



United States Department of the Interior  
BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT  
Canyon Country District Office  
Moab Field Office  
82 East Dogwood  
Moab, Utah 84532  
(435) 259-2100



## **PUBLIC SCOPING LETTER**

### **Lisbon Valley Mining Company**

### **Copper Mine Plan of Operations Modification**

### **Environmental Impact Statement**

#### **INTRODUCTION**

The purpose of this letter is to notify you that the public scoping period under the *National Environmental Policy Act* (NEPA) for the Lisbon Valley Mining Company, Copper Mine Plan of Operations Modification Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) will begin Tuesday, May 28. The Bureau of Land Management (BLM) is the lead agency preparing the EIS and public involvement is an important part of this process. We ask for your input to help us determine the scope and issues to analyze in this EIS.

Please take the time to read the following information and let us know your concerns about the proposed action and the decisions to be made. We appreciate your contribution of time and effort and believe the information you share with us will lead to a better decision. Please submit your comments according to the procedures described at the end of this letter. The information will be used to help us prepare a draft EIS. The draft EIS itself will be subject to a separate public comment period.

The BLM will prepare the EIS to inform our decisions on the proposed Lisbon Valley Mining Company, Copper Mine Plan of Operations Modification (the Project) submitted by the Lisbon Valley Mining Company (LVMC). The Project would occur on BLM, State lands managed by the Trust Lands Administration (TLA), and private lands on unpatented mining claims and state of Utah mining leases. The Project is located in San Juan County, Utah, approximately 16 air miles southwest of La Sal, Utah (**Figure 1**). The EIS will evaluate the potential effects of the Project on natural resources and the human environment. Effects of the proposed action will be assessed along with that of the no action alternative. Other action alternatives to the proposed action may be considered.

LVMC currently operates the Lisbon Valley Copper Mine which was approved by the BLM in a 1997 Record of Decision (ROD). The Mine Plan boundary encompasses approximately 4,480 acres. Current operations include 1,146 acres of disturbance (BLM: 521 acres; State: 333 acres; Private: 292 acres). Current operations include open pit mining to extract copper-bearing ore. LVMC also conducts exploration activities within a 5,430-acre authorized boundary adjacent to the Mine Plan boundary under and Exploration Plan of Operations. Federal, state, and private lands also occur within the Exploration Plan boundary.

In April 2023, LVMC submitted a modification to their existing Mine Plan of Operations to expand the Project by approximately 5,430 acres into Exploration Plan boundary, which the BLM will analyze under NEPA. The proposed expansion activities would disturb an additional 2,391 acres (BLM: 1,388 acres; State: 412 acres; Private: 591 acres) through the installation of an open pit, waste dumps, access roads, well fields, power lines, pipeline corridors, heap leach facilities, and ancillary supporting facilities while implementing environmental protection measures and reclamation. LVMC would initiate additional copper recovery by adding an in-situ recovery (ISR) process which includes injection wells, pump-back wells and monitoring wells. All beneficiation

following the initial leaching and solution removed from the ISR would be performed in LVMC's existing solvent extraction and electrowinning (SX/EW) process facilities and buildings.

The BLM is the lead agency for the preparation of the EIS. The United States Environmental Protection Agency (EPA); the Utah Public Lands Policy Coordination Office; the TLA; the Utah Department of Environmental Quality, Division of Air Quality; the Utah Division of Oil, Gas, and Mining; Utah Division of Water Quality; and San Juan County will be cooperating agencies on the Project.

## **PURPOSE AND NEED**

The BLM's purpose and need is to respond to LVMC's Mine Plan of Operations Modification to expand mining operations and associated infrastructure and to prevent unnecessary and undue degradation of the public lands consistent with the BLM's responsibilities under FLPMA, as amended, Surface Management regulations (43 CFR Subpart 3809), and Use and Occupancy regulations (43 CFR Subpart 3715).

