



INSPECTION REPORT: GREENS CREEK MINE

Tongass National Forest Minerals Group
8510 Mendenhall Loop Rd
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Date Of Inspection: Tuesday, May 14, 2013
USDA FS Inspector: Jessica Lopez Pearce
Ranger Districts: Admiralty National Monument
Juneau Ranger District
Weather Conditions: cloudy, light rain, temps in the 40s

1. Exploration in accordance with operating plan	Not Applicable
2. Timber removal following timber sale contract	Not Applicable
3. BMPs for erosion control	OK
4. Water Quality BMPs	OK
5. Public safety & fire prevention	OK
6. Reclamation work adequate and timely	OK
7. Roads maintenance is adequate and current	OK
8. Tails placement in accordance with plan	OK
9. Waste Rock placement in compliance	OK
10. Company supervision of operation	OK
11. Operating in a clean and orderly manner	OK

Any conditions noted as UNSATISFACTORY will require follow up action by the Mine Inspector and a written memorandum to the operator, outlining the necessary work.

NEW REMARKS

Mitch Brooks (HGCMC) accompanied Jessica Lopez Pearce (USFS, Tongass Mineral Group) and Shane King (USFS, Juneau RD/Admiralty NM Special Uses) on an inspection of the Greens Creek Mine. The site visit included stops at Youngs Bay, the Intertie Station, Pit 7, the Tailings Disposal Facility, 0.9-Mile B-Road Pit, Site 23, the 920 Area, and Site E.

YOUNGS BAY FERRY DOCK

Participants began the inspection with a drive down the A-Road to the Youngs Bay Ferry Dock. The extension cords from the generator to the shuttle bus' block heaters have been removed for the season. Also, a bear spray canister station has been installed for those employees who disembark the Crew Ferry and walk up the A-Road to the Shale Pit. Good housekeeping practices are in place at this site.

INTERTIE STATION

Shane King performed a Special Use Permit inspection of this facility.

PIT 7

Pit 7 is a storage site for waste rock, topsoil and organic material, and explosives. There is no evidence of invasive thistle at this point in the growing season at Pit 7. Salamanders were observed swimming in the shallow ponds at the site.

Since Spring break-up, the roads had become muddy and potholed. The A-Road was graded during the night of May 9 and was much improved since the last visit. The B-Road was graded on May 7. At the time of our visit, the ditches and culverts were being cleared (Photos 1a and 1b). Hydroseeding of the roadsides is planned to occur soon.





TAILINGS DISPOSAL FACILITY

Tailings placement was occurring near the far northern point of the TDF during this inspection. Photos were taken at all of the three tracking points established in February 2013: the northern high point looking south (Photo 2), directly adjacent to the water treatment plant, looking northeast (Photo 3), and from milepost 1 on the B-Road looking west (Photo 4).

A second large portable windscreen has been fabricated and installed in the TDF. The two windscreens were placed south of the active tailings placement with an east-west orientation (Photo 5). The most recent pail test collection occurred on May 2. HGCMC is awaiting the lab results from these samples.

A Special Use Permit inspection of Pond 7 was also performed by Shane King.

0.9-MILE B-ROAD PIT

A brief stop was made at this site for a Special Use Permit inspection by Shane King.

SITE 23

The removal of the central pile of Class 2/3 waste rock continues within Site 23. This material is being relocated underground. Meanwhile, the Class 1 waste rock pile continues to grow (Photo 6). This pile of material was adequately signed. Another small pile of Class 2/3 waste rock is located on the eastern side of the site. It was missing signage.

Mitch had recently performed field work at this site to extend the wiring on the existing thermistors, vibrating wire, suction lysimeters, and gas tubes in preparation for a remote sampling station.

920 AREA

The visit to the 920 Area included a stop at the Warehouse, the Portal, Pond A, and a walk around the Mill and Administration buildings.

The warehouse area contained multiple secondary containment issues. Several shipping containers stored flocculants, cleaning products, and petroleum products without secondary containment (Photos 7a, 7b, 7c, 7d). This is a recurring issue from past inspections. According to Chris Wallace, HGCMC is costing out the price of installing three shipping containers with built-in secondary containment for this location. Also evident at the warehouse was the inappropriate placement of a snow push pile. The gravel left over after the snow melted indicated that the pile had been pushed too far and sediment from the pile was draining into a lined ditch that ends in Greens Creek (Photo 8).

The Portal area contained piles of gravel that will be used for underground road maintenance imminently. Also to occur soon is additional work on the concrete pads at the Portal and maintenance/reconstruction on the Greens Creek Bridge. The access up to the 1350 level was still covered with snow. Several backfill trucks were observed entering the portal with loads of tailings that appeared excessively high (Photo 9). These tall loads of tailings create a greater opportunity for tailings spills onto the road surface. As discussed with HGCMC employees on previous occasions, new employee training is key to reducing the incidence of overloaded backfill trucks.

Pond A appeared to contain additional sediment and debris since my last visit to the site (Photo 10). Maintenance activities began on May 20 to remove sediment buildup in Pond A.



SITE E

Shane King performed a Special Use Permit inspection at this location. Site E was completely free of snow. The caisson at the entrance gate appeared to be extremely full (Photo 11). Pond E also appeared to be near capacity. After my visit, Mitch followed up and reported that the Site E caisson and the Site E pond were pumped to Pond 7 for treatment on May 21.

PHOTOS

(High-resolution version of all images available upon request)



(1a. B-Road before ditch cleaning)



(1b. B-Road after ditch cleaning)

Photos 1a and 1b. Ditch cleaning along the B-Road.



Photo 2. Tailings Disposal Facility taken from the northern photopoint.



Photo 3. Tailings Disposal Facility taken from the Water Treatment Plant photopoint.



Photo 4. Tailings Disposal Facility taken from the eastern photopoint.



Photo 5. Two large portable windscreens at the TDF.



Photo 6. The Class 1 waste rock pile and one of the two Class 2/3 waste rock piles were adequately signed.



Photos 7a, 7b, 7c, 7d. Multiple secondary containment issues at the 920 Warehouse.



Photo 8. After the snow melted, there is remaining evidence that the snow push pile was inappropriately placed.



Photo 9. Overfilled backfill truck at the 920 Portal.



Photo 10. Pond A held a large volume of sediment.



Photo 11. The caisson at Site E was extremely full of water. It has subsequently been pumped to Pond 7 for treatment.

Thank you very much to HGCMC for a thorough and enjoyable visit.

/s/ Jessica Lopez Pearce, Minerals Administrator