatives to the Proposed Action are analyzed in detail: (1) No Action, (2) Increased Mining and Processing Rate, (3) Decreased Mining and Processing Rate, (4) Reduced Project Size, and (5) Partial Backfilling.

Lee DeLaney, Area Manager, California Desert District, Bureau of Land Management

Published in The Mojave Desert News
June 12, 1997



NOTICE OF PUBLIC NOTICE

AGENCY: Bureau of Land Management, Interior
ACTION: Notice

SUMMARY: Notice is hereby given that the Bureau of Land Management (BLM) has prepared a Draft Environmental Impact Statement for the Soledad Mountain Project, a proposed gold mining operation on public and private lands in Kern County, California.

DATES: Comments on the Draft Environmental Impact Report/Environmental Impact Statement must be postmarked no later than July 14, 1997.

ADDRESSES: Written comments should be addressed to Bureau of Land Management, Ridgcrest Resource Area, 300 S. Richmond Road, Ridgcrest, California, 93555. Attention: Ahmed Mousen.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Ahmed Mousen (760) 385-3421

PUBLIC MEETINGS: Public meetings are planned for:

Date: June 24, 1997	Date: June 28, 1997
Time: 7:00 P.M.	Time: 7:00 P.M.
Place: Halsey Auditorium Rosamond Elementary School 1981 Rosamond Boulevard Rosamond, California	Place: Mojave Elementary School Auditorium Mojave Elementary School 15800 "O" Street Mojave, California

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: Golden Queen is proposing to construct and operate the Soledad Mountain Project, an open pit precious metals (gold and silver) mining and cyanide heap leaching operation. The project is located at the Soledad Mountain project area approximately five miles southwest of the town of Mojave in Kern County, California. The proposed mine would include two lined heap leach pads designed and constructed to support and contain the ore heap and to collect process fluid from the ore heap for precious metals recovery.

The project area includes approximately 1,690 acres of which 1,219 acres are privately owned land and 471 acres are unpatented mining claims on public lands administered by the BLM. The proposed surface disturbance is 930 acres of which 735 acres are on private land and 195 acres are on public land.

Five alternatives to the Proposed Action are analyzed in detail: (1) No Action, (2) Increased Mining and Processing Rate, (3) Decreased Mining and Processing Rate, (4) Reduced Project Size, and (5) Partial Backfilling.

Lee Delaney, Area Manager, California Desert District, Bureau of Land Management

*Rosamond News
June 16, 1997*



U.S. Department of the Interior
Bureau of Land Management
News Release

For Immediate Release: July 17, 1997
Contact: Doran Sanchez, (909) 697-5215

CA 060-97-35

Comment Period Extended for Proposed Soledad Mountain Project Draft EIS/EIR

The Bureau of Land Management (BLM) and County of Kern are extending the public comment period on the joint federal-county draft environmental impact statement/environmental impact report (EIS/EIR) for the proposed Soledad Mountain Project open pit, heap leach gold mine to August 4, 1997.

The Draft EIS/EIR analyzes the five alternatives and potential environmental impacts of the proposed project, including geology, water resources, vegetation, wildlife, air quality, visual resources, cultural resources, land use, mitigation, and reclamation.

The site for the proposed Soledad Mountain Project is located five miles south of the City of Mojave in Kern County. The proposed project area would encompass approximately 1,690 acres, which includes 1,219 acres of private land and 471 acres of public lands administered by BLM. Approximately 930 acres would be disturbed, including 735 acres of private land and 195 acres of public land.

The proposed open pit, heap leach gold mine project would be operated by the Golden Queen Mining Company. Once approved, the Soledad Mountain Project would operate for approximately 15 years.

The Draft EIS/EIR was released for public review and comment on June 2, 1997. BLM held public meetings on June 24 in Rosamond and June 25 in Mojave to provide the public an opportunity to comment on the proposed project.