## **PROPOSED ACTION**

The proposed action is to modify the Mine Plan to expand open pit mining and beneficiation operations, and to initiate the extraction of copper through a method of in-situ recovery (ISR) mining (**Figure 2**). The proposed expansion activities would include improvement of existing mining facilities in the Mine Plan boundary and construction of new facilities, and associated access, power, and water in the Exploration Plan boundary. Under the proposed action there would be approximately 2,391 acres of total surface disturbance, including 1,388 acres of BLM-managed lands, 412 acres of State land, and 591 acres of private land. A total of approximately 2,058 acres proposed for disturbance would undergo reclamation within the first three years following completion of the proposed construction. The proposed long-term disturbance from implementation of the modification is approximately 334 acres, which would exist for the life of the mine, predicted by the LVMC to be 20 years, and through final reclamation and post-closure monitoring until 2066.

The Mine Plan Modification would include the following components:

- Open pit (72 acres)
- Backfill area (363 acres)
- ISR Wellfield (injection wells, pump-back wells, monitor wells) (188 acres)
- Waste rock storage (55 acres)
- Storm water diversion channels, sediment basins, and berms (85 acres)
- Heap leach pad (244 acres)
- Process ponds (24 acres)
- Solution pipelines (17 acres)
- Access roads (144 acres)
- Ancillary facilities (power supply; reagent, fuel, ready line; crushing area and related stockpiles; area for temporary storage of petroleum-contaminated soils; groundwater monitoring wells; water supply pipeline and facilities; and construction laydown yards) (185 acres).

The total proposed disturbance also includes improvements made to the existing mining and processing facilities and their associated roads in the Mine Plan boundary to accommodate the increase in copper production and personnel on site. Ongoing mining activity would continue in the existing Mine Plan boundary as LVMC constructs the proposed new facilities which are expected to be completed within three years.

The installation of ISR wellfields would occur in conjunction with open pit mining operations. ISR activities would include the construction of access roads and approximately 1,700 well pads for injection, production, and/or monitoring that would each be 50 feet by 50 feet in size and spaced approximately 125-200 feet apart. LVMC would install the first injection and production wells in a pilot test for the ISR in an existing pit area. The pilot test at the existing pit area would last approximately one year. At the end of the pilot test, the data derived

would be used to fine-tune the installation of the ISR wellfield that would be adjacent to the new open pit. ISR mining would occur for the life of the mine until final reclamation.

In accordance with 40 CFR 1502.14(e), the BLM will develop alternatives to the proposed action in response to resource concerns and public scoping input. Resource concerns likely to influence alternatives development include water and waste management (e.g., waste rock and tailings). One preliminary alternative identified at this stage is the proposed action without ISR mining. The BLM welcomes comments on all preliminary alternatives as well as suggestions for additional alternatives.

## EIS SCHEDULE

The tentative schedule is to release a draft EIS for public comment in early 2025 and publish a final EIS in winter 2025, followed by the ROD. This schedule is subject to change.

## PUBLIC MEETING

The BLM has arranged two public scoping meetings that you are invited to attend: one in person in Moab, Utah on **Wednesday, June 12, 2024, 6-8 pm MST** and a virtual meeting **Thursday, June 13, 2024, 6-7:30 pm MST**. The meeting in Moab, Utah will be held at the Moab Field Office at 82 East Dogwood Avenue. BLM and LVMC representatives will be in attendance to provide information about the project and EIS process and answer any questions you have.

You can register to attend the virtual meeting at:

[https://zoom.us/webinar/register/WN\\_aF4NUR\\_IRxKWkODK1qmGvA](https://zoom.us/webinar/register/WN_aF4NUR_IRxKWkODK1qmGvA), or you can go to zoom.us, click Join and enter Webinar ID: 969 6336 3294. BLM and LVMC representatives will provide a presentation about the Project and the EIS process and answer any questions you have.

## HOW TO COMMENT

The BLM is seeking input and written comments from Federal, State, Tribal, and local agencies; as well as individuals and organizations who may be interested in, or affected by, the Project. To assist the agencies in identifying and considering issues and concerns related to the Project, comments should be as specific as possible. The most helpful comments are directly relevant to the proposal and Project area. Only those who provide comment or otherwise express interest in the proposed action either during scoping or other designated opportunity for public comment will be eligible as objectors (36 CFR 218.5).

Comments must be received or postmarked on or before June 27, 2024. Comments received outside established public involvement timeframes will not be rejected; however, these comments may be considered secondary to comments received in a timely manner and may only be assessed to determine if they identify concerns that would substantially alter the assumptions, proposal, design, or analysis presented in the EIS.

