STATE OF ALASKA

DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENTAL CONSERVATION

DIVISION OF WATER

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FIELD INSPECTION REPORT
HECLA GREENS CREEK MINING COMPANY

Inspection Date: September 23, 2009
Report Date: September 29, 2009

Weather: Rain; temperature mid 50's.

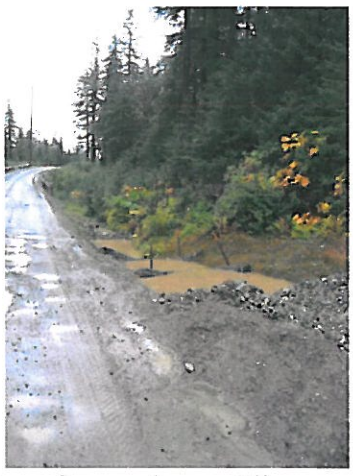
HGCMC Personnel: Jennifer Saran, Environmental Affairs Manager

State Personnel: Kenwyn George, ADEC
USFS personnel: Sarah Samuelson, Chad Hood

Purpose of visit: Routine inspection.

Sand Pit. The storm water sediment ponds had been enlarged; however the water was still turbid leaving the last pond. Chad Hood had walked down the path of discharge in the wooded area beyond the culvert discharge and found that even at fairly high flows the water dispersed and was absorbed into the forest duff. He did not see it re-emerge further down the slope.

Large settling pond



Series of secondary settling ponds

"B" road: One clean water diversion pipe installed at surface run-on streams adjacent to the ditch at the tailings facility had broken free. Jennifer Saran said this was a problem due to expansion and contraction. She would look into other ways to affix a flexible pipe to prevent this re-occurrence.

Ditches contained murky road runoff water; there was not a lot of sediment built up behind check dams.

Potholes formed in the road aggravate the discharge of sediment laden water. The recent rains had prevented graders from maintaining theses portions of the road.

920 Mill area: A drill rig was drilling exploratory holes on a bench of the embankment behind the mill. Water from the operation was being pumped to Pond A for further treatment.

Drill rig

Drill rig discharge

Pond "D": Berm replacement was complete.

Site "E": 40,000 cy of waste/production rock had been removed and taken to the tailings storage facility. No more material is to be removed this year. The ground had been smoothed to enable surface runoff during the winter period. This material will not be covered. Water from the site is pumped from a sump to the polyethylene discharge pipe from the 920 area for discharge to Pond 7. It was suggested that a temporary cover be constructed to aid maintenance of the pump during inclement winter weather, including snow events.

Smoothed surface of pile

Sump / pump to main effluent line.

Tailings site: Tailings are currently being placed in the NW area. Additional rock adjacent to the clean road had been removed to the west of the facility. This area will receive a polyethylene liner prior to the placement of tailings in this area.

Sediment ponds have been constructed adjacent to the water treatment plant. These, in conjunction with "dirt bags" will collect tailings washed down from the TSF by storm flows, reducing the volume of this material to be removed from Pond 7.

Tailings placement in NW corner

Sediment ponds (lined) near dirt bags

Action items:

1. Look at how to prevent the clean water diversion pipe breaking away at the joint where it connects to the upland catchment at the ditch/tailings facility.
2. Fill potholes in the road to reduce sediment-laden water discharge to the ditches.
3. Look at whether it would be wise to create a temporary cover to the pump at Site E for ease of maintenance during early winter runoff periods.