Public Notice

DEQ Requests Comments on Proposed Water Quality Permit Issuance for Mineral Valley, LLC, Mormon Basin Mine

Date posted: 11/19/26

The Oregon Department of Environmental Quality invites the public to submit written comments on the conditions of Mineral Valley, LLC, Mormon Basin Mine proposed water quality permit, known officially as a Water Pollution Control Facilities permit.

How to provide public comment

Facility name: Mineral Valley, LLC, Mormon Basin Mine

Permit type: Individual Industrial WPCF

Comments due by: Dec. 28, 2026 at 5 p.m.

Submit written comments:

By mail: Permit Coordinator, Oregon DEQ, 475 NE Bellevue Drive, Suite 110, Bend, OR 97701

By web: Your DEQ Online

By email: Water.PermitER@deq.oregon.gov

Summary

This permit allows Mineral Valley, LLC, Mormon Basin Mine to operate a nonchemical gold mine wastewater system in Malheur and Baker counties. Part of the review process is an opportunity for public comment, based on the application and other DEQ information. Subject to public review and comment, DEQ plans to issue the new permit.

About the facility

Mineral Valley, LLC, Mormon Basin Mine is a nonchemical gold mine that intends to operate a wastewater system located on Bureau of Land Management land and a private road near Bridgeport, Oregon. This is a newly proposed permit.

Mineral Valley Mining will conduct a mining operation and process approximately 366,000 cubic yards per year, with increasing volumes in future years capping at 500,000 cubic yards. Operations are seasonal (approximately 180 days), with limited mining conducted during winter months due to freezing weather.

The facility's wastewater is circulated through processing equipment and three pit-type ponds lined with high-density polyethylene liner. The ponds will have low berms which protect the area from runoff. Coarse gravels are removed via an initial settlement trap pond. Pond freeboard – the extra "empty" space above the water level that prevents overtopping – will be at least two feet.

The permit does not allow any discharges to waterways.

The applicant holds a WPCF General 600 DEQ Permit.

What types of pollutants does the permit regulate?

The permit regulates pollutants typically associated with nonchemical placer gold mining wastewater. No chemicals or hazardous materials of any type, including flocculants, except fuel and lubricants that are used for excavation and processing machinery, will be used in the process or brought onto the site.

Turbidity and pH are the primary pollutants of concern for surface water and groundwater protection. The potential for untreated or inadequately treated wastewater to impact groundwater – and for impacted groundwater to recharge surface waters – has been addressed in this permit. The permit requires the facility to monitor various wastewater pollutants. Additionally, a leak test of the lagoons will be required once during the permit cycle to determine the rate of leakage.

Would the draft permit change the amount of pollution the facility is allowed to release?

No

How does DEQ determine permit requirements?

DEQ evaluates types and amounts of pollutants and the water quality of the surface water or groundwater where the pollutants are proposed to be discharged to determine permit requirements. This ensures the proposed discharges will meet applicable statutes, rules, regulations and effluent guidelines of Oregon and the Clean Water Act.

DEQ relied solely on these documents and made no other discretionary decisions for the permit action.

How does DEQ monitor compliance with the permit requirements?

This permit will require the facility to monitor for pollutants discharged using approved monitoring practices and standards. DEQ reviews the facility's discharge monitoring reports to check for compliance with permit limits.

What happens next?

DEQ will hold a public hearing if DEQ receives a written request for a public hearing within 14 days of posting the public notice from at least 10 people.

DEQ will consider and respond to all comments received and may modify the proposed permit based on comments.

For more information

View information about this proposed permit renewal, including the application, permit evaluation report and underlying documents online or by contacting Patty Isaak, Permit Coordinator, at 541-613-1125 to make an appointment to review the documents in person.

Non-discrimination statement

DEQ does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, disability, age, sex, religion, sexual orientation, gender identity, or marital status in the administration of its programs and activities.

For translation and other formats, visit DEQ's Civil Rights and Environmental Justice page.

State of Oregon Department of Environmental Quality

WATER POLLUTION CONTROL FACILITIES PERMIT

Oregon Department of Environmental Quality
Eastern Region –Bend Office
475 NE Bellevue Dr., Ste. 110
Bend, OR 97701
Telephone: 541-388-6146

Issued pursuant to ORS 468B.050

ISSUED TO:	SOURCES COVERED BY THIS PERMIT:		
Mineral Valley, LLC 40900 Woodward Avenue, Suite 265 Bloomfield Hills, MI 48304	**Type of Waste**	**Outfall Number**	**Location**
	Industrial Wastewater (Evaporation and Storage Ponds)	001	Lat/Long: 44.429970, -117.600270
	Wastewater Derived Solids (Reuse and Disposal)	As provided in the PER/Facility Plan	

FACILITY TYPE AND LOCATION:

Mineral Valley, LLC – Mormon Basin Mine
Placer Gold Mining, Evaporation and Storage Ponds
West and South of Mormon Basin and Rye Valley Rd., Bridgeport, Oregon 97819

County: Malheur/Baker

RIVER BASIN INFORMATION:

WRD Basin: Middle Snake-Boise

USGS Sub-Basin: Willow-Malheur
Nearest surface water body name: Basin Creek, RM 7.35
LLID: 1176055443389

Issued in response to Application YDO Submittal ID No. 100962 received May 5, 2026. This permit is issued based on the land use findings in the permit record.

Draft	Draft	Draft
Mike Hiatt Water Quality Permitting Manager, ER	Issuance Date	Effective Date

PERMITTED ACTIVITIES

Until this permit expires or is modified or revoked, the permittee is authorized to construct, install, modify or operate a wastewater collection, treatment, control and disposal system in conformance with the requirements, limits, and conditions set forth in this permit.

Unless specifically authorized by this permit, by another NPDES or WPCF permit, or by Oregon statute or administrative rule, any direct or indirect discharge of pollutants to waters of the state is prohibited.

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SCHEDULE A: WASTE DISCHARGE LIMITS

1. Permitted System

Mineral Valley, LLC is authorized to operate and dispose of wastewater from non-chemical ore processing operations at Mormon Basin Mine (Township 13S, Range 42E, Sections 17, 20, and 21, Tax Lots 400, 100, and 500) on Bureau of Land Management and private land in Malheur and Baker County jurisdictional land. The permittee is authorized to conduct ore processing operations only as identified in the Preliminary Engineering Report/Facility Plan and in accordance with the conditions of this permit.

a. Total volume of ore processed at all sites under this permit must not exceed 500,000 cubic yards per year.

2. Surface Water Protection

Direct discharge to navigable waters as defined in OAR Chapter 340 Division 045 Section 0010(14) is prohibited.

3. Chemical Use Prohibited

Petroleum-based products, coagulants, flocculants, solvents, and acids, as well as other substances that might cause the water quality standards of the state of Oregon to be violated must not be discharged, disposed, or placed in any locations where they would likely be carried into the waters of the state by any means. No chemicals are to be used in the processing of the gravel placer deposits.

4. Groundwater Protection

Any activity that has an adverse effect on existing or potential beneficial uses of groundwater is prohibited. All wastewater and wastewater solids must be managed and disposed in a manner that will prevent a violation of the Groundwater Quality Protection Rules (OAR Chapter 340, Division 40). If warranted, at any time, DEQ may evaluate the need for or require a full assessment of the facility's effect on groundwater quality.

