THE STATE of ALASKA
GOVERNOR MIKE DUNLEAVY

Department of Natural Resources

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Manh Choh Mine Field Inspection Report

Inspection Date:	September 19, 2025
Time:	1:00 PM to 4:00 PM
Weather:	Overcast in the afternoon with a cloud ceiling of ≈2000 feet with broken cloud cover later in the day. Slight breeze at lower elevations with gusts around 10mph higher up with an average temperature of 50°F.
DNR Personnel:	Aaron Kruse, William Groom, Erika Alexander, Jonathan Kummer
Manh Choh Personnel:	Brent Culleton, Doreen Mark
Inspection Objectives:	Site Inspection

Operations:

Manh Choh Mine (Manh Choh) is located approximately 10-miles southeast of Tok, accessed via Alaska Highway, and is owned by Peak Gold, LLC (Peak Gold), a joint venture between Kinross Gold Corporation (Kinross, majority owner and operator) and Contango ORE, Inc. The mine's operational footprint resides on private native lands owned by the Village of Tetlin, who leases their mineral and surface rights to Peak Gold (Map 1). Mining began in late 2023 and is expected to continue to produce for 4 to 5 years.[1]

The mine is a conventional hardrock open pit truck and shovel operation employing approximately 300 people that runs 356 days per year, twenty-four hours a day. Ore is hauled by truck to the Fort Knox mine near Fairbanks where it is stockpiled to be milled in batched campaigns. The first gold bar from Manh Choh was poured in July 2024 followed by two additional milling campaigns in August and November producing a total of 141,000 oz of gold in 2024.[2]

Field Inspection Plan, Execution and Summary Schedule:

The Department of Natural Resources (DNR) is the lead agency regarding mining activities on private land for surface disturbance, water use, and reclamation. DNR conducts site inspections to ensure compliance with Manh Choh's Reclamation Plan Approval (F20232626RPA), as required under AS 27.19 and 11 AAC 97. The primary objectives for DNR personnel were to inspect active disturbance, such as ongoing construction, waste rock storage, reclamation, and water management. The inspection

[1] Manh Choh Kinross. (n.d.). *Manh Choh Bringing Jobs & Economic Opportunities To Interior Alaska.* Retrieved December 16, 2025, from https://manhchoh.com/

[2] Kinross. (2025). *Annual Activity Report for Reporting Year 2024*. Kinross Manh Choh A JV with Contango ORE. Pg. 8. Document available at DNR's website: https://dnr.alaska.gov/mlw/mining/large-mines/manh-choh/

plan was designed to allow for selecting additional sites for inspection in an opportunistic fashion, and as time allowed.

DNR staff arrived at the Manh Choh office located in Tok at approximately 12:00 PM to meet with Kinross staff, Brent Culleton and Doreen Mark, to review the inspection plan for the mine site and its facilities and to discuss any relevant information before starting the inspection.

The inspection began around 1:00 PM by driving to the Manh Choh access road off the Alaskan Highway. There, DNR staff documented sediment track out control measures put in place to reduce material deposition on the highway. Continuing along the access road, DNR stopped at borrow sites, the change out yard, and other areas of interest to photograph each location (Map 1). DNR was then driven to the Untreated Water Pond and Brine Pond above the Water Treatment Pad to deploy a drone to document the area and Ore Load Yard. Next, DNR staff drove a short distance to the Mine Infrastructure Site, where a drone was deployed to document all infrastructure support facilities, the North Waste Rock Dump (WRD), North Pit, ore stockpiles, and Explosives Storage area. DNR staff then continued to the Main WRD to deploy the drone to document the Dry and Wet Waste Rock stockpiles, Main WRD, and South Pit (Map 2).

Findings:

A summary of findings can be found below with a description of active sites that were visited. Detailed route maps with areas of interest, including photos of all inspected sites with observations notes, are in Appendix A.

1. Inspection of Active Areas of Disturbance and Reclamation

1.1. Track out of sediment from vehicles onto the Alaskan Highway has been a concern of Kinross for several years. Kinross has implemented several Best Management Practices (BMPs) to address the issue. DNR first documented a cattleguard installation in the spring of 2024 to help vibrate loose material from vehicles. Later that fall, the company extended the asphalt apron 500 feet from the highway to the cattleguard. Currently, an automated wash station is in place that cleans the undercarriage and tires of vehicles before turning onto the Alaska Highway (Photo1). The wash-station is periodically mucked with a skid steer loader where sediment is sampled for testing, temporarily stored onsite, and then hauled to a borrow pit. This new automated wash station uses a recirculating water system that is filled by tanker truck and only operates in temperatures above freezing.

