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COUNTY OF PARK
Director of
Development Services



May 4, 2020

Thomas Duffy
Via email: tduffydoctrine@aol.com

Dear Tom,

Re: Mineral Resource Area 1041 Review and Finding of No Significant Impact
Proposed Prospecting and Mining; Buckskin Joe Placer/Duffy Claim

I have reviewed your proposal for prospecting and mining at the Buckskin Joe Placer, the information you provided during our preapplication conference on April 14, 2020, and your responses to my subsequent questions. The claim is a portion of Schedule No. 45345.

It is my understanding that you will conduct your activities using picks, hammers, and a portable sluice. You intend to dig holes up to twenty feet deep in the unconsolidated aggregate material (quaternary glacial drift), much of which has been previously mined and otherwise disturbed. Prior to proceeding to the next hole, each hole will be backfilled. The estimate of disturbed area is 1 acre of the 20-acre lease. Based on the information provided, and mapping available, I summarize your proposal's compliance with the approval standards as follows.

* * *

Section 502 Basic Approval Standards.

A. The following basic standards shall apply to *all* applications subject to review under these Regulations.

1. Property rights, permits and approvals – The subject property is owned by the U.S. Forest Service (USFS). The mining claim (CMC292600) has been recorded with the Bureau of Land Management (BLM). A Notice of Intent was filed with the USFS, and they do not require a Mining Plan of Operations at this time. The applicant is working with DRMS to determine what they require.
 - a. The Project will not impair property rights held by others. There are no other claims overlapping the location. The proposed activity does not preclude an owner of a future lode claim to extract minerals from the bedrock below the unconsolidated material. The mapping provided by the applicant was checked by

GIS, and a problem was found. Attachment 1 shows the intended location of the Project. The applicant is working with BLM to correct the legal description.

2. Expertise, financial capability - The proposed activities are basic and inexpensive. The applicant has the necessary expertise and financial capability to develop and operate the Project consistent with all requirements and conditions. If finances became an issue, the operations could cease at any time with no impact to others or the environment.
3. Technical and financial feasibility – See 2, above.
4. Natural Hazards - The Project is not subject to significant risk from natural hazards. The location is relatively flat, with no mapped geologic hazards. It is not within a mapped floodplain.
5. Land use, water quality plans - The Project is consistent with the land use regulations. It is zoned Mining (M) and Conservation Recreation (CR), both of which allow mining. The land use is consistent with historical use of the property. There are other mining claims in the area. An Alma watershed permit has been issued. Erosion control is proposed.
6. Land use patterns - The Project will have no significant adverse effect on land use patterns. Surrounding parcels are also zoned M and CR, allowing mining operations.
7. Government services, service delivery - The Project will neither have an adverse effect on the capability of local government to provide services, nor exceed the capacity of service delivery systems.
8. Housing - The Project will not have an adverse effect on housing availability or cost, as activities will be conducted by the applicant and his wife, and are minimal in scale.
9. Financial burden - The Project will not create any foreseeable financial burden on existing or future residents of the County.
10. Local economy - The Project will not degrade any current or foreseeable future sector of the local economy.
11. Recreational activities - The Project will not have an adverse effect on recreational opportunities. It is in an area of historic mining operations. It is and will remain available for activities allowed on USFS land.
12. Conservation, energy efficiency, recycling, reuse – The proposed operations are very basic, requiring little disturbance, and little energy. The planning, design and operation of the Project will reflect principals of resource conservation, energy efficiency and recycling or reuse.
13. Natural environment - The Project will not significantly degrade the natural environment. Reclamation (backfilling holes) will be ongoing.
 - a. Air quality – No impact.
 - b. Visual quality – Little to no impact. Equipment is limited and reclamation will be ongoing.
 - c. Surface water quality – Little to no impact. Development will have to comply with Alma watershed restrictions. Erosion control is included in the plan.
 - d. Groundwater quality – No impact. Groundwater may be encountered during excavation, but no potentially contaminant processes or products are proposed in the operation.
 - e. Wetlands and riparian areas – Little to no impact. U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service mapping indicates no wetlands within the project boundaries.