5. Storage Ponds

a. Small ponds used for cooling purposes or for the treatment and disposal of turbid wastewaters associated with gravel mining operations, placer mining operations, or stormwater control systems may be exempt from plan submittal in accordance with OAR 340-052. In order to determine if exempt from plan submittal, these systems must undergo DEQ review for the preliminary design as described in Schedule D.3 of the permit.

b. Pond freeboard must not be less than two feet, as measured from the lowest elevation of the containment system (spill point).

c. Removed Substances: Solids, sludge, filter backwash, or other pollutants removed in the course of treatment or control of wastewaters must be disposed of in such a manner as to prevent any pollutant from such materials from entering waters of the state, causing nuisance conditions, or creating a public health hazard.

SCHEDULE B: MINIMUM MONITORING AND REPORTING REQUIREMENTS

1. Reporting Requirements

The permittee must submit to DEQ monitoring results and reports as listed below.

Table B1: Reporting Requirements and Due Dates

Reporting Requirement	Frequency	Due Date	Report Form (See Note a.)	Submit To
Table B2 Storage Ponds Monitoring	Quarterly	By the 15th of the following quarter	DMR	Electronic reporting as directed by DEQ
Pond Solids Annual Report (see Schedule D)	Annually	March 15	Report	Electronic reporting as directed by DEQ
Lagoon Leak Test: Settling ponds 1, 2, and 3 (see Schedule D)	One-Time	October 1, 2034	Report	Electronic reporting as directed by DEQ

Notes:
a. All reporting requirements are to be submitted in a DEQ approved format, unless otherwise specified in writing.

2. Monitoring and Reporting Protocols

a. **Electronic Submissions.**

When submitting electronic copies as required by table B1, the permittee must submit to DEQ the results of monitoring in an electronic format as specified below.

i. When directed by DEQ, the permittee must submit monitoring results required by this permit via DEQ-approved web-based Electronic Discharge Monitoring Report (DMR) forms.

ii. The reporting period is the calendar quarter.

iii. The permittee must submit monitoring data and other information required by this permit for all compliance points by the 15th day of the month following the reporting period unless specified otherwise in this permit or as specified in writing by DEQ.

iv. When directed by DEQ, the permittee must submit electronic reports for any required Pretreatment Program Reports, Wastewater Solids and Biosolids Annual Report, Recycled Water Annual Report, Sewer Overflow/Bypass Event Reports, and other required information to DEQ via designated web-based reporting process.

b. **Test Methods.**

The permittee must conduct monitoring according to test procedures in 40 CFR part 136 and 40 CFR part 503 for biosolids or other approved procedures as per Schedule F.

c. **Quality Assurance and Quality Control**

i. Quality Assurance Plan – The permittee must develop and implement a written Quality Assurance Plan that details the facility sampling procedures. This plan should include any equipment calibration and maintenance, analytical methods, quality control activities and laboratory data handling and reporting if the permittee conducts any of their own analytical work. The QA/QC program must conform to the requirements of 40 CFR 136.7.

ii. If QA/QC requirements are not met for any analysis, the permittee must re-analyze the sample. If the sample cannot be re-analyzed, the permittee must re-sample and analyze at the earliest opportunity. If the permittee is unable to collect a sample that meets QA/QC requirements, then the permittee must include the result in the discharge monitoring report (DMR) along with a notation (data qualifier). In addition, the permittee must explain how the sample does not meet QA/QC requirements. The permittee may not use the result that failed the QA/QC requirements in any calculation required by the permit unless authorized in writing by DEQ.

iii. Flow measurement, field measurement, and continuous monitoring devices - The permittee must:

(A) Establish verification and calibration frequency for each device or instrument in the quality assurance plan that conforms to the frequencies recommended by the manufacturer.

(B) Verify at least once per year that flow-monitoring devices are functioning properly according to manufacturer's recommendation. Calibrate as needed according to manufacturer's recommendations.

(C) Verify at least weekly that the continuous monitoring instruments are functioning properly according to manufacturer's recommendation unless the permittee demonstrates a longer period is sufficient and such longer period is approved by DEQ in writing.

d. **Reporting Sample Results**

i. The permittee must report the same number of significant digits as the permit limit for a given parameter.

3. Monitoring and Reporting Requirements

a. The permittee must monitor effluent at Outfall 001 (outfall of the sluice/inlet to Pond 1 unless otherwise approved by DEQ in writing), in accordance with Table B1 and the table below:

Table B2: Storage Ponds Monitoring Requirements

Item or Parameter	Units	Time Period	Minimum Frequency	Sample Type/ Required Action See note a.	Report Statistic See note b.
pH (00400)	SU	Year-round	Weekly	Grab	Quarterly Minimum Quarterly Maximum
Inspect dikes and containment system – each pond (1, 2 and 3) dike (82289)	Yes/No	Year-round	Daily when ponds contain water and when operating	Visual	Record Observations
Dike Freeboard – each pond (52020)	Feet	Year-round	Daily when ponds contain water and when operating	Measured	Quarterly Maximum Quarterly Minimum
Total Flow – Wastewater into Pond #1 (51500)	MGD	Year-round	Daily when operating	Measured	Quarterly Total
Total Flow – Makeup water to Pond #3 (51500)	MGD	Year-round	Daily when operating	Measured	Quarterly Total
Ore processed (85777)	Cubic Yards	Year-round	Monthly	Measured	Monthly Total Annual Total
Solids/Sediments removal from ponds (see note c.)	Cubic Yards	Year-round	Each occurrence	N/A	Monthly Total Annual Total
Mining operation start-up and shut-down dates	N/A	Year-round	Each occurrence	N/A	Date Started Date Ended

Notes:

a. In the event of equipment failure or loss, the permittee must notify DEQ and deploy new equipment to minimize interruption of data collection. If new equipment cannot be immediately deployed, the permittee must perform grab measurements.
b. When submitting DMRs electronically, all data used to determine summary statistics shall be submitted in a DEQ approved format as an attachment unless otherwise directed by DEQ.
c. Ore processing sediments are defined as tailings or slimes, which are the fine-grained, rock-like muddy residues left over after valuable minerals are extracted from mined ore.

SCHEDULE C: COMPLIANCE SCHEDULE

There are no compliance schedule requirements for this permit.

SCHEDULE D: SPECIAL CONDITIONS

1. Emergency Response and Public Notification Plan

The permittee must develop an Emergency Response and Public Notification Plan ("plan"), or ensure the facility's existing plan is current and accurate, per Schedule F, Section B, and Condition 6 within 6 months of permit effective date. The permittee must update the plan annually to ensure all information contained in the plan, including telephone and email contact information for applicable public agencies, is current and accurate. An updated copy of the plan must be kept on file at the facility for DEQ review. The latest plan revision date must be listed on the plan cover along with the reviewer's initials or signature.