Written, hand-delivered, and electronic comments will be accepted. Please reference “Lisbon Valley Copper Mine Plan of Operations Modification EIS” on all correspondence and identify whether you are submitting comments as an individual or as the designated spokesperson on behalf of an organization. Issues determined to be outside the scope of the proposal will not be addressed in the EIS.

Comments can be submitted by one of the following methods:

- on the BLM Land Use Planning and NEPA Register website at <https://eplanning.blm.gov/eplanning-ui/project/2027164/510>;
- by mail sent to Bureau of Land Management Moab Field Office, Lisbon Valley Mine Plan Modification EIS, 82 E Dogwood, Moab, Utah 84532; or
- hand-delivered to the BLM Moab Field Office at the address below.

Please note *Attention: Lisbon Valley Copper Mine Plan of Operations Modification EIS* on all documents. More information, including scoping information, will be posted on the internet at <https://eplanning.blm.gov/eplanning-ui/project/2027164/510>

For further information contact:

Jill Stephenson, Project Lead  
Bureau of Land Management  
Moab Field Office  
82 East Dogwood  
Moab, Utah 84532  
Phone: (435) 259-2100  
Email: [BLM\\_UT\\_MB\\_LVMC\\_EIS@blm.gov](mailto:BLM_UT_MB_LVMC_EIS@blm.gov)

Those who provide comments are advised that before including their address, phone number, e-mail address, or other personal identifying information, they should be aware that the entire comment, including personal identifying information, may be made publicly available at anytime. While those commenting can ask in their comments to have their personal identifying information withheld from public review, the BLM cannot guarantee that they will be able to do so.

Sincerely,

**DAVID PALS**

Digitally signed by DAVID PALS  
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Dave Pals  
Field Manager  
BLM Moab Field Office

Enclosures:    Figure 1—Project Location  
                  Figure 2—Proposed Action

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 Revised: 2024-05-17 By: aaeates

