

STATE OF
COLORADOGagnon - DNR, Nikie <nikie.gagnon@state.co.us>

Re: Hukill Gulch Mill Discharge Permit

1 message

Mortazavi - CDPHE, Emily <emily.mortazavi@state.co.us>
To: "Gagnon - DNR, Nikie" <nikie.gagnon@state.co.us>

Tue, Apr 1, 2025 at 12:04 PM

Yes, evaporation is acceptable.

No problem! Feel free to reach out anytime with questions.

Best,
Emily

On Tue, Apr 1, 2025 at 11:53 AM Gagnon - DNR, Nikie <nikie.gagnon@state.co.us> wrote:

Thank you for getting back to me on this. I spoke to the operator. The water in the impoundment is a combination of the residual process water from the initial testing of the mill, and snow and rain falling into the impoundment since 2018. They've just been letting it evaporate. that acceptable since they cannot discharge it?

I appreciate you helping me understand the requirements for these mining operations. Feel free to call me if you'd like to discuss this further over the phone 720-527-1640.

Kind regards,

Nikie Gagnon

On Tue, Apr 1, 2025 at 9:07 AM Mortazavi - CDPHE, Emily <emily.mortazavi@state.co.us> wrote:

Hi Nikie,

I am speak to your questions about the permit. For compliance, you will have to check [ECHO](#) about that or you can contact Andrea Nestler (andrea.nestler@state.co.us) of our enforcement team .

When you say that they did some early test runs with a small amount of material several years ago. Did any of that process water circulate into the tailings pond? The COR040302 certification only covers stormwater. If any amount of the process water entered the tailings pond then it would be considered process water, even if it was years ago, and discharge from the tailings pond would not be covered by the COR040302 certification.

If the test milling was isolated from the tailings pond then yes the pond could be dewatered through the outfall in the certification. Please note there are monitoring requirements for discharges that they would have to test for.

Please let me know if you have any further questions.

Best,
Emily

On Mon, Mar 31, 2025 at 1:31 PM Scott - CDPHE, Erin <erin.scott@state.co.us> wrote:

Erin Scott
Unit Manager
Industrial & Natural Resource Extraction Permitting Unit - Permits Section
P 303.692.3506
erin.scott@state.co.us
www.colorado.gov/cdphe/wqcd
24-hr Environmental Release/Incident Report Line: 1.877.518.5608

----- Forwarded message -----

From: **Gagnon - DNR, Nikie** <nikie.gagnon@state.co.us>

Date: Mon, Mar 31, 2025 at 1:17 PM
Subject: Hukill Gulch Mill Discharge Permit
To: Erin Scott - CDPHE <erin.scott@state.co.us>

Hi Erin.

I left a voicemail for you, but I thought I'd follow up with an email and provide a bit of background on the site I'm calling about.

The mine site is the Hukill Gulch Mill in Clear Creek County. DRMS permit No. M2009076. The stormwater discharge permit is COR040302.

This operation is permitted to mill historic tailings. A lined tailings impoundment structure was constructed to hold the waste from the milling process. There's a concrete dam at the base. During milling, water would be recycled and reused for the milling process. However, this site has never been in production. They did some early test runs with a small amount of material several years ago, but nothing has been milled since 2018.

Stormwater is collecting in the tailings impoundment. The impoundment is not holding any mill waste, just water. The attached photo shows that there was a few feet of water in the facility in September 2024 (see attached photo).

The facility has stormwater diversion channels around the impoundment and a stormwater sedimentation pond below the tailings structure, which is typically dry.

My question for you is related to the water in the impoundment. Should the operator pump out the stormwater, since at this point, the water is likely rain/snow and not production water since the mill is not operating? Are they currently in compliance with CDPHE?

Feel free to give me a call to discuss this site whenever it's convenient for you. I believe we spoke once before about the Bennett Pit in Adams County.

Kind regards,

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Nikie Gagnon
Environmental Protection Specialist



COLORADO
Division of Reclamation,
Mining and Safety
Department of Natural Resources

Cell: 720.527.1640

Physical: [1313 Sherman Street, Room 215, Denver, CO 80203](#)

Address for FedEx, UPS, or hand delivery:

DRMS Room 215, [1001 E 62nd Ave, Denver, CO 80216](#)

nikie.gagnon@state.co.us | <https://www.drms.colorado.gov>