2. Placer Mining Operations and Notification

a. Unless otherwise approved in writing by the Department, accumulated sediments (tailings or slimes, which are the fine-grained, rock-like muddy residues left over after valuable minerals are extracted from mined ore) in the ponds must be cleaned out and removed at the end of each mining season to reduce the likelihood of sediment washout from the ponds during high runoff periods. In addition, at the end of each mining season wastewater must be emptied in accordance with the permit to prevent overfilling and dike failure or Schedule B monitoring must be continued.

b. All water control devices and solids retention structures must be maintained to ensure their effectiveness and to protect from unexpected catastrophic failure. Whenever a structural weakness or incipient failure becomes evident, repair of the structure to reasonably assure against catastrophic failure must be made immediately.

c. The Permittee must notify the DEQ of the following events:

   i. Change in operation. Any substantive change to the wastewater handling systems covered by this permit must have prior approval, in writing, from the Department before this change is implemented. Non-approved changes are a violation of this permit.

   ii. In the event of any malfunction of the storm water/wastewater system the Permittee must notify the Department in accordance with response times contained in the General Conditions of this permit to enable coordination of corrective action between the Permittee and the Department.

   iii. Start-up and shut-down dates for the annual mining operation as required in Schedule B, Table B3.

d. Sanitary waste must be managed in portable toilets that are supplied and maintained by an appropriate contractor.

e. An environmental supervisor must be designated to coordinate and implement all necessary functions related to maintenance and operation of waste management, treatment, and disposal facilities. This person must have access to all information pertaining to the generation of wastes in the various process areas.

3. Preliminary Engineering Report/Facility Plan

Prior to constructing or modifying wastewater, treatment and disposal facilities, detailed plans and specifications must be submitted to and approved in writing by the Department unless exempted in accordance with OAR 340-052-0045. The Preliminary Engineering Report/Facility Plan is required even if an exemption is granted and must be reviewed and updated, if necessary, and whenever there is a change in operations or supervisory personnel during the year. Operation of the facility must be done in accordance with a DEQ-approved Plan. At a minimum, the Plan must include the items listed below.

a. A written description of how the operation will comply with the permit conditions. The document must include:

i. A water balance calculation for the mining operation and for the sizing of the settling ponds. The water balance must include estimated volumes of: a) wastewater; storm water, and makeup water discharged to the ponds, b) infiltration and evaporation losses from the ponds, and c) recirculating from the ponds;
ii. Methods of estimating water flow and volume as listed above;
iii. Best Management Practices that will be used to prevent pond overflow and seepage from impacting waters of the State (for example, a berm along the creek).

b. An engineered design or plot plan showing relative sizes and locations of streams, diversion ditches or channels, settling pond sizes and locations, proposed treatment practices, overburden stockpiles, side drainage ways, mining area(s), and final location of streams, ponds, etc.
c. Pond solids/sediment and slime management, location of storage and drying areas.
d. The name, address, and phone number of the person or persons responsible for supervising the mining operation on a day-to-day basis, referred to in Condition D.2(e) above.

4. Pond Solids Annual Report

The permittee must submit a Pond Solids Annual Report each year documenting removal of pond sediments from the ponds during the previous calendar year. Sediments are defined as tailings or slimes, which are the fine-grained, rock-like muddy residues left over after valuable minerals are extracted from mined ore. This report must include the volume of material removed and the name of the permitted facility that received the solids if different from the permittee.

5. Lagoon Leak Test

The permittee must submit a Lagoon Leak Test report one-time during the permit cycle as specified in Schedule B for each pond (Pond #1, #2, and #3). Leak testing must be completed using DEQ's *Guidelines for Estimating Leakage from Existing Sewage Lagoons* which is applicable to certain industrial operations with low strength wastewater. The report must include description of the test in line with the DEQ guidance, and a summary of results with the estimated leak rate of each pond.

6. Compliance with Federal and State Permit Requirements

The permittee must obtain and maintain coverage and compliance under the appropriate federal and state permits to ensure compliance. This includes but is not limited to: Oregon Department of Geology and Mineral Industries (DOGAMI), Oregon Department of State Lands (DSL) and Oregon Water Resources Department (OWRD) permits or authorizations as necessary to ensure adherence to all required regulatory requirements.

7. Re-opener Clause

This permit may be re-opened and modified to include new or revised discharge limitations, monitoring, or reporting requirements, compliance conditions and schedules, and special conditions. If necessary, DEQ will commence modification of this permit by notifying the permittee and seeking public comment on the proposed modifications.

SCHEDULE F: WPCF GENERAL CONDITIONS – INDUSTRIAL FACILITIES

SECTION A. STANDARD CONDITIONS

Duty to Comply with Permit

1. The permittee must comply with all conditions of this permit. Failure to comply with any permit condition is a violation of Oregon Revised Statutes (ORS) 468B.025 and grounds for an enforcement action. Failure to comply is also grounds for the Department to modify, revoke, or deny renewal of a permit.

Property Rights and Other Legal Requirements

2. Issuance of this permit does not convey any property rights of any sort, or any exclusive privilege, or authorize any injury to persons or property or invasion of any other rights, or any infringement of federal, tribal, state, or local laws or regulations.

Liability

3. The Department of Environmental Quality or its officers, agents, or employees may not sustain any liability on account of the issuance of this permit or on account of the construction or maintenance of facilities or systems because of this permit.

Permit Actions

4. After notice by the Department, this permit may be modified, suspended, or revoked in whole or in part during its term for cause including but not limited to the following:

a. Violation of any term or condition of this permit, any applicable rule or statute, or any order of the Commission;

b. Obtaining this permit by misrepresentation or failure to disclose fully all relevant facts.

Transfer of Permit

5. This permit may not be transferred to a third party without prior written approval from the Department. The Department may approve transfers where the transferee acquires a property interest in the permitted activity and agrees in writing to fully comply with all the terms and conditions of this permit and the rules of the Commission. A transfer application and filing fee must be submitted to the Department.

Permit Fees

6. The permittee must pay the fees required by Oregon Administrative Rules.

SECTION B. OPERATION AND MAINTENANCE OF POLLUTION CONTROLS

Proper Operation and Maintenance

1. At all times the permittee must maintain in good working order and properly operate as efficiently as possible all treatment or control facilities or systems installed or used by the permittee to comply with the terms and conditions of this permit.

Standard Operation and Maintenance

2. All waste collection, control, treatment, and disposal facilities or systems must be operated in a manner consistent with the following:

a. At all times, all facilities or systems must be operated as efficiently as possible in a manner that will prevent discharges, health hazards, and nuisance conditions.

b. All screenings, grit, and sludge must be disposed of in a manner approved by the Department to prevent any pollutant from the materials from reaching waters of the state, creating a public health hazard, or causing a nuisance condition.

c. Bypassing untreated waste is generally prohibited. Bypassing may not occur without prior written permission from the Department except where unavoidable to prevent loss of life, personal injury, or severe property damage.

Noncompliance and Notification Procedures

3. If the permittee is unable to comply with conditions of this permit because of surfacing sewage; a breakdown of equipment, facilities or systems; an accident caused by human error or negligence; or any other cause such as an act of nature, the permittee must:

a. Immediately take action to stop, contain, and clean up the unauthorized discharges and correct the problem.

b. Immediately notify the Department's Regional office so that an investigation can be made to evaluate the impact and the corrective actions taken, and to determine any additional action that must be taken.

c. Within 5 days of the time the permittee becomes aware of the circumstances, the permittee must submit to the Department a detailed written report describing the breakdown, the actual quantity and quality of waste discharged, corrective action taken, steps taken to prevent a recurrence, and any other pertinent information.

Compliance with these requirements does not relieve the permittee from responsibility to maintain continuous compliance with the conditions of this permit or liability for failure to comply.

Wastewater System Personnel

4. The permittee must provide an adequate operating staff that is duly qualified to carry out the operation, maintenance, and monitoring requirements to assure continuous compliance with the conditions of this permit.

