



# BLM NEWS RELEASE

US DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR ■ BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT  
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## **BLM Seeks Public Input on Proposed HB Potash In-Situ Solution Mining Project**

**-Agency to Develop Environmental Impact Statement for Project-**

Carlsbad – The Bureau of Land Management has initiated a public scoping process to help identify issues involved with a proposal to construct and operate an in-situ solution mining project by HB Potash in Eddy County, New Mexico. A formal announcement opening the 30-day public comment period and initiating the preparation of an environmental impact statement (EIS) for the proposed project was published in the Federal Register on January 12, 2010.

HB Potash, LLC, (a subsidiary of Intrepid Potash, Inc.) is proposing to construct and operate an in-situ solution mining project that would involve the injection of saline water into previously mined, existing potash mine workings and extraction of a mineral-rich solution by pumping soluble deposits back to the surface. The solution would be piped to a solar evaporation pond system where the potassium-bearing salts would be precipitated. The salts would be harvested from the ponds and routed to a flotation plant for ore refinement. The proposed project area, including a flood zone of 4,330 acres of open mine workings, encompasses about 38,453 acres (60.08 square miles) of mostly federal land.

BLM initially began to prepare an environmental assessment (EA) for this project. During the public comment period and two public scoping meetings, held in September 2008, a high level of public interest in the project, as well as information about the project's potential impacts, was received. For this reason, BLM determined that an EIS would be required to analyze the potential environmental impacts of the proposed project. Other alternatives in addition to the proposed action, including a no action alternative, will be evaluated in the EIS in accordance with the National Environmental Policy Act. The BLM Carlsbad Field Office will serve as the lead agency for preparing the EIS.

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Two public scoping meetings have been scheduled on January 26, 2010 at the Pecos River Village Conference Center, 711 Muscatel Drive, Carlsbad, New Mexico. Project specialists will be available from 1PM – 4PM and again from 6PM – 9PM to provide information, and answer questions, about the proposed project. Written comments will be accepted during the meetings. These are the only public scoping meetings planned at this time.

Written comments on issues related to the HB Potash, LLC – “In-Situ” Solution Mine Project can also be submitted by any of the following methods:

- Email: james\_b\_smith@blm.gov
- Fax: 575-885-9264
- Mail: Bureau of Land Management, Carlsbad Field Office, Attention: James Smith, 620 E. Greene St., Carlsbad, NM 88220.

For additional details about the proposed project, please visit: <http://www.nm.blm.gov/cfo/HBIS>

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