1.2. Borrow pits along the access road to the mine have been documented by DNR for active disturbance and reclamation efforts. Only active borrow sites were documented during this inspection. The following is a quick overview of each site visited:

- The borrow site at MP 5 is still active with operations only occurring within the northern area. This is also the disposal site for mucked material from the automated wash station. Most of the site has been reclaimed with several years of vegetative growth (Photo 2). Final reclamation of the barrow site is proposed after mine closure.
- At MP 7.2, much of the borrow pits area has been reclaimed (Photo 3); however, within its western end remains an active material site. The active area includes a small yard which is used for storage and has several stockpiles of aggregate rock (Photo 4).
- At MP 12.8 there is a large borrow pit that has been expanded to be used as a laydown yard; however, it is still an active site with material stockpiles (Photo 5). Organic material has been stockpiled at the southern end of the yard for use at a later date (Photo 6).

- Material Site 1, located at MP 14.5, is active with aggregate stockpiles on its eastern end with a centralized excavation pit (Photo 7).

1.3. The ore haul truck change out and storage yard is well organized with a continuous exchange between driver and vehicle. Old culverts are stored on site from previous road construction and were stacked and sorted. Other road maintenance materials and equipment are staged for easy access and are properly stored (Photo 8).

1.4. At milepost 9.5 is a road cut that experienced excessive erosion undercutting the jute matting in the spring of 2024. DNR has monitored the BMPs Kinross has put in place to stabilize the area to prevent further degradation. Last year Kinross removed the jute matting, re-sloped the cut to an angle of repose, and seeded. Currently the slope has had one year of vegetative growth and has remained stable. The sloped cut on the opposite side of the road did not experience erosional issues and has had two years of vegetative growth (Photo 9).

1.5. The growth media test plots, located at MP 12.8 on the eastern edge of the borrow site, is a recent addition that began earlier this spring. There are several test plots, each with a consistent mix of organics but vary in depth of topsoil placed over waste rock from the North WRD. All the test plots have controlled seeding, except one, which was not seeded for comparison of natural vegetative regrowth. DNR was onsite in June just a few weeks after these test plots were prepared before plant germination began. Approximately four months since DNR's previous inspection, there is now noticeable vegetative growth within each test plot (Photo 10).

1.6. The Ore Loadout Area footprint has remained consistent with supporting facilities which include a highway truck shop, office trailers, and weigh scales. The peripheral area along the northwestern highway truck yard is used for storage of equipment. Mine haul trucks stockpile ore along the southern extent of the loadout area where it is loaded into highway b-train tractor-trailers (Photo 11).

1.7. The Mine Infrastructure Site houses the main facilities for Kinross and their contractors. The pad area footprint remains consistent; however, active waste rock deposition continues in the North WRD along its benches on the northern side of the Mine Infrastructure Site (Photo 12). Small oxide and sulfide stockpiles of low-grade ore (Photo 13) have been placed across from the fuel island on top of the North WRD southern corner. The main pad area is comprised of offices, maintenance shops, warehouse, fuel island, support equipment storage, communication tower and generator facility (Photo 14). At the northern extent of the infrastructure pad is the marginal low grade ore stockpile (Photo 15), which has increased in area but not height since the previous inspection.

1.8. The Explosive Pad, located northwest of the infrastructure site, is well organized and maintains a good separation for working around and between the magazines (Photo 16). Off the road to the Explosive Pad is a reclaimed drill pad from 2024 that is beginning to show natural growth of vegetation (Photo 17).

1.9. Active excavation was observed for both the North and South Pits. North Pit continues to produce ore, but it is expected to bottom out later this year (Photo 18). South Pit was observed with active drilling for preparation in blasting alongside removal of waste rock that was currently being loaded and hauled to the Main WRD (Photo 19).

1.10. DNR staff deployed a drone atop the Dry Waste Rock Stockpile to document it, the Wet Waste Rock Stockpile, and Main WRD. Both the Wet and Dry Waste Rock Stockpiles have been placed on top of the western lobe of the Main WRD. During this inspection, DNR staff observed a well-developed buildout for the dry and wet stockpiles (Photo 20), which will be relocated into the

North and South Pits after mining is complete. The buildout of the Main WRD eastern lobe continues with expansion of the upper tiered bench (Photo 21) from what was documented earlier this spring. Its overall disturbed footprint has remained the same; however, its volume continues to increase along with its elevation as outlined within Manh Choh's Reclamation and Closure Plan submission for the Main WRD scheduled development.[3]

2. Water Management

2.1. An elevated water tank was documented for dust suppression usage. This elevated water tank is located at the western corner of the ore haul truck change out yard. The tank, water withdrawal well, and surrounding area are well maintained, and structures are in good condition (Photo 22). This elevated tank is also the water source for trucking water to the automated wash station.