- f. Terrestrial and aquatic animal life – Little to no impact. Although the project is within High and Very High wildlife impact areas, the minimal scale of the operation (size and process) should minimize its impact on wildlife. There should be no impact on aquatic animal life. (Note: This Project does not meet the definition of development under the wildlife 1041 regulations, as it does not change the use or character of the land.)
 - g. Terrestrial and aquatic plant life – Little to no impact. No tree removal is proposed. The ground cover that exists subsequent to previous mining and grading activities will be disturbed. There should be no impact to aquatic plant life.
 - h. Soils and geologic conditions – No impact. The operations rework previously disturbed material (alluvial, colluvial, and human disturbance).
14. The Project will not cause a nuisance. Minimal noise will be generated through digging and sluicing operations. Trash will be hauled off site.
15. The Project will not significantly degrade areas of paleontological, historic, or archaeological importance. The applicant is aware that there is substantial potential for artifact discovery, and has agreed to contact Historic Preservation upon any finding to allow for photo documentation. Artifacts would likely relate to the previous mining operations in the area.
16. The Project will not result in unreasonable risk of releases of hazardous materials.
- a. Materials are limited to gas and oil required for a portable generator to run a pump, which will be used only if and when groundwater is encountered.
 - b. There is no reason for wasting oil and gas needed for the generator. Waste will be minimized.
 - c. Spills will be minimized through use of a catch basin when filling the generator with gas.
17. The benefits accruing to the County and its citizens from the Project outweigh the losses of any natural, agricultural, recreational, grazing or commercial resources within the County, or the losses of opportunities to develop such resources. While there is little to no monetary benefit to the County, there is also little impact to its resources.
18. The Project represents the alternative that best complies with these Regulations. The small-scale operations minimize all impacts to the County, surrounding property owners, and the environment.
19. The Project is needed within the County and/or area to be served. Park County has a rich mining history, and supports this type of operation.

Section 503 Additional Standards Applicable to Mineral Resource Areas.

A. In addition to the standards in Section 502, the following standards apply.

- 1. Extraction and exploration of minerals shall be accomplished in a manner which causes the least practicable environmental disturbance. Surface area disturbance associated with the Project shall be reclaimed in accordance with the provisions of Article 32 of Title 34, C.R.S. *The proposed operation causes very minimal environmental disturbance. Holes will be backfilled prior to digging the next hole.*
- 2. Areas containing only sand, gravel, quarry aggregate or limestone used for construction purposes shall be administered as provided by Part 3 of Article 1 of Title

34, C.R.S. *Exploration and mining will take place only in the unconsolidated aggregate material.*

3. The proposed extraction and exploration of minerals would not cause significant danger to public health and safety. *The proposed operations cause little to no danger to health and safety.*
4. If the economic value of the minerals present is less than the value of another existing or requested use, the other use should be given preference. Other uses which would not interfere with the extraction and exploration of minerals may be allowed. *The economic value of the minerals present is unknown, pending the proposed operations. The Project does not interfere with future exploration and extraction activities.*

* * *

Based on the information above, and in consideration of the standards of approval contained in our Mineral Resource Area 1041 Regulations, I have concluded that your proposal does not degrade the future ability to extract mineral resources on your claim or properties around you, and presents little to no impact on surrounding properties and the environment. Therefore, you are hereby notified of my Finding of No Significant Impact. Your project is not subject to the major permit review or 1041 permit requirements. Please let me know if you have any questions.

Sincerely,



Sheila Cross
Park County
Director of Development Services

cc: Board of County Commissioners
Tom Eisenman, County Manager
Erin Smith, County Attorney

DUFFY PLACER CLAIM - ALMA

0 0.02 0.04 0.08 Miles



CORNER 2

CORNER 1

CORNER 10

CORNER 7

CORNER 8

CORNER 9

COUNTY RD 8

Parcel data should not be considered survey quality. Park County will not be held liable for misuse or misinterpretation of this data. @Park County GIS 2019