

**Final  
Environmental Impact Statement  
HB In-Situ Solution Mine Project  
DOI-BLM-NM-P020-2011-498-EIS**

Lead Agency: U.S. Department of the Interior  
Bureau of Land Management  
Carlsbad Field Office

Cooperating Agencies: City of Carlsbad, New Mexico  
City of Eunice, New Mexico  
City of Hobbs, New Mexico  
Chaves County, New Mexico  
Lea County, New Mexico  
New Mexico Energy, Minerals and Natural Resources  
Department, Mining and Minerals Division  
New Mexico Environment Department  
U.S. Department of Energy

Project Location: Eddy County, New Mexico

Correspondence on this EIS  
Should be Directed to: HB In-Situ Solution Mine EIS Project Lead  
BLM Carlsbad Field Office  
620 East Greene Street  
Carlsbad, NM 88220  
(575) 234-5972  
Email: nmcfo\_comments@blm.gov

**ABSTRACT**

Intrepid Potash, Inc. (Intrepid) is proposing to extract the potash remaining in inactive underground mine workings by constructing and operating an in-situ solution mine project, located approximately 20 miles northeast of Carlsbad in Eddy County, New Mexico. Instead of excavating the remaining potash in the remaining underground pillars and walls of the inactive workings, the process would inject saline water into the inactive mine workings and extract a mineral-rich solution. This mineral-rich solution would be pumped to the surface and transported to evaporation ponds. Once the solution evaporates in the ponds, the potassium-bearing salts would be harvested from the ponds and transported to a newly constructed mill for ore refinement.

The BLM's Preferred Alternative would require approximately 1,331 acres of new surface disturbance, the installation surface and buried pipelines within 82 miles of new rights-of-way, construction and operation of 4 groundwater pumping wells and 14 monitoring wells, construction of an evaporation pond system and a new processing mill, and pumping of a maximum of 2,267 gallons per minute of groundwater from combined sources. The proposed project would operate for 28 years.

This Final Environmental Impact Statement analyzes the environmental effects of the Proposed Action, the Preferred Alternative, two action alternatives, and the No Action Alternative.

Responsible Official for the EIS: Jim Stovall, Field Manager  
Carlsbad Field Office