

Near Santa Luz we have purchased and now protect compensatory land in the Caatinga region, the only exclusively Brazilian biome; a large part of its biological heritage cannot be found anywhere else in the world. We have also protected habitat near Castle Mountain for the desert tortoise.

In adherence to our Environment and Climate Change Policy, we seek partnerships with local communities, NGOs, government and academia to achieve positive biodiversity outcomes. At Castle Mountain, for example, we have partnered with local communities and NGOs to protect local bighorn sheep and golden eagles. At Mercedes, our efforts have focused on the protection of important bat species.

2021 Performance

At Castle Mountain, we partnered with the Californian Big Horn Sheep Conservation Society to install watering points for big horn sheep within our mining lease. The Castle Mountain team also established a partnership with the town of Searchlight in Nevada to transplant Joshua trees into their community. This initiative expands beyond regulatory requirements to salvage the species from mine lands, while enhancing community green spaces with the Joshua tree, which has become an iconic symbol of the American desert.



Conserving Wildlife in California

The Desert Bighorn Sheep Wildlife Project is a partnership with species experts such as the Society for the Conservation of Bighorn Sheep (SCBS) that work in the area near our Castle Mountain Mine in California, USA. From the arid desert of the Mojave to the snowy heights of the Sierra Mountains, California is home to many distinct populations of bighorn sheep.

In 2021, Castle Mountain's employees and about 30 SCBS volunteers installed a new wildlife guzzler system at the mine site – an artificially created water source that allows the animals to find consistent freshwater in the otherwise arid region. The Desert Bighorn Sheep rely on these guzzlers, particularly during drought years.

Castle Mountain is also conducting golden eagle surveys as part of our baseline environmental studies. The golden eagle is a protected species that requires careful monitoring and management. In 2021, we partnered with experts from the American Eagle Research Institute, which outfits the eagles with GPS devices that can track the eagles' movements for up to three years, allowing more detailed monitoring of their behaviour.

We also mitigate any potential impacts to the threatened desert tortoise at both our Castle Mountain and Mesquite mines. We ensure that all of our operational areas are fully fenced with 'tortoise-proof' mesh and enforce stringent speed limits on access roads to reduce risk from vehicles. Our site employees are trained to identify and report tortoises found onsite and trained biologists are employed to identify tortoise dens, so the tortoises can be relocated to suitable habitat outside the mine boundaries.