2.2. DNR staff deployed a drone over the Water Treatment Pad to document water levels of each pond and facility condition. Both the smaller Brine Pond and larger Untreated Water Pond, located at the upper elevation of the pad, appeared to have water storage volumes which have remained consistent since the previous spring inspection (Photo 23). Water from the larger pond is primarily used for dust suppression, while brine water is generated from back washing filters from the Reverse Osmosis water treatment facility next to the Treated Water pond (Photo 24). Overall pad and facilities are well organized and in good condition.

2.3. Water Ditches and Retention Ditches surrounding the perimeter of mine were documented through aerial imagery. The northeast, southeast and west ditches were clean of debris with no visible water except in the lined retention ditches (Photo 25). Both the North and South Ditch lined ponds, located adjacent to the ore load out area, contained water levels that were lower than what has normally been observed from previous inspections. Sediment accumulating in a section downslope from the access road within the South Ditch was observed with water ponding behind it (Photo 26). The water ditches, retention ditches and associated ponds appeared to be in good condition and well maintained.

Conclusion and Recommendations:

Peak Gold facilitates their mining activities in a manner which prevents unnecessary and undue degradation of private lands and State water resources. All observed activities conform with the Reclamation Plan Approval, and current activities meet the state's requirements under AS 27.19 and 11 AAC 97. DNR finds Manh Choh operations are in good condition and consistent with industry standards.

