



## Gold Hill Fire Protection District

1011 Main – Gold Hill EIN 841110317  
Boulder, CO 80302

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Colorado Division of Reclamation, Mining and Safety (DRMS)

On behalf of the Gold Hill Fire Protection District, I must raise the following list of concerns about the proposed Gold Hill Mill Conversion project.

First, the proposed Gold Hill Mill Conversion project creates a “hazmat” situation for which our department is not equipped to respond to. We must learn what steps will be taken to respond to chemical spills both inside the mill and outside, particularly the tailings ponds. The transportation of chemicals to and from the proposed mill presents additional concerns. Should a chemical container be dropped or compromised en route to the mill, a spill on our roads or near water sources would trigger a hazardous spill emergency. A timely response would be difficult due to availability, and Tech level HAZMAT response would be coming from Boulder. The response time could be more than one hour.

Second, the Fire Protection District will need to be ensured that all appropriate signage is installed. We will need to know have full access to MSDS documents and be made aware of any and all hazards present on the site as well as safety measures in place to avoid accidents on the site.

Third. The transportation routes of tailings to and from the mill site must be reviewed to identify potential conflicts with motorist, cyclists and pedestrians. The roads to and from Gold Hill have become extremely popular tourist routes for bikers and outdoor recreationalists. Appropriate signage and lighting may be required. Additionally, the dirt roads surrounding the community are already overused with the increase in population and tourism in the area. Upkeep of the roads is already difficult to maintain, and sudden new usage of heavy equipment and dump trucks will certainly degrade the roads further. Without proper dust abatement and increased maintenance of the roads the project will severely impact residents ability to safely use the roads.

Fourth, the potential groundwater contamination from the proposed mill must be studied in detail. Most Gold Hill residents rely on water wells and septic systems. Given the historical mining activities in the area, contaminated water could flow into neighboring wells and septic systems. Draining and emergency protocols must be developed to the satisfaction of the Fire Protect District.

Fifth, the Fire Protection District installed three “dry hydrants” in Lefthand Creek. These hydrants are a critical source of water that might be used to combat fires, both structural and forest fires. If the water levels are lowered it could adversely impact the ability of the firefighters to combat and contain a fire. The monitoring of Lefthand Creek is essential. Water sources in Gold Hill are less than our current anticipated needs. If this project were to move forward it would put Gold Hill in undue duress to accommodate the water needs should a wildland incident occur from the project.

Lastly, as mentioned before, tourism has greatly increased in the Gold Hill mountain corridor over the past decade. Cyclists, runners, hikers and outdoor enthusiasts come to Gold Hill and the surrounding area to recreate and take in the beauty of a historic Colorado town. Additionally, our residents moved to the community with these factors in mind and rely on safe and timely transport on our roadways which could be severely impacted by the project.

These are some of our initial concerns and we look forward to receiving additional information. The Fire Protection District reserves the right to add additional concerns and comments once more information is made available.

With regards. The Gold Hill Fire Protection District