Copies of the Draft EIS/EIR are available for review at most local libraries, BLM's Ridgecrest Resource Area Office, 300 South Richmond Road, Ridgecrest, CA 93555, and California Desert District Office, 6221 Box Springs Blvd., Riverside, CA 92507, and the Kern County Planning Department, 2700 M Street, Bakersfield, CA. 93301. The Draft EIS/EIR, project description, and resource inventories information also is available on the Internet at <http://www.ca.blm.gov/GoldenQueen>.

Written comments regarding the Soledad Mountain Project Draft EIS/EIR may be submitted through August 4, 1997, to the Bureau of Land Management, Ridgecrest Resource Area, Attention: Ahmed Mohsen, 300 South Richmond Road, Ridgecrest, CA 93555. For more information contact Mohsen at (760) 384-5421.

-BLM-

BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT

AGENCY: Bureau of Land Management, Interior

ACTION: Notice

SUMMARY: Notice is hereby given that the Bureau of Land Management (BLM) and the County of Kern, State of California are extending the comment period for the Draft Environmental Impact Statement/ Environmental Impact Report for the Soledad Mountain Project, a proposed gold mining operation on public and private lands in Kern County, California.

DATES: Comments on the Draft Environmental Impact Report/ Environmental Impact Statement must be postmarked no later than August 4, 1997.

ADDRESSES: Written comments should be addressed to Bureau of Land Management, Ridgecrest Resource Area, 300 S. Richmond road, Ridgecrest, California, 93555, Attention: Ahmed Mohsen, EIS Coordinator.

For Further information contact: Ahmed Mohsen-EIS Coordinator
(760) 385-4521.

PUBLIC MEETINGS: Public meetings were held on:
June 24 and June 25 at Rosamond & Mojave, California

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

The purpose of the Draft EIR/EIS is to present BLM and Kern County's comparative analysis of the impacts of the Proposed Action and Alternative on the physical, biological, social and economic resources of the area. The Proposed Action is a mining proposal to extract minerals from the subsurface, process the ore using chemical leaching methods and place the waste rock adjacent to the processing and mining areas. Alternatives to the Proposed include variations on the duration of operations and placement of waste rock. After careful consideration of the impacts of the Proposed Action and all the alternatives, BLM has identified a Preferred Action in response to regulatory requirements, issues raised, resources present, impact analysis results and the effectiveness of mitigation and reclamation measures.

A public scoping process was initiated by the BLM and Kern County to identify issues and concerns relating to the proposed mining operation and assist the lead agencies in formulating alternatives to the Proposed Action. The scoping process was designed to provide an opportunity for receipt of verbal and written comments from the public, organizations, and government agencies. This was achieved through two public meetings, newspaper publications, federal register notice and notice of preparation of an EIR/EIS. Project description, resource inventories and public meeting proceedings were made available on the world wide web. Site can be reached with the following address: <http://www.ca.blm.gov/GoldenQueen>.

The project area includes approximately 1,690 acres of which 1,219 acres are privately owned land and 471 acres are unpatented mining claims on public lands administered by the BLM. The proposed surface disturbance is 930 acres of which 735 acres are on private land and 195 acres are on public land.

Five alternatives to the Proposed Action are analyzed in detail: (1) No Action, (2) Increased Mining and Processing Rate, (3) Decreased Mining and Processing Rate, (4) Reduced Project Size, and (5) Partial Backfilling.

A federal register notice was published on June 2, 1997 (Volume 62, Number 105) Page 29736 to announce the public meeting dates and comment period schedules.

Lee Delaney
Resource Area Manager

ROSAMOND NEWS

JULY 28, 1997
AUG 4, 1997



U.S. Environmental Protection Agency

[\[EPA Home\]](#) [\[Federal Register Home\]](#) [\[Comments\]](#) [\[Search\]](#)

Federal Register Document

[Federal Register: July 31, 1997 (Volume 62, Number 147)]
[Notices]
[Page 41074-41075]
From the Federal Register Online via GPO Access [wais.access.gpo.gov]
[DOCID:fr31jy97-111]

DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR

Bureau of Land Management

Amended Notice

SUMMARY: Notice is hereby given that the Bureau of Land Management (BLM) and the County of Kem, State of California have extended the comment period for the Draft Environmental Impact Statement/Environmental Impact Report for the Soledad Mountain Project, a proposed gold mining operation on public and private lands in Kem County, California.