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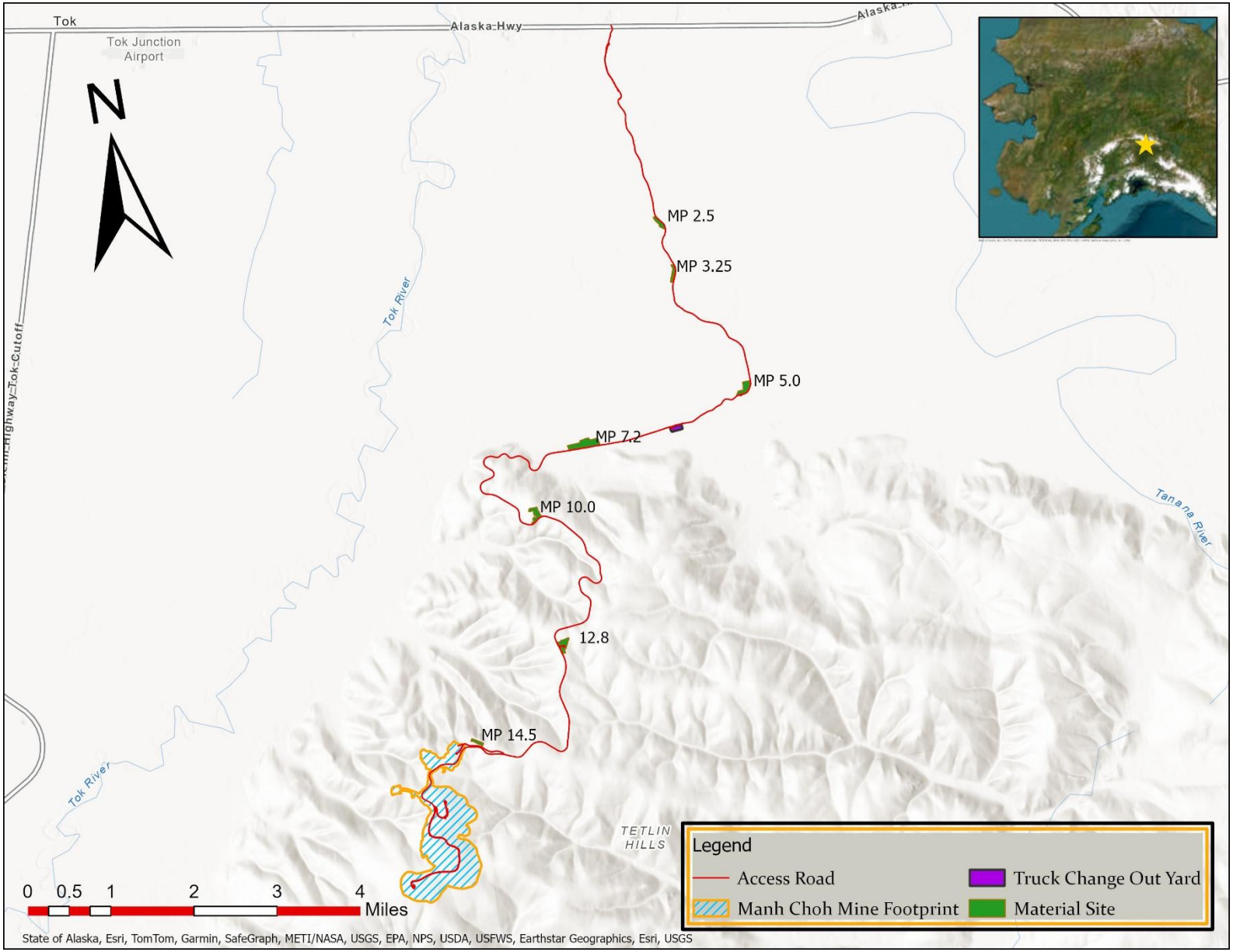
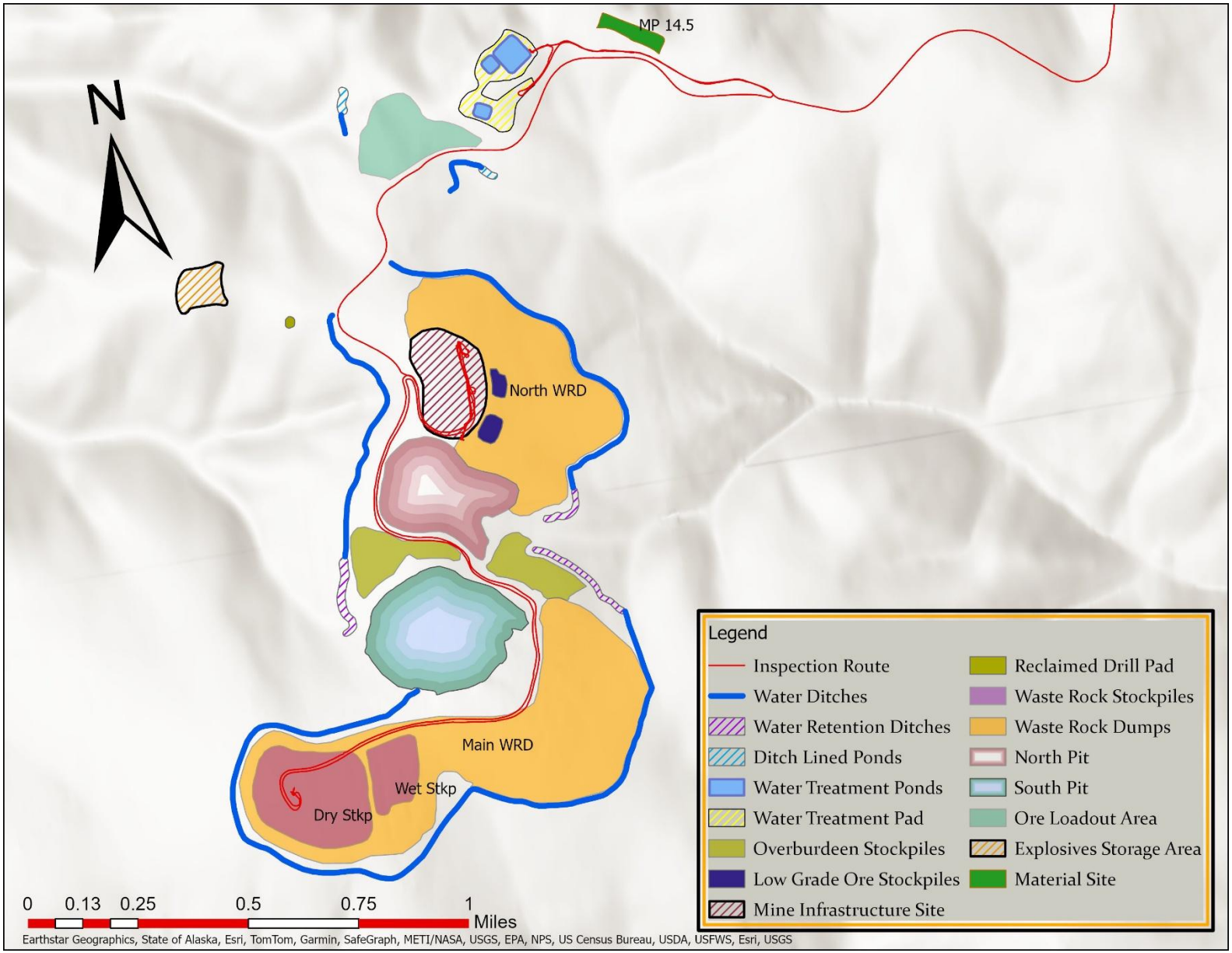
[3] SRK Consulting. (2023). *Manh Choh Project Reclamation and Closure Plan Revision 1.* Prepared for Peak Gold, LLC. Section 7.8.1. Document available at DNR's website: https://dnr.alaska.gov/mlw/mining/large-mines/manh-choh/

Appendix A

Inspection Maps, Photos, and Observations of Note



Map 1: Manh Choh Mine footprint within Tetlin lands and mine road access with supporting facilities.