Public Notification of Effluent Violation

5. If effluent limitations specified in this permit are exceeded or an overflow occurs that threatens public health, the permittee must take such steps as are necessary to alert the public, health agencies and other affected entitles (e.g., public water systems) about the extent and nature of the discharge in accordance with the notification procedures developed in accordance with General Condition B.6. Such steps may include, but are not limited to, posting of the river at access points and other places, news releases, and paid announcements on radio and television.

Emergency Response and Public Notification Plan

8. The permittee must develop and implement an emergency response and public notification plan that identifies measures to protect public health from bypasses or upsets that may endanger public health. At a minimum the plan must include mechanisms to:

a. Ensure that the permittee is aware (to the greatest extent possible) of such events;

b. Ensure notification of appropriate personnel and ensure that they are immediately dispatched for investigation and response;

c. Ensure immediate notification to the public, health agencies, and other affected entities (including public water systems). The response plan must identify the public health and other officials who will receive immediate notification;

d. Ensure that appropriate personnel are aware of and follow the plan and are appropriately trained;

e. Provide emergency operations: and

f. Ensure that DEQ is notified of the public notification steps taken.

SECTION C. MONITORING AND RECORDS

Inspection and Entry

1. The permittee must at all reasonable times allow authorized representatives of the Department to:

a. Enter upon the permittee's premises where a waste source or disposal system is located or where any records are required to be kept under the terms and conditions of this permit;
b. Have access to and copy any records required by this permit;
c. Inspect any treatment or disposal system, practices, operations, monitoring equipment, or monitoring method regulated or required by this permit; or
d. Sample or monitor any substances or permit parameters at any location at reasonable times for the purpose of assuring permit compliance or as otherwise authorized by state law.

Averaging of Measurements

2. Calculations of averages of measurements required for all parameters except bacteria must use an arithmetic mean; bacteria must be averaged as specified in the permit.

Monitoring Procedures

3. Monitoring must be conducted according to test procedures specified in the most recent edition of **Standard Methods for the Examination of Water and Wastewater**, unless other test procedures have been approved in writing by the Department and specified in this permit.

Retention of Records

4. The permittee must retain records of all monitoring and maintenance information, including all calibrations, copies of all reports required by this permit, and records of all data used to complete the application for this permit, for a period of at least 3 years from the date of the sample, measurement, report or application. The Department may extend this period at any time.

SECTION D. REPORTING REQUIREMENTS

Plan Submittal

1. Pursuant to Oregon Revised Statute 468B.055, unless specifically exempted by rule, construction, installation, or modification of disposal systems, treatment works, or sewerage systems may not commence until plans and specifications are submitted to and approved in writing by the Department. All construction, installation, or modification shall be in strict conformance with the Department's written approval of the plans.

Change in Discharge

2. Whenever a facility expansion, production increase, or process modification is expected to result in a change in the character of pollutants to be discharged or in a new or increased discharge that will exceed the conditions of this permit, a new application must be submitted together with the necessary reports, plans, and specifications for the proposed changes. A change may not be made until plans have been approved and a new permit or permit modification has been issued.

Signatory Requirements

3. All applications, reports, or information submitted to the Department must be signed and certified by the official applicant of record (owner) or authorized designee.

Twenty-Four Hour Reporting

4. The permittee must report any noncompliance that may endanger health or the environment. Any information must be provided orally (by telephone) within 24 hours from the time the permittee becomes aware of the circumstances, unless a shorter time is specified in the permit. During normal business hours, the Department's Regional office must be called. Outside of normal business hours, the Department must be contacted at 1-800-452-0311 (Oregon Emergency Response System).

The following must be included as information that must be reported within 24 hours under this paragraph:

a. Any unanticipated bypass that exceeds any effluent limitation in this permit;
b. Any upset that exceeds any effluent limitation in this permit;
c. Violation of maximum daily discharge limitation for any of the pollutants listed by the Department in this permit; and
d. Any noncompliance that may endanger human health or the environment.

A written submission must also be provided within 5 days of the time the permittee becomes aware of the circumstances. The written submission must contain:

e. A description of noncompliance and its cause;
f. The period of noncompliance, including exact dates and times;
g. The estimated time noncompliance is expected to continue if it has not been corrected;
h. Steps taken or planned to reduce, eliminate and prevent reoccurrence of the noncompliance; and
i. Public notification steps taken, pursuant to General Condition B.6.

The Department may waive the written report on a case-by-case basis if the oral report has been received within 24 hours.

SECTION E. DEFINITIONS

1. *BOD or BOD_5* means five-day biochemical oxygen demand.
2. *CBOD or $CBOD_5$* means five-day carbonaceous biochemical oxygen demand.
3. *TSS* means total suspended solids.
4. *Bacteria* means but is not limited to fecal coliform bacteria, total coliform bacteria, *Escherichia coli* (*E. coli*) bacteria, and *Enterococcus* bacteria.
5. *FC* means fecal coliform bacteria.
6. *Total residual chlorine* means combined chlorine forms plus free residual chlorine
7. *Technology based permit effluent limitations* means technology-based treatment requirements as defined in 40 CFR § 125.3, and concentration and mass load effluent limitations that are based on minimum design criteria specified in OAR 340-041.
8. *mg/l* means milligrams per liter.
9. *µg/l* means microgram per liter.
10. *kg* means kilograms.
11. *m^3/d* means cubic meters per day.
12. *MGD* means million gallons per day.
13. *Average monthly effluent limitation* as defined at 40 CFR § 122.2 means the highest allowable average of daily discharges over a calendar month, calculated as the sum of all daily discharges measured during a calendar month divided by the number of daily discharges measured during that month.
14. *Average weekly effluent limitation* as defined at 40 CFR § 122.2 means the highest allowable average of daily discharges over a calendar week, calculated as the sum of all daily discharges measured during a calendar week divided by the number of daily discharges measured during that week.

15. *Daily discharge* as defined at 40 CFR § 122.2 means the discharge of a pollutant measured during a calendar day or any 24-hour period that reasonably represents the calendar day for purposes of sampling. For pollutants with limitations expressed in units of mass, the daily discharge must be calculated as the total mass of the pollutant discharged over the day. For pollutants with limitations expressed in other units of measurement, the daily discharge must be calculated as the average measurement of the pollutant over the day.

16. *24-hour composite sample* means a combination of at least six discrete sample aliquots of at least 100 milliliters, collected at periodic intervals from the same location, during the operating hours of the facility over a 24 hour period. Four (rather than six) aliquots should be collected for volatile organics analyses. The composite must be flow or time proportional, whichever is more appropriate. The sample aliquots must be collected and stored in accordance with procedures prescribed in the most recent edition of *Standard Methods for the Examination of Water and Wastewater*.

17. *Grab sample* means an individual discrete sample collected over a period of time not to exceed 15 minutes.

18. *Quarter* means January through March, April through June, July through September, or October through December.

19. *Month* means calendar month.

20. *Week* means a calendar week of Sunday through Saturday.