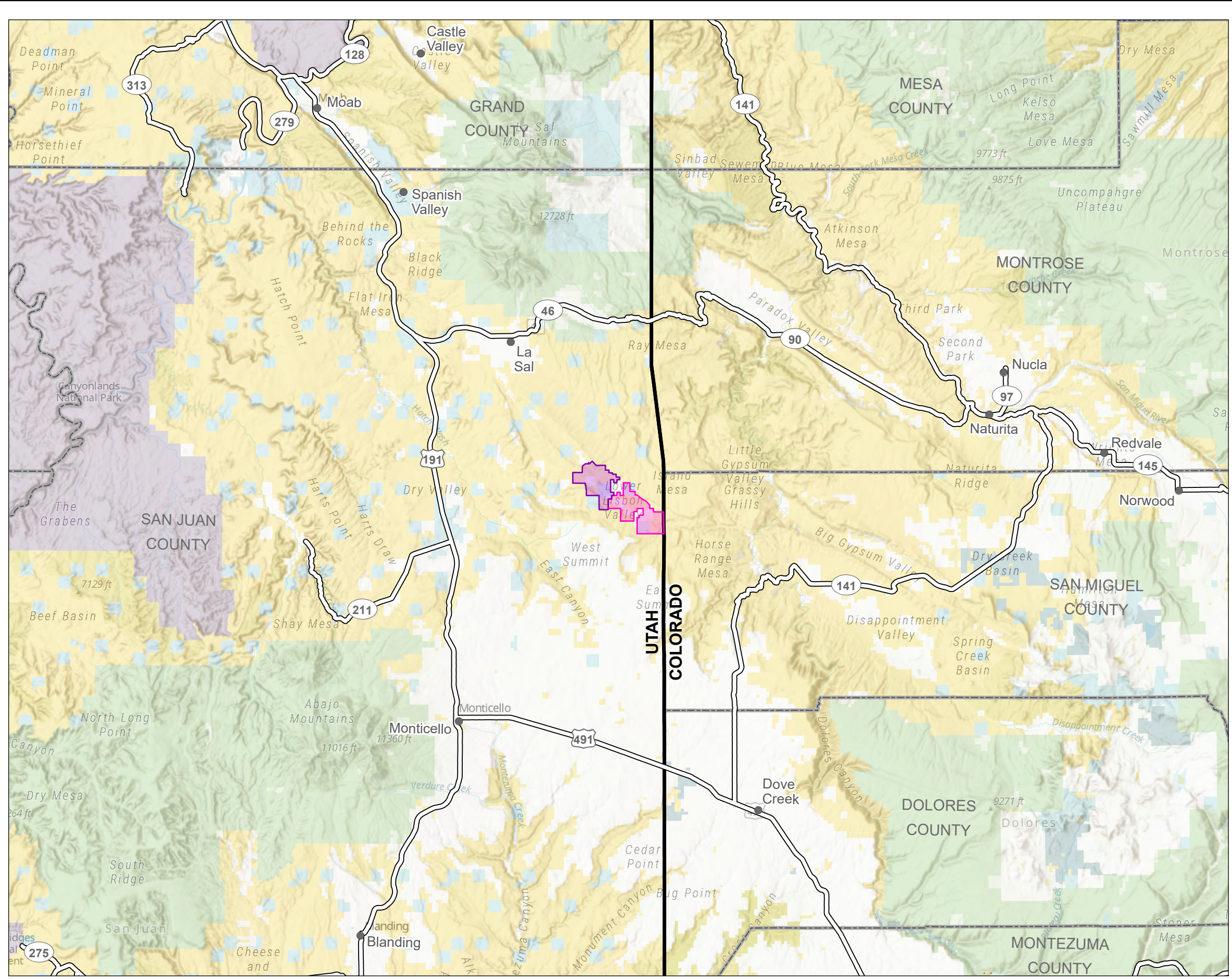


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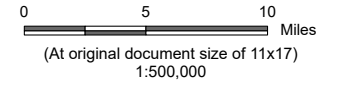
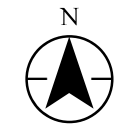
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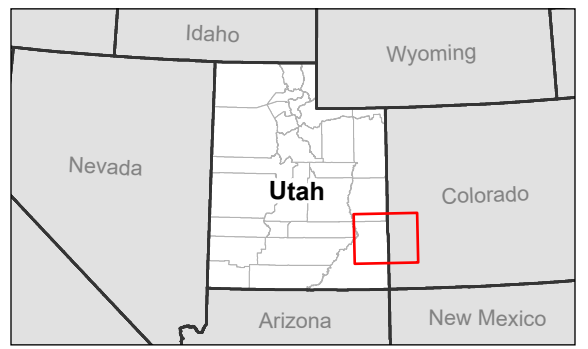
**Lisbon Valley Mining Company (LVMC)  
Copper Mine Plan of Operations Modification -  
Proposed Action**

Project Location

San Juan Co., Utah



- LLV Plan Boundary
- LVMC Active Project Boundary
- City/Town of Interest
- Road or Highway**
- U.S. or State Highway
- State Boundary
- County Boundary
- Jurisdiction (SMA)**
- Bureau of Land Management
- Bureau of Reclamation
- Department of Energy
- Forest Service
- Local
- National Park Service
- Private
- State
- Other Federal Agencies



- Notes**
1. Coordinate System: NAD 1983 UTM Zone 12N
  2. Data Sources: Lisbon Valley Mining Co., BLM, Esri, US Census
  3. Background: Esri World Topographic Map; Esri World Terrain

Figure No.

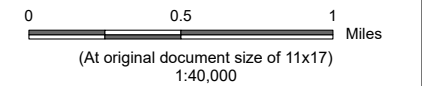
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**Lisbon Valley Mining Company (LVMC)  
Copper Mine Plan of Operations Modification -  
Proposed Action**

Project Location

San Juan Co., Utah



- LLV Plan Boundary
- LVMC Active Project Boundary

**Proposed Action**

- Surface Drainage
- Storm Event Ponds
- Wellfield Roads
- Cattle Guard
- Conveyor
- Solution Pipeline
- Light Vehicle Access
- Natural Gas Line Re-route
- Mine Haul Roads
- Road Berms & Fill
- Waste Rock Storage
- Mine Pit Areas
- In-Pit Backfilling
- Heap Leach Pads
- Process Area
- Process Ponds
- Admin Area
- Crusher Yard
- Laydown Yard
- Equipment Lineup & Truckshop
- Growth Media Stockpiles
- LP Capping Borrow Material

