

Response to Comments.

On the Draft Modified NPDES Permit for:

Meridian Beartrack Company
Beartrack Mine
NPDES No. ID-002702-2

Introduction

On September 21, 2006 the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) issued a draft modified National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) permit for the Meridian Beartrack Company, Beartrack Mine. The Beartrack Mine is an open pit, cyanide heap leach gold mine, which is no longer operating. The mine is currently in the reclamation and closure phase. Wastewater discharged includes storm water run-off and heap leach pad drain-down flow, as well as potential discharge from the mine's South Pit depending on the closure approach. The public comment period for the draft permit extended from September 21, 2006 through October 21, 2006.

No comments were received during the public comment period, so the draft permit modification was finalized and issued.

State of Idaho Clean Water Act Section 401 Certification

On July 5, 2006 the Idaho Department of Environmental Quality (IDEQ) issued a draft modified CWA §401 Water Quality Certification of the Meridian Beartrack Mine NPDES permit. No comments were received on the draft certification, and IDEQ issued a final 401 certification on October 24, 2006.

Endangered Species Act (ESA) Information

EPA sent a copy of the draft modified permit to USFWS on September 18, 2006. On October 2, 2006 Damien Miller of the USFWS Eastern Idaho Field Office sent a letter to Mike Lidgard of EPA concurring with EPA's determination that the proposed permit modification will not change the effects determinations previously consulted on in 2003.

EPA sent a copy of the draft modified permit to NOAA-NMFS. No comments were received.