

INFORMATION SHEET

ORDER NO. R5-2007-XXXX
RICHARD SYKORA AND USDA, FOREST SERVICE
RED INK MAID AND BIG SEAM MINE
PLACER COUNTY

On 27 June 2006, Richard Sykora submitted a Report of Waste Discharge (RWD) for an existing underground lode gold mine. The property where the Red Ink Maid and Big Seam Mine is located is owned by the United States Government and administered by the United States Department of Agriculture, Forest Service (Forest Service). Richard Sykora is the mine claimant and operator and therefore has primary responsibility for compliance with these waste discharge requirements (WDRs), including day-to-day operations, monitoring, and reclamation. The Forest Service is the administrator of the federal land where the discharge occurs, and is ultimately responsible for ensuring compliance with these WDRs and therefore is also named as a Discharger. For the purposes of these WDRs, unless otherwise noted, the term "Discharger" refers to Richard Sykora.

The Discharger has operated the Red Ink Maid and Big Seam Mine for the past 20 years. The two 20-acre mining claims that make up the mine property drain to Mad Canyon, tributary to the Middle Fork of the American River. Gold mineralization occurs within veins in the country rock. The mine consists of approximately 1.75-miles of underground mine workings. Waste-rock inside the mine is loaded and transported out of the underground workings with a underground load-haul-dump vehicle and side cast onto the waste dumps. Ore bearing material will be hand sorted and transported off site. No milling or processing takes place on the surface of these claims.

WASTE DUMPS

There are four existing waste dumps on the site, and a fifth proposed waste dump area. Waste dumps #1-4 have slopes ranging from 55-75%. Lack of capacity and stability issues restrict further placement of waste on waste dumps #1-4. Reclamation of waste dumps #1-4 will help to control erosion, reduce infiltration, and provide for increased slope stability. The proposed waste dump area #5 contains slopes that range between 20-55%. Placement of waste rock in waste dump #5 following the recommendations of the Discharger's consultant is critical to the stability of waste dump #5.

WASTE CHARACTERIZATION

Analysis of existing mining waste from the site indicates that the waste material is not acid generating and is classified as a Group C mining waste. Based on waste characterization, the discharge of waste rock from the site should not pose a significant threat to water quality, other than turbidity.

BACKGROUND

The Discharger's consultant, the Department of Conservation, and Regional Water Board staff have all identified that reclamation of waste dumps #1-4 is necessary to control erosion, reduce infiltration, and provide for increased slope stability. Although the Discharger's reclamation plan extends final reclamation of these waste dumps to 2015, this Order requires completion of reclamation activities by 30 October 2009 to reduce the threat to water quality caused by slope

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failure of the waste dumps. Reclamation measures such as hydroseeding or hydromulching that establish self-sustaining plant cover to control erosion, reduce infiltration, and provide for increased slope stability are required. This schedule allows two full years to complete reclamation of waste dumps #1-4, totaling approximately two acres.

Because the mine waste has been classified as a Group C waste, this Order contains provisions for a Monitoring and Reporting Program (MRP) that implements provisions found in Water Quality Order No. 97-03-DWQ (General Industrial Permit) Discharges of Storm Water Associated with Industrial Activities in place of a surface water monitoring plan. The MRP represents an engineered alternative to the prescriptive standards required for a mining unit under Title 27. This MRP is intended to eliminate unnecessary monitoring costs, while ensuring that the monitoring program meets the requirements of Title 27.

This Order does not include a groundwater monitoring plan because groundwater beneath the site appears to be limited, fully saturated zones are not present in the soils or other geologic formations, and no groundwater or significant seepage is encountered in the mine. For these reasons, groundwater monitoring is not feasible or practical.

The Discharger has a mining and reclamation plan and related financial assurance approved by Placer County, the lead agency for the project to pay for the costs of closure and post closure maintenance. These WDRs incorporate by reference the Discharger's mining and reclamation plan and approved financial assurance in place of Title 27 Closure and Post-Closure Maintenance Plan and Closure and Post-Closure Financial Assurances. Because the Forest Service, the Department of Conservation, and Placer County are all named on the Discharger's existing financial assurance, the Discharger has requested that the Regional Water Board waive the requirement that adds the Regional Water Board as an alternate payee to the existing financial assurance citing additional costs associated with adding the Regional Water Board to the financial assurance. These WDRs waive that requirement.