**Road or Highway**

- Secondary State or County Highway
- Local, Neighborhood, Rural or City Street

**State Boundary**

- State Boundary

**Public Land Survey System**

- Township Boundary
- Section Boundary

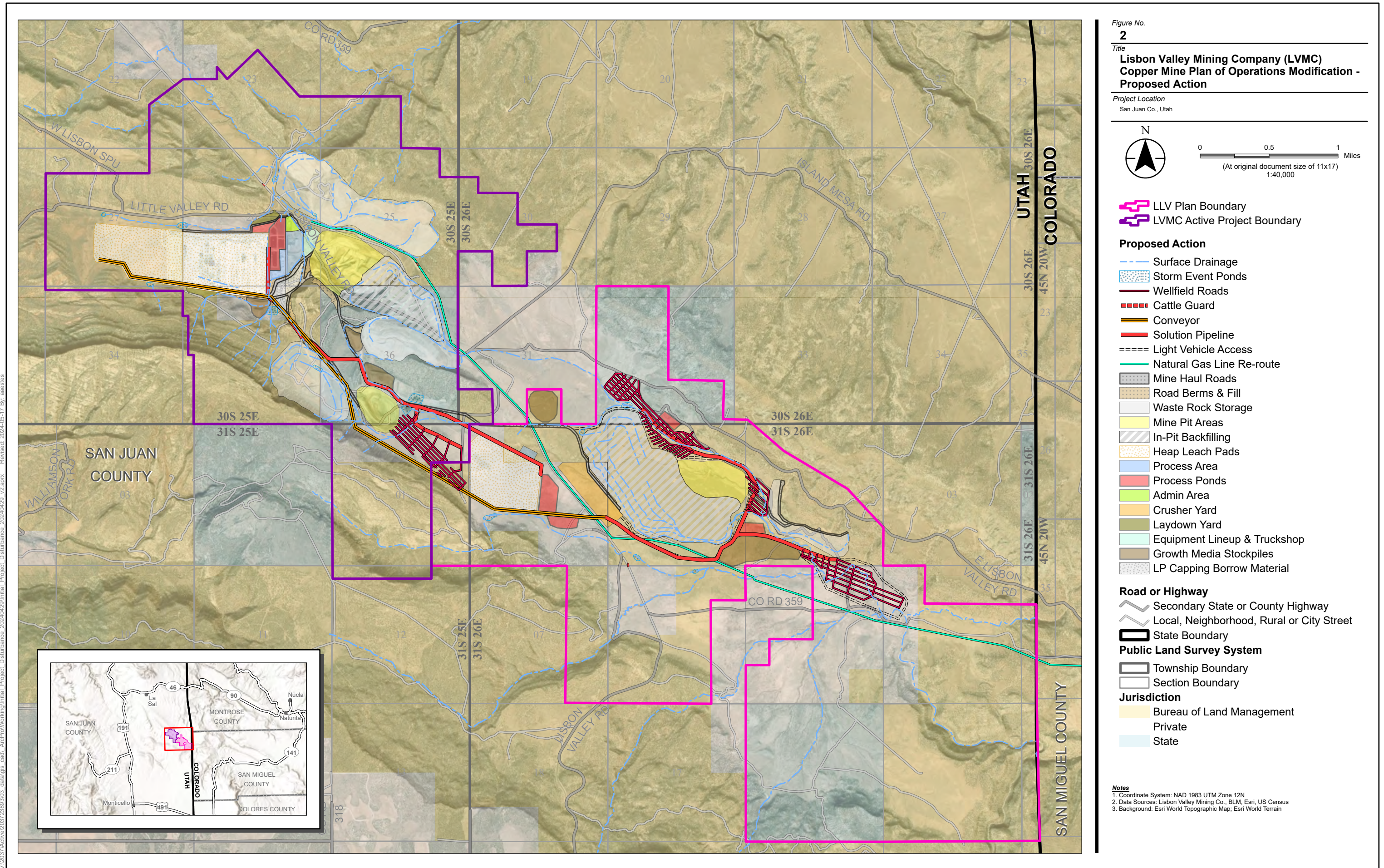
**Jurisdiction**

- Bureau of Land Management
- Private
- State

**Notes**

1. Coordinate System: NAD 1983 UTM Zone 12N
2. Data Sources: Lisbon Valley Mining Co., BLM, Esri, US Census
3. Background: Esri World Topographic Map; Esri World Terrain

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