State of Oregon
Department of
Environmental
Quality

Water Pollution Control Facilities
Permit Fact Sheet
Mineral Valley, LLC – Mormon Basin

Permittee	Mineral Valley, LLC 40900 Woodward Avenue, Suite 265 Bloomfield Hills, MI 48304
Existing Permit Information	YDO Site RID: 24232 Permit Number: TBD Expiration Date: TBD
Permittee Contact	Thomas Hammond tom@mineralvalleyllc.com (248) 205-7930 40900 Woodward Avenue, Suite 265 Bloomfield Hills, MI 48304
Facility Name & Location	Facility Name: Mineral Valley, LLC – Mormon Basin Mine Address: West and South of Mormon Basin and Rye Valley Rd., Bridgeport, Oregon 97819 French Gulch Processing Site Lat/Long: 44.429970, -117.600270 County: Malheur
LLID:	LLID: 1176055443389
Receiving Stream/Basin:	Nearest Stream: Basin Creek, RM 7.35 Sub Basin Name: Willow-Malheur WRD Basin Name: Middle Snake-Boise
Proposed Action:	New Permit Issuance Submittal RID: 100962 Date Application Received: May 5, 2026
Source Category:	Industrial
Sources Covered:	Industrial Wastewater Placer Gold Mining
Permit Type:	WPCF-IW-B12
Permit Writer	Anna Morgan-Hayes 541-246-4562 Date Prepared: 11/19/2026

WPCF Permit Fact Sheet
Mineral Valley Mining, LLC – Mormon Basin

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WPCF Permit Fact Sheet
Mineral Valley Mining, LLC – Mormon Basin Mine

1. Introduction

This fact sheet describes the basis and methodology used in developing the permit in accordance with Oregon Administrative Rule 340-045-0037. The permit is divided into several sections:

Schedule A – Waste discharge limitations
Schedule B – Minimum monitoring and report requirements
Schedule C – Compliance conditions and schedules
Schedule D – Special conditions
Schedule F – General conditions

DEQ requires an individual Water Pollution Control Facilities (WPCF) permit for wastewater management if an owner or operator proposes a metal mining activity that processes more than 10,000 cubic yards of ore per year with no discharge to Oregon waters. The mine is currently non-operational as of the time of writing this permit, however, the facility plans to be operational as soon as possible.

The Mormon Basin Mine site is located on Bureau of Land Management (BLM) and private land near Bridgeport, Oregon (Township 13S, Range 42E, Sections 17, 20, and 21, Tax Lot 400, 100, and 500). Related to this operation, Mineral Valley, LLC is authorized by the Department of Geological and Mineral Industries (DOGAMI) Operating Permit 23-0267 to mine at the following locations:

ID No.:	23-0267
Site Name:	Mormon Basin
County:	Malheur
Twp R S TL:	13S42E16 1000, 13S42E17 125, 13S42E17 400, 13S42E20 125, 13S42E20 400, 13S42E21 125, 13S42E21 400

On September 3, 2026, DEQ received a complete application package (YDO Submittal ID 100962) for Mormon Basin Mine, owned and operated by Mineral Valley, LLC a business registered with Oregon Secretary of State Corporation Division. The application consisted of a signed Land Use Compatibility Statement signed by Malheur County Planning Director, the DOGAMI Operating Permit, and a Preliminary Engineering Report/Facility Plan (PER).

2. Facility Description

2.1 Wastewater Facility

Mineral Valley, LLC will conduct a placer mining operation and process approximately 366,000 cubic yards per year, but not more than 500,000 cubic yards. The facility will operate seasonally, with startup beginning in March and winterizing operations beginning in October.

The following description of the facility is paraphrased from the Preliminary Engineering Report/Facility Plan (PER) (Darden, September 2026):

Pay gravel will be mined from either the area near French Gulch, the area near Californian Gulch or the area near Pedro Mountain. This land is private property and BLM lands in both Malheur (primary) and Baker Counties. The BLM portion of the area to be mined is approved under Plan of Operation 64155 and Environmental Assessment DOI-BLM-OR-050-2009-EA. The project area, consisting of both BLM and private lands, is approved under DOGAMI permit 23-0267, but the total amount of material processed will not exceed the total number of yards authorized under this permit.

The facility is located within the five-acre stationary processing site near French Gulch. The facility is considered a closed-loop system, where water enters the facility at the end of the sluices, which are associated with the wash plant, and exits the facility and reenters the site wash plant at the end of the last settling pond. This circular system circulates water through the wash plant into the facilities' sand screw and three stationary settling ponds and back to the wash plant. Makeup water is added to the third stationary settling pond.

The three settling ponds of this facility are designed to use gravity to settle particulates from sediment laden waters. The water is then recirculated through the wash plant for placer ore processing. The first section of the system is a sandscrew which acts as a sediment trap, the initial water settling location, and the point of the greatest particulate settlement. The three settling ponds will be lined with a 40-mil HDPE liner in 2027 following approval of the September 2026 PER. There will be no biological treatment/retreatment taking place in this facility, nor is chemical treatment or flocculants planned in this facility.

Placer gravels are extracted using mechanized equipment and the gravels are transferred to the plant. There, the gravels are washed with water to facilitate separation of the gold particles from the gravel. The gold is collected, and the washed tailings are returned to the excavation for reclamation. No chemicals are used in the processing of the gravel. The gold being removed is elemental gold which is generally not bound to other materials.

Wash Plant

Makeup water at the average rate of 120 gpm will be pumped from one of the water rights the permittee operates under (see Makeup Water section below). This water will be transferred to Pond 3. The pump will be operated on an "as needed" basis which will maintain Pond 3 water

level with a freeboard of approximately three feet. Sediment reduction via the three lined ponds is required so that the facility can recycle water though the wash plant.

Pay gravel will be processed through a sluice box handling 7/16" minus gravels. The washed tailings will be fed to a stacker conveyor. Water is circulated through the wash plant and through a sluice box at an average rate of approximately 1200 gpm in a closed loop cycle. Following processing in the sluice box, a sand screw will remove course sediment, and the first part of the first pond will be utilized to remove fine sediment. The water will then be routed to the three-pond system. Water and slimes (settled fines from the processing of placer gold gravels), will be routed through the settling ponds via 18" culverts.

Settling Ponds #1, #2, and #3

The ponds are all pit type ponds with low berms and vary in size. These three ponds will provide approximately 1.23 days to be processed through the system. The total surface area of the three settling ponds is approximately 26,600 square feet. Rain and snowmelt that falls within the site can be routed to one of the settling ponds where there is a cut in the berm to allow water to enter. Makeup water at the rate of approximately 120 gpm will be added to the facility settling Pond 3. The water surface level in settling Pond 3 is maintained with approximately three feet of freeboard and will be used to meter the flow of water from the water supply source. Water flow rates to the facility are established by the facility operator using the depth of the water in the sluice box. Normal operation requires water flowing at an approximate depth of 2". At that depth, the correct average flow of approximately 1200 gallons per minute will be achieved.

Slimes Management and Reclamation

Ore processing sediments are defined as tailings or slimes, which are the fine-grained, rock-like muddy residues left over after valuable minerals are extracted from mined ore Slimes will be moved by pumping to a slime holding area for dewatering or by other means as are appropriate.

Rock tailings will be processed continuously and returned to the excavation site for reclamation. This will normally be accomplished by means of haul trucks. Once in place, the tailings will be covered with topsoil according to BLM and DOGAMI permit requirements. Dried slimes will be mixed with topsoil for reuse in reclamation. All sediments must be managed in approved permitted areas.

Makeup Water

Makeup water will be supplied, as needed, via water rights from Humbolt shaft #47931, the storage reservoirs, HB 2153, #69224, Glengarry Creek #1574, and well G17310.The amount of makeup water required will depend on the weather conditions and operations.

