

**Department of Environmental Conservation
Response to Comments**

for

**Jumbo Dome Mine
APDES Permit No. AK0053741 – Modification #1**

Public Noticed April 17, 2020 - May 18, 2020

May 21, 2020



**Alaska Department of Environmental Conservation
Wastewater Discharge Authorization Program
555 Cordova Street
Anchorage, AK 99501**

1 Facility and Modification Description

Jumbo Dome Mine is a surface coal mine located about 12 miles northeast of Healy, Alaska. All the storm water and groundwater that contacts the active mine area, if commingled, is considered mine drainage. Three outfalls are being proposed for discharging a blend of coal seam, seepage, and precipitation water into Marguerite Creek. However before discharge, wastewater will be treated, which involves primary and secondary settling, followed by passive aeration, flow through a limestone bed, and then a final settling pond.

Usibelli Coal Mine, Inc. operates the Jumbo Dome Mine. The deposit has an estimated 83 million tons of sub-bituminous coal to be mined over the next 25 to 40 years for domestic and export markets.

In February 2020, Usibelli Coal Mine, Inc. (Usibelli), the permittee and operator of the Jumbo Dome Mine, requested that the Department increase the “Total Flow” limit in its Alaska Pollutant Discharge Elimination Permit (APDES) AK0053741. The Department found that there was cause for modifying the APDES permit, and the Department modified the permit by increasing the “Total Flow” limit to a cumulative annual limit of 420 million gallons per calendar year.

2 Opportunities for Public Participation

The Department of Environmental Conservation (DEC) proposed to modify the Alaska Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (APDES) wastewater discharge permit modification for Jumbo Dome Mine. To ensure public, agency, and tribal notification and opportunities for participation, the Department:

- notified potentially affected tribes that the Department would be working on this permit modification via letter, fax and/or email,
- formally published public notice of the draft permit modification on April 17, 2020 in the Fairbanks Daily News Miner and posted the public notice on the Department’s public notice web page, and
- sent email notifications via the APDES Program List Serve when the draft and final permit modification were available for review.

3 Comments

The Department received comments from one interested party, Alaska Miners Association, on the draft permit modification. However, the commenter offered general support for the permit modification while offering nothing specific for which to respond.

4 Permit Modification

The permit modification was issued by the Department on May 21, 2020, and it becomes effective June 1, 2020. There were no changes from the public noticed permit modification.