

State of New Mexico
Energy, Minerals and Natural Resources Department

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**Mining and Minerals Division Outlines Process To
Safeguard Mines in the Town of Silver City**

(Silver City, NM) – Silver City has an historic connection to the mining industry. The founding of the town occurred shortly after the discovery of silver ore in 1870. Many of the old abandoned mines around the area remain a potential danger to the public. Today, the New Mexico Abandoned Mine Land Program announces it is moving forward with a comprehensive plan to protect the public from the dangers of old Silver City area mines on Boston Hill.

The New Mexico Abandoned Mine Land Program, part of the New Mexico Energy, Minerals and Natural Resources Department's Mining and Minerals Division is conducting a planning effort to safeguard hazardous mine conditions. The Abandoned Mine Land Program has hired a "planning team" of planners, landscape architects, biologists and engineers to conduct an assessment of the environmental conditions of Boston Hill and to contact community members to determine the level of interest in safeguarding the Boston Hill Open Space. Safeguarding activities could include netting over open shafts, closures at mine openings to protect bats and other wildlife, and enhancement of recreational amenities with the aim to protect public safety and preserve historic resources.

The Abandoned Mine Land Program and the planning team are committed a public outreach process that reaches general agreement about a plan that may:

- 1.) reduce public safety hazards in the Boston Hill area;
- 2.) protect wildlife habitat associated with mine features;
- 3.) improve recreational amenities in the area; and,
- 4.) protect sensitive wildlife and plant species associated with historic mining areas.

The Abandoned Mine Land Program and its planning team is very interested in the community's, local residents' and other stakeholders' questions and input regarding the possibility of safeguarding work on Boston Hill, including how they use Boston Hill, how the open space benefits them and the community, and whether they have safety concerns or improvements to Boston Hill that they would suggest.

Those seeking to communicate concerns and suggestions, please contact Ken Romig, Associate at Dekker Perich Sabatini at 505.923.3598 or Sarah McGrath, AML Project Manager at 505.476.3408. Public comments will be considered before any formal plan is announced.

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It is estimated there are more than 15,000 mine hazards scattered throughout New Mexico that remain un-reclaimed. The New Mexico Abandoned Mine Land Program has closed more than 4,000 hazardous mine openings over the past 21 years and reclaimed numerous mine waste piles. Inactive or abandoned mine sites are extremely hazardous and potential visitors to these sites are advised to exercise extra caution when exploring these areas. The best safety practice to follow is to "Stay Out and Stay Alive."

For information regarding mine safeguarding and reclamation or the New Mexico Abandoned Mine Land Program, contact John A. Kretzmann, P.E., AML Program Manager, Mining and Minerals Division, (505) 476-3423 or John.Kretzmann@state.nm.us.

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