

**TITLE:** SCREENING PROCEDURE FOR INACTIVE AND ABANDONED MINE SITES

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**ABSTRACT:**

Inactive and abandoned hardrock mine (AML) sites pose a largely unknown threat to human health and the environment. Due to the provisions of the 1872 mining law, most of the sites are in the western U.S. and most are on or within federal lands. In order to cope with the large number of sites, estimated at over 500,000, in a timely and orderly fashion, federal agencies need an efficient and effective means to prioritize which sites to address first.

To that end, the Bureau conducted research to develop a screening procedure for AML sites. This research, which was one of four pilot studies evaluated by the BLM in designing its national AML strategy, used the BLM Winnemucca District, Nevada (1295 sites) as a test area. The procedure relies on data readily available in the literature and in state and federal agency files. Application of the procedure results in numeric ratings for mineral-commodity-related human health and environmental hazards for each site in a study area.

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