A review of assigned water rights was not conducted by DEQ as part of this permit development process, water right assignments are regulated by OWRD. The permittee is required to operate makeup water sources in compliance with approved water rights and/or irrigation district agreements.

Chemicals Used

No chemicals or hazardous materials of any type, except fuel and lubricants that are used for excavation and processing machinery, will be used in the process or brought onto the site. No flocculants are proposed for use. A hazardous material plan has been prepared and implemented as a requirement under Mine Safety and Health Administration rules.

There will be no on-site sewage disposal. Portable toilets will be used at each work site for personnel use. These facilities will be supplied and maintained by an appropriate contractor.

Figure 2-1: Mineral Valley, LLC - Mormon Basin Mine, Tax Map (Darden, 2026)

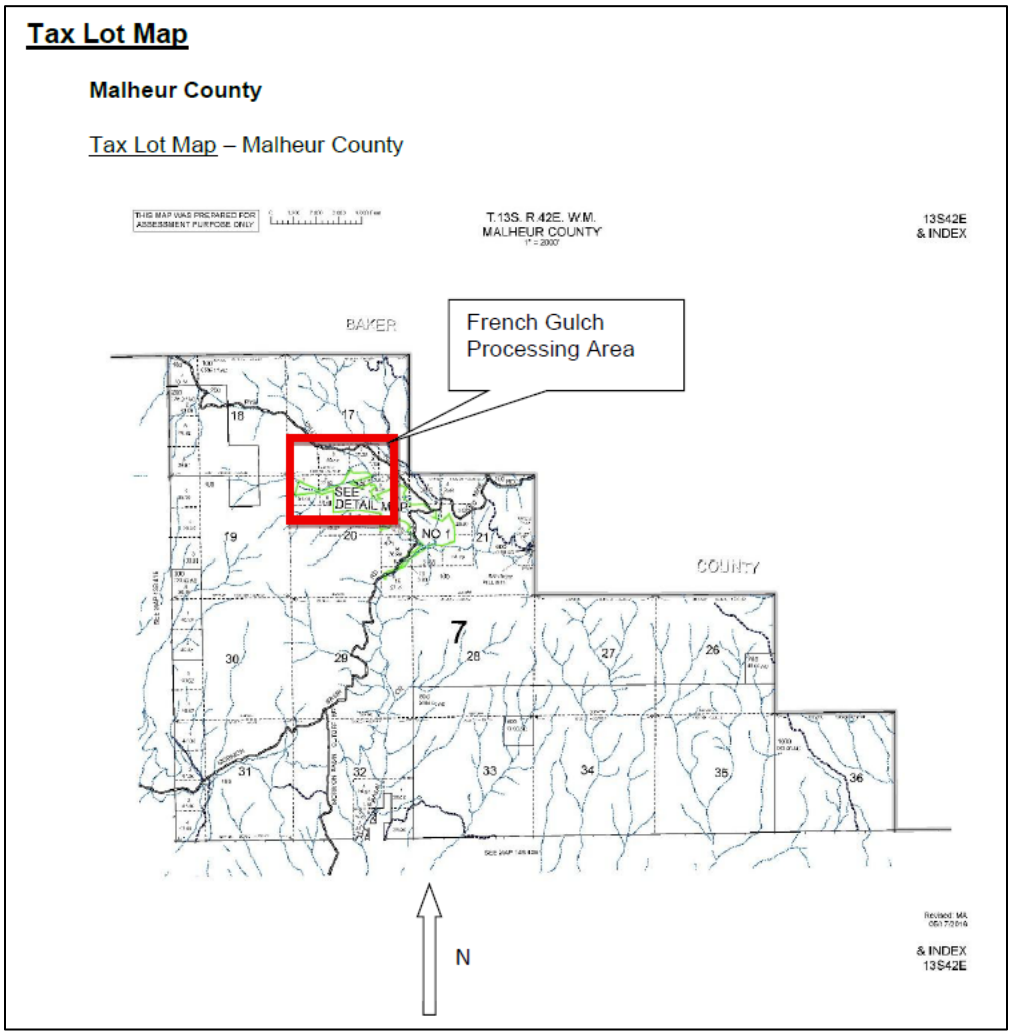


Figure 2-2: Mineral Valley, LLC - Mormon Basin Mine Site Location

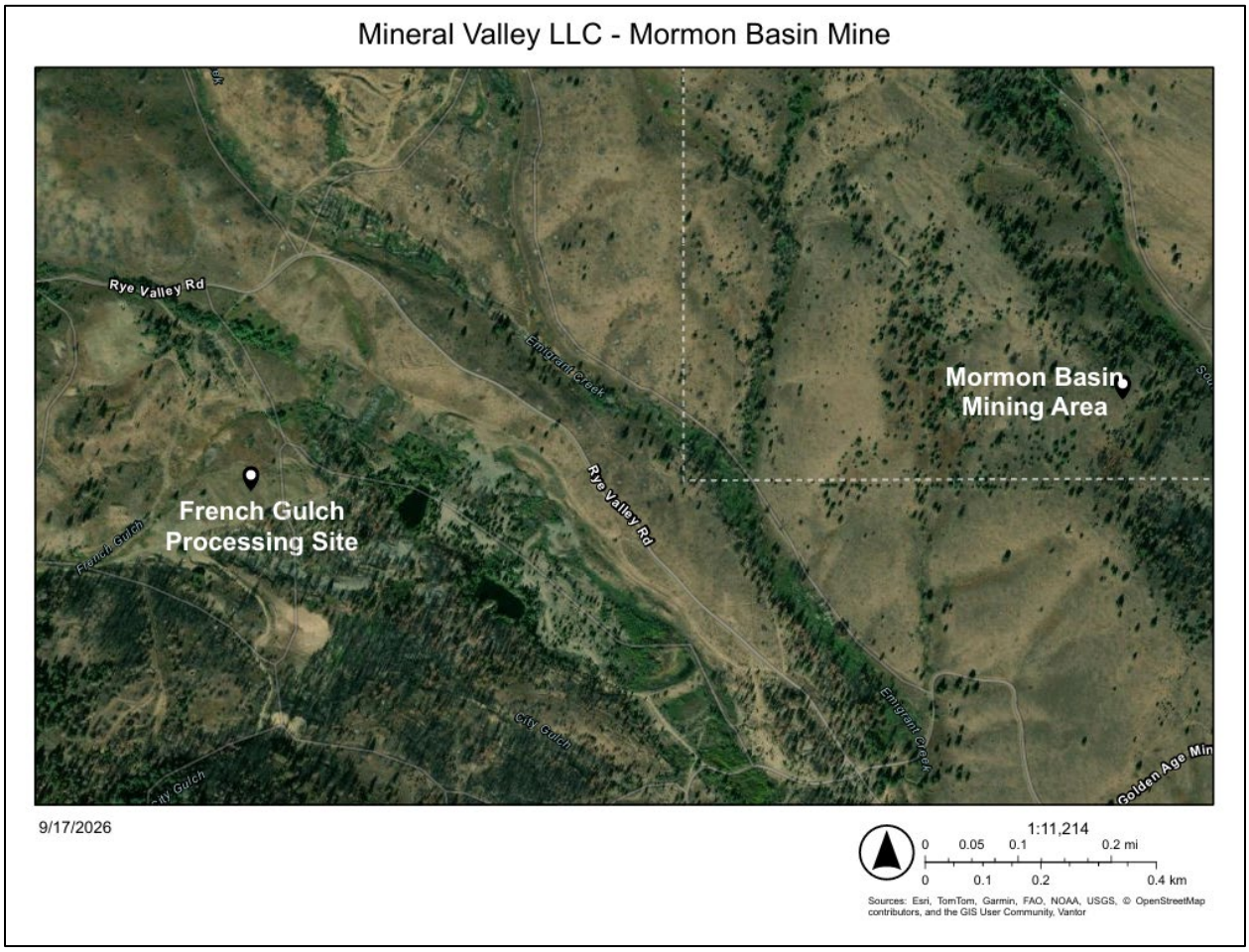


Figure 2-3: Mineral Valley, LLC - Mormon Basin Mine Sites Area Map (Darden, 2026)