DATES: Comments on the Draft Environmental Impact Report/Environmental Impact Statement must be postmarked no later than August 11, 1997.

ADDRESSES: Written comments should be addressed to Bureau of Land Management, Ridgecrest Resource Area, 300 S. Richmond Road, Ridgecrest, California, 93555, Attention: Ahmed Mohsen, EIS Coordinator.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:
Ahmed Mohsen--EIS Coordinator (760) 384-5421.

PUBLIC MEETINGS: Public meetings were held on: Tues. June 24, 1997 and Wed. June 25, 1997.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: The purpose of the Draft EIR/EIS is to present BLM and Kem County's comparative analysis of the impacts of the Proposed Action and Alternatives on the physical, biological, social and economic resources of the area. The Proposed Action is a mining proposal to extract minerals from the subsurface, process the ore using chemical leaching methods and place the waste rock adjacent to the processing and mining areas. Alternatives to the Proposed Action include variations on the duration of operations and placement of waste rock. After careful consideration

[[Page 41075]]

of the impacts of the Proposed Action and all the alternatives, BLM has identified a Preferred Action in response to regulatory requirements, issues raised, resources present, impact analysis results and the

effectiveness of mitigation and reclamation measures.

A public scoping process was initiated by the BLM and Kem County to identify issues and concerns relating to the proposed mining operation and assist the lead agencies in formulating alternatives to the Proposed Action. The scoping process was designed to provide an opportunity for receipt of verbal and written comments from the public, organizations and government agencies. This was achieved through two public meetings, newspaper publications, Federal Register notice and notice of preparation of an EIR/EIS. Project description, resource inventories and public meeting proceedings were made available on the world wide web. Site can be reached with the following address:
[htt:www.ca.blm.gov/GoldenQueen](http://www.ca.blm.gov/GoldenQueen).

The project area includes approximately 1,690 acres of which 1,219 acres are privately owned land and 471 acres are unpatented mining claims on public lands administered by the BLM. The proposed surface disturbance is 930 acres of which 735 acres are on private land and 195 acres are on public land

A Federal Register notice was published on June 2, 1997 (Volume 62, Number 105) Page 29736 to announce the public meeting dates and comment period schedules.

Dated: July 25, 1997.
Lee Delaney,
Area Manager.
[FR Doc. 97-20139 Filed 7-30-97; 8:45 am]
BILLING CODE 1990-01-M

the impacts of the Proposed Action and all the alternatives, BLM has identified a Preferred Action in response to regulatory requirements, issues raised, resources present, impact analysis results and the effectiveness of mitigation and reclamation measures. A public scoping process was initiated by the BLM and Kern County to identify issues and concerns relating to the proposed mining operation and assist the lead agencies in formulating alternatives to the Proposed Action. The scoping process was designed to provide an opportunity for receipt of verbal and written comments from the public, organizations and government agencies. This was achieved through two public meetings, newspaper publications, *Federal Register* notice and notice of preparation of an EIR/EIS. Project description, resource inventories and public meeting proceedings were made available on the world wide web. Site can be reached with the following address: <http://www.ca.blm.gov/GoldenQueen>.

The project area includes approximately 1,690 acres of which 1,219 acres are privately owned land and 471 acres are unpatented mining claims on public lands administered by the BLM. The proposed surface disturbance is 930 acres of which 735 acres are on private land and 195 acres are on public land.

A *Federal Register* notice was published on June 2, 1997 (Volume 62, Number 105) Page 29736 to announce the public meeting dates and comment period schedules.

Dated: July 25, 1997.

Lee Delaney,

Area Manager.

[FR Doc. 97-20139 Filed 7-30-97; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 1990-01-M

DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR

Bureau of Land Management

Soledad Mountain Project, CA

ACTION: Notice.

SUMMARY: Notice is hereby given that the Bureau of Land Management (BLM) and the County of Kern, State of California are extending the comment period for the Draft Environmental Impact Statement/Environmental Impact Report for the Soledad Mountain Project, a proposed gold mining operation on public and private lands in Kern County, California.

