

Mining Weekly
Rhyolite Ridge plans approved
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The Bureau of Land Management (BLM) has approved ASX-listed Ioneer's plan of operations for its Rhyolite Ridge lithium/boron project, in Nevada.

The plan of operations is the foundational permitting document and will become the basis for compliance during operations and closure.

"Completion and acceptance of the plan of operations represents a major milestone towards developing the Rhyolite Ridge lithium/boron project. It is the culmination of over two years of dedicated work by Ioneer and our team of consultants," said MD Bernard Rowe on Monday.

"Ioneer's mission is to become a responsible and profitable producer of the materials necessary for a sustainable future. Our project is the only lithium/boron project in North America and one of only two known such deposits in the world.

"It sits at the very bottom of the global cost curve, and has been engineered to ensure a predictable, sustainable and low-cost source of lithium in the US, a key component for batteries fuelling the electric vehicle revolution. In delivering this world-class project, Ioneer will also make a significant positive impact on the economy in the state of Nevada through the creation of 400 to 500 construction jobs and 200 to 300 high paying operating jobs."

Ioneer is hoping to be construction ready by the second quarter of 2021.

A definitive feasibility study into the Rhyolite Ridge project estimated that it would require a capital investment of \$785-million to produce 20 600 t/y of lithium carbonate, converting in the fourth year of operation to 22 000 t/y of battery grade lithium hydroxide and 174 000 t/y of boric acid, over a mine life of 26 years.