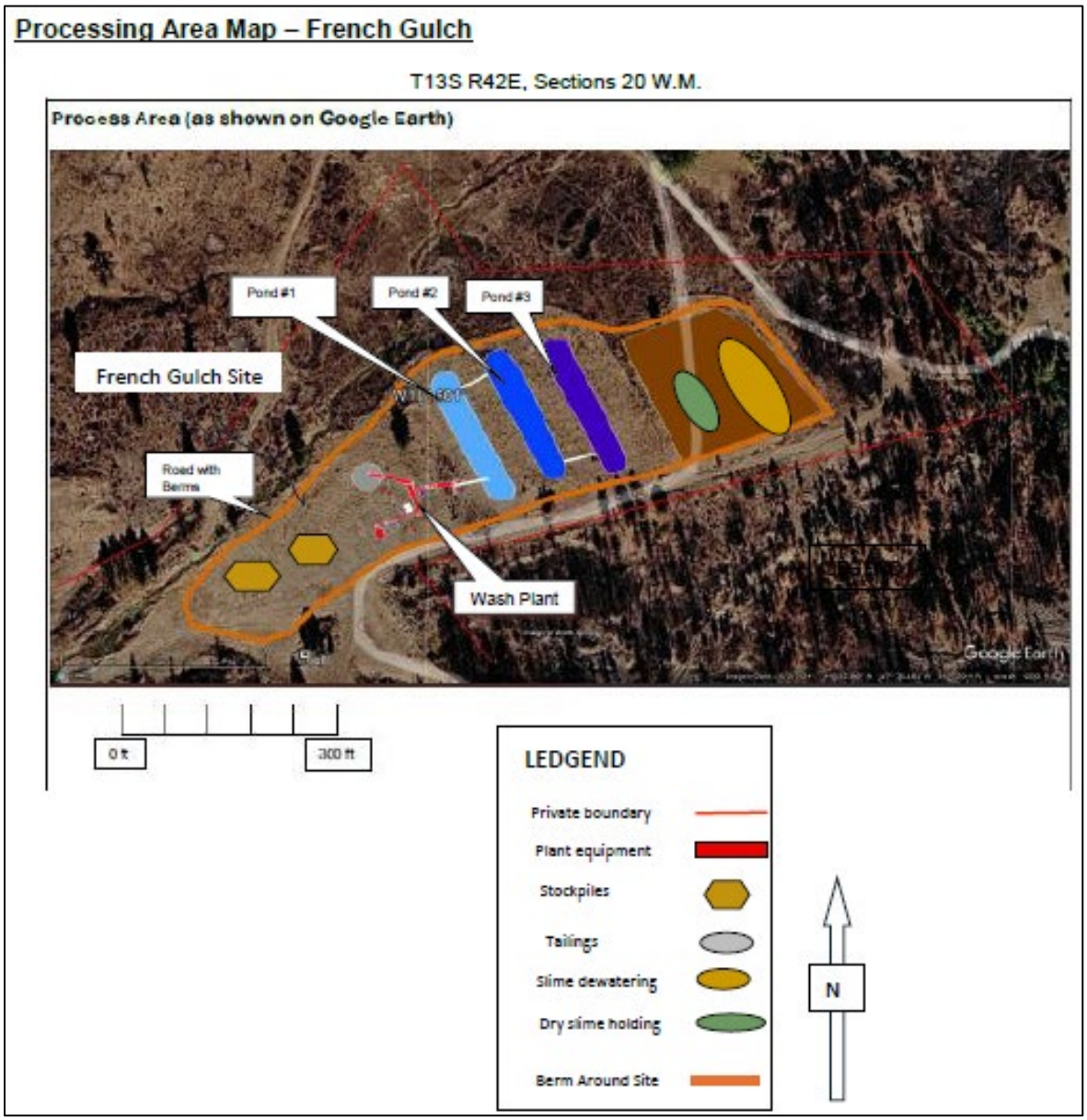
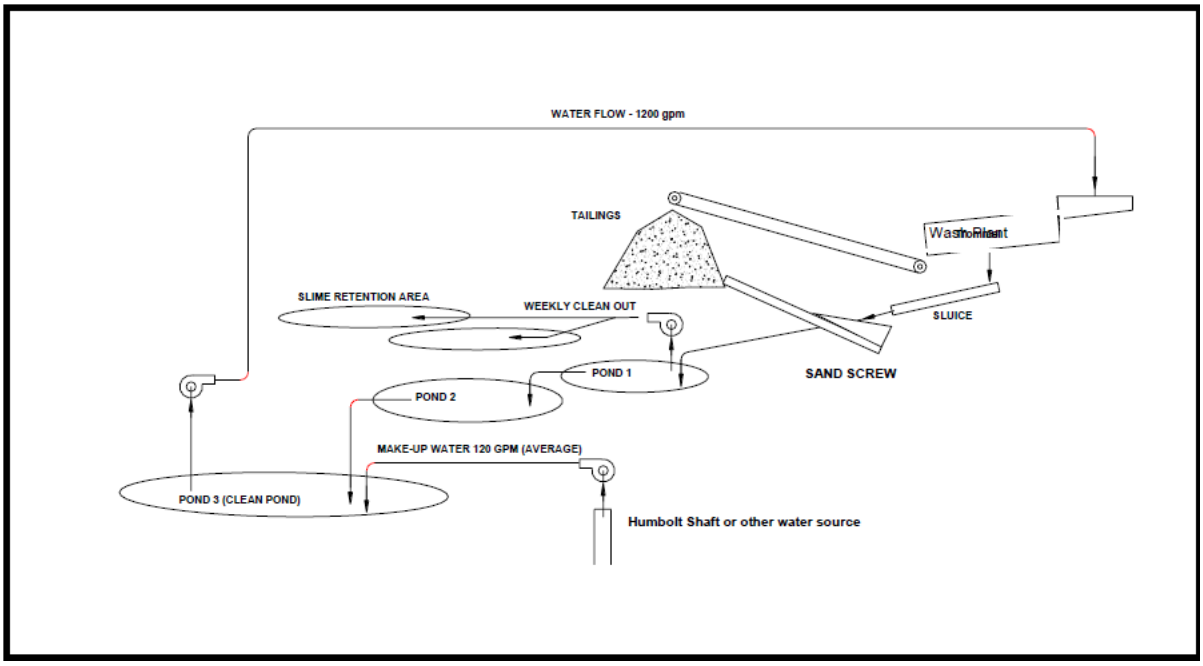


Figure 2-4: Mineral Valley, LLC - Mormon Basin Mine Processing Schematic (Darden, 2026)



2.2 Compliance History

This is a new permit; therefore, there is no compliance history associated with this permit.