Map 2: Manh Choh Mine layout of major facilities, active areas of disturbance, and water management documented during inspection.

Field Inspection Photos with Observations of Note

Photo 1: View looking south of the automated wash station on the mine access road located approximately 1000 feet from the Alaska Highway.	
Photo 2: View to the north of the borrow site at MP5. Most of the area has been recontoured and seeded for reclamation. This borrow site will continue to remain active for aggregate production.	

Photo 3: View to the west of the borrow site at MP 7.2. Most of this area has been reclaimed; however, the western end will remain an active material site.	
Photo 4: View to the west of the storage yard and aggregate stockpiles located on the western edge of the borrow site at MP 7.2.	

Photo 5: View to the west of a small stockpile of material at MP 12.8 borrow site. Most of the area has been expanded to be used as a laydown yard; however, it is still an active material site.	
Photo 6: MP 12.8 borrow site organic stockpile located at the southern end of the yard.	

Photo 7: Material site 1, located at MP 14.5 close to the water treatment pad and ore loadout yard.	
Photo 8: Truck change out yard between drivers from the mine to those who will truck the ore to Fort Knox for milling. Culverts and other road building/maintenance material and equipment stored along the periphery of the truck change out yard.	

Photo 9: MP 9.5 left side of road cut has been stabilized, re-sloped, and seeded after erosional issues from the previous year. Right side of road has had no erosional issues with over two years of vegetative growth.	
Photo 10: Growth media test plots are located within the eastern portion of the material site at MP 12.8. Each plot has a consistent mix of organics but vary in depth of topsoil placed over waste rock. Photo shows approximately four months of growth since germination in June.	

Photo 11: Ore Loadout area facilities include highway truck shop, scales, ore and material stockpiles.	
Photo 12: Active deposition of waste rock along the northern benches of the North WRD.	

Photo 13: Oxide and sulfide stockpiles of low-grade ore adjacent to the Mine Infrastructure Site located on the southern end of the North WRD. Both stockpiles have doubled in volume from previous inspection in June.	
Photo 14: View to the west of the Mine Infrastructure Site that houses all offices, shops, fuel island, and warehouse.	

Photo 15: View to the south of the marginal low grade ore stockpile (circled).	
Photo 16: View towards northwest of the explosive storage pad.	

Photo 17: Reclaimed drilling pad off the road to the explosive storage pad. Natural vegetative growth is just starting to show some coverage.	
Photo 18: View to the northeast of North Pit. Active excavation and removal of material was observed below the north highwall.	

Photo 19: View to the southeast of South Pit. Active drilling was observed along with active removal of material. Haul trucks were transporting material to the Main WRD and Dry Waste Rock Stockpile.	
Photo 20: View to the west of the western lobe of the Main WRD where the Wet and Dry Waste Rock is stockpiled. The buildout of both stockpiles has expanded in material volume within the same tiered benches since DNR's spring inspection.	

Photo 21: View of the eastern lobe of the Main WRD looking north. Buildout of the top tiered bench has expanded in material volume since DNR's spring inspection.	
Photo 22: View looking north at the western corner of the ore haul truck change out yard. Well location for the water draw point is noted to the right of the elevated water tank (hidden behind tank foundation). Water is primarily used for dust suppression along the access road.	

Photo 23: View to the northeast of the Brine and Water Treatment ponds. Water levels have remained constant since the previous June inspection. Water Treatment Pond water is primarily used for dust control. Brine Pond water is generated from backwashing filters from the RO water treatment facility.	
Photo 24: Northeast view of the Water Treatment Pad and associated facilities. The RO facility, and surrounding Water Treatment Pad are well organized and in good condition.	

Photo 25: View to the south between the North and Main WRD eastern lobe. Water ditches and retention ditches encompass all the mine-related facilities. Photograph is of the Northeast and Southeast retention ditches.	
Photo 26: View of the South Ditch and Lined Pond that collects water along the eastern edge of the ore loadout yard and mine access road. Sediment from the access road was observed to have accumulated within the corner of the ditch impeding water flow (circled).