DATES: Comments on the Draft Environmental Impact Report/Environmental Impact Statement must

be postmarked no later than August 4, 1997.

ADDRESSES: Written comments should be addressed to Bureau of Land Management, Ridgecrest Resource Area, 300 S. Richmond Road, Ridgecrest, California, 93555, Attention: Ahmed Mohsen—EIS Coordinator.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Ahmed Mohsen—EIS Coordinator (760) 385-5421.

PUBLIC MEETINGS: Public meetings were held on: June 24 and June 25 at Rosamond and Mojave, California.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: The purpose of the Draft EIR/EIS is to present BLM and Kern County's comparative analysis of the impacts of the Proposed Action and Alternatives on the physical, biological, social and economic resources of the area. The Proposed Action is a mining proposal to extract minerals from the subsurface, process the ore using chemical leaching methods and place the waste rock adjacent to the processing and mining areas. Alternatives to the Proposed Action include variations on the duration of operations and placement of waste rock. After careful consideration of the impacts of the Proposed Action and all the alternatives, BLM has identified a Preferred Action in response to regulatory requirements, issued raised, resources present, impact analysis results and the effectiveness of mitigation and reclamation measures.

A public scoping process was initiated by the BLM and Kern County to identify issues and concerns relating to the proposed mining operation and assist the lead agencies in formulating alternatives to the Proposed Action. The scoping process was designed to provide an opportunity for receipt of verbal and written comments from the public, organizations and government agencies. This was achieved through two public meetings, newspaper publications, federal register notice and notice of preparation of an EIR/EIS. Project description, resource inventories and public meeting proceedings were made available on the world wide web. Site can be reached with the following address: <http://www.ca.blm.gov/GoldenQueen>.

The project area includes approximately 1,690 acres of which 1,219 acres are privately owned land and 471 acres are unpatented mining claims on public lands administered by the BLM. The proposed surface disturbance is 930 acres of which 735 acres are on private land and 195 acres are on public land.

Five alternatives to the Proposed Action are analyzed in detail: (1) No

Action, (2) Increased Mining and Processing Rate, (3) Decreased Mining and Processing Rate, (4) Reduced Project Size, and (5) Partial Backfilling.

Five alternatives to the Proposed Action are analyzed in detail: (1) No Action, (2) Increased Mining and Processing Rate, (3) Decreased Mining and Processing Rate, (4) Reduced Project Size, and (5) Partial Backfilling.

A *Federal Register* notice was published on June 2, 1997 (Volume 62, Number 105) Page 29736 to announce the public meeting dates and comment period schedules.

Lee Delaney,

Resource Area Manager.

[FR Doc. 97-20201 Filed 7-30-97; 8:45 am]

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DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR

Bureau of Land Management

[CA-010-1220-00]

Meeting of the Bakersfield Resource Advisory Council

AGENCY: Bureau of Land Management, Department of the Interior.

ACTION: Meeting of the Bakersfield Resource Advisory Council.

SUMMARY: Pursuant to the authorities in the Federal Advisory Committee Act (Public Law 92-463) and the Federal Land Policy and Management Act of 1976 (sec. 309), the Bureau of Land Management Resource Advisory Council for the Bakersfield District will meet in Bridgeport, California.

DATES: August 15-16, 1997.

ADDRESSES: Bridgeport Elementary School, 205 Kingsley Street.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: The 12 member Bakersfield Resource Advisory Council is appointed by the Secretary of the Interior to advise the Bureau of Land Management on public land issues. The Council will meet on Friday and Saturday, August 15-16, 1997, beginning at 8:00 a.m. both days. Agenda items include election of officers, a plan to set priorities for the expenditure of range improvement funds, an update on the proposal to trade federal oil leases for the Headwaters forest, a discussion of RS-2477 rights of way, reports on the role of fire in native plant and deer herd management, an update on the draft Environmental Impact Statement for the Healthy Rangelands initiative, and an update on the status of proposed recreation fees for BLM lands. There will be a field trip Friday afternoon to Bodie State Historic Park. A public