2.3 Stormwater

The site which will be surrounded by berms before construction of the facility begins to prevent stormwater from running off. The site is on the valley floor and is flat to gently sloping and will be rocked. During processing, the berms on all sides will prevent run-off from entering the site, except at the road access points where trucks and equipment enter the site with pay gravel or leave the site with washed tailings. Rain and snow will melt into the graveled site and will not run off.

Discharge of stormwater to surface water is prohibited. All stormwater runoff from mining operations will be contained by berms around each site and managed by seepage and evaporation. Runoff from within the processing sites is channeled to the respective pond. DEQ stormwater has evaluated potential for stormwater runoff at the excavation sites separately from this permit.

The discharge of stormwater from other areas outside of the areas covered under the WPCF may require a 1200-Z industrial stormwater permit. A facility may require separate stormwater permitting in accordance with a 1200-Z and/or 1200-C permit.

A facility that may discharge industrial stormwater to surface waters or to conveyance systems that discharge to surface waters of the state and,

1. The stormwater is associated with an industrial activity identified in Table 1: Sources Covered or listed in Table 2: Additional Industrial Activities Covered; or
2. The facility is notified in writing the Director determines coverage under this permit is required for its stormwater discharges pursuant to 40 CFR 122.26(a)(9)(i)(D).

It is the responsibility of the permittee to evaluate and attain appropriate stormwater coverage as part of facility construction and operations.

2.4 Groundwater

The nearest surface water that could be affected is Basin Creek at river mile 7.35. Basin Creek is a tributary of Willow Creek, a tributary of the Malheur River in the Middle Snake-Boise Basin. Oregon Administrative Rule (OAR) OAR 340-041-0201, Table 201A lists the beneficial uses for which a surface water quality must be protected in the Burnt subbasin. The beneficial uses included in Table 260A include: domestic and industrial water supply, irrigation, livestock watering, fish and aquatic life, wildlife and hunting, fishing, boating, water contact recreation, and aesthetic quality. Downstream designated fish uses indicated in Figure 201A include: Redband trout. Applicable water quality standards for the Malheur-Willow subbasin that protect these uses are found in OAR 340-041.

According to the Preliminary Engineering Report/Facility Plan (Darden, 2026), there is a perched groundwater aquifer in the area near French Gulch. This perched aquifer is not connected to the aquifer which has been tapped for the well which is several hundred feet below the surface. Prior excavation in the wash plant areas has shown that groundwater in this perched aquifer is deeper than the 15-foot depth of the excavated ponds. Mining test holes in the area indicate ground water level deeper than the pond excavations.

There are two wells located within a ½ mile radius of the operations. One is located near French Gulch and one at the Humbolt Mine Shaft. There are springs located in French Gulch, California Gulch, City Gulch, Rich Gulch and two in Glengarry Gulch, all of which will be protected during mining. These springs appear on the USGS map included earlier on page 4 of this document.

In the operation of nonchemical placer gold mining, turbidity is the primary parameter of concern for surface water and groundwater protection. Lined settling ponds 1 through 3 will have very minimal seepage and soil functions as a natural filter for turbidity, therefore, there are no expected downgradient impacts to beneficial uses of groundwater. The potential for untreated or inadequately treated wastewater to impact groundwater, and for impacted groundwater to recharge surface water, has been addressed in this permit by requiring the permittee to monitor various wastewater parameters and lining the ponds. Additionally, a leak test of the lined lagoons will be required once during the permit cycle to determine the rate of leakage. Moreover, surface water discharge is prohibited in the proposed permit.

3. Schedule A: Effluent Limit Development

No discharge to state waters is permitted. Only wastewater from nonchemical ore processing operations is permitted to be disposed in the facility ponds. Water quality standards for groundwater and surface water must not be violated. Wastewater management and disposal must be conducted in accordance with the Department approved Engineering Report/Facility Plan. Additional benchmarks pertain to pond freeboard, pond solids management and nuisance conditions. A benchmark for pH has not been included in this permit due to the ponds having a liner.

3.1 Groundwater

DEQ may evaluate the need for a full assessment of the facility's impact on groundwater quality if there is any evidence of an adverse impact resulting from the facilities operation or the facility fails to operate in accordance with permit conditions. Schedule A of the proposed permit includes a condition prohibiting adverse impacts to groundwater.

4. Schedule B: Monitoring and Reporting Requirements

Schedule B of the permit describes the minimum monitoring and reporting necessary to demonstrate compliance with the proposed effluent limits. Detailed monitoring frequency and reporting requirements are in Schedule B of the proposed permit. The required monitoring, reporting and frequency for many of the parameters are based on DEQ's monitoring and reporting matrix guidelines, permit writer judgment, reporting requirements for similar facilities of this type and size and ensuring the needed data is available for the next permit renewal.

The monitoring data provides DEQ with information to evaluate the performance of the wastewater treatment facility. The authority to require periodic reporting by permittees is found at ORS 468.065(5).

Monitoring requirements for pH discharge into Pond #1 and visual inspections are included in the permit for Mineral Valley, LLC, Mormon Basin Mine to ensure no adverse impacts on groundwater. Additionally, monitoring of freeboard, dikes, total flow, ore processed, operation dates, and solids removal are included in Schedule B of the permit to determine proper operations and function of Mormon Basin Mine. A lagoon leak test will be required once during the permit cycle to further evaluate integrity of the liner to prevent impacts to groundwater.

5. Schedule C: Compliance Schedule

The permittee is expected to meet all permit limits upon issuance and therefore a compliance schedule is not needed.

6. Schedule D: Special Conditions

The proposed permit contains the following special conditions. The conditions include the following:

6.1 Emergency Response and Public Notification Plan

A requirement to develop and submit an emergency and spill response plan or ensure the current one is current per General Condition B.8 in Schedule F.

6.2 Placer Mining Operations and Notification

A condition that requires the permittee to comply with operations and notification procedures specific to placer mines of this size and type.

6.3 Preliminary Engineering Report/Facility Plan

A condition requiring that the permittee update their Engineering Report/Facility plan annually, if necessary, and whenever there is a change in operations or supervisory personnel during the year and provide proper notification to DEQ of any changes.

6.4 Pond Solids Annual Report

This condition requires the permittee to submit a Pond Solids Annual Report each year documenting removal of wastewater solids from the ponds during the previous calendar year.

6.5 Lagoon Leak Test

This condition requires the permittee to submit a Lagoon Leak Test Report one-time during the permit cycle as specified in the permit.

6.6 Compliance with Federal and State Permit Requirements

This condition requires the permittee to maintain compliance with applicable agency permitting and relevant authorities.

6.7 Re-opener Clause

A condition authorizing DEQ to modify the permit if necessary.

7. Schedule F: WPCF General Conditions

This schedule includes conditions and definitions that are applicable to all WPCF permits in Oregon of this type.

8. Next Steps

Mineral Valley, LLC – Mormon Basin Mine has submitted a complete WPCF permit application. DEQ will proceed with a Category III permitting action for public notification as per OAR 340-045-0027.

DEQ will respond to comments received during the comment period. All those providing comment will receive a copy of DEQ's response. Interested parties may also request a copy of DEQ's response. Once comments are received and evaluated, DEQ will decide whether to issue the permit as proposed, to make changes to the permit, or to deny the permit. DEQ will notify the permittee of DEQ's decision. If substantive changes are made to the permit, then an additional public notice period may occur. DEQ may also revise this fact sheet or update the fact sheet through memorandum.