

CWA 401 Water Quality Certification Request

version 2.15

(Submission #: HQE-3THN-KW9A0, version 1)

Digitally signed by:
dec.alaska.gov
Date: 2025.07.15 11:38:14 -08:00
Reason: Submission Data
Location: State of Alaska

Details

Site: Comeback Creek - West Fork

Submission ID HQE-3THN-KW9A0

Form Input

Form Instructions

Form Instructions

Instructions for filling out the 401 Prefiling Meeting Request Form are located on the Alaska DEC website at the link below.

[401 Prefiling Meeting Request Form Instructions](#)

Agents: For Delegation of Authority to act on behalf of the applicant in processing the application, use the following form, have signed, and upload with application.

- [Delegation of Authority - 401 Application](#)

Contact Information (1 of 2)

Required Contacts

The following **Contact Roles are REQUIRED**. Please select the appropriate role(s) for each contact and complete the contact details. Multiple role(s) may be assigned to each unique individual.

- **Applicant** (Responsible Party)
- **Billing Contact**

Contact Role(s)

Applicant

Owner

Operator

Application Preparer

Contact

Prefix

NONE PROVIDED

First Name Last Name
Drew Miller

Title

Project Engineer

Organization Name

Taiga Mining Company, Inc.

Phone Type	Number	Extension
Business	9073494644	
Mobile	9072021370	

Email

dmiller@taigamining.com

Mailing Address

PO BOX 113108
Anchorage, Alaska 99511
USA

Contact Information (2 of 2)

Required Contacts

The following **Contact Roles are REQUIRED**. Please select the appropriate role(s) for each contact and complete the contact details. Multiple role(s) may be assigned to each unique individual.

- **Applicant** (Responsible Party)
- **Billing Contact**

Contact Role(s)

Billing Contact

Contact

Prefix

NONE PROVIDED

First Name Last Name
Karina Barenz

Title

Accounts Payable

Organization Name

Taiga Mining Company, Inc.

Phone Type	Number	Extension
Business	9073494644	

Email

tmc.alaska@taigamining.com

Mailing Address

PO BOX 113108
Anchorage, AK 99511
United States

Project / Facility Site Info

Identify the applicable federal license or permit

A copy of the federal permit or license application is required to be submitted with the request for the water quality certification. (18 AAC 15.130, 18 AAC 15.180)

Federal Agency

Army Corps of Engineers (USACE)

Permit License Number (ex. USACE: POA-XXXX-XXXX; FERC: FERC-xxxx-xxxx; EPA: AK#####)
POA-2025-00278

Project Name or Title

Comeback Creek - West Fork

Primary Receiving Waterbody Name

NONE PROVIDED

Estimated Project Dates (+/- 30 days)

Project Estimated Start Date	Project Estimated End/Completion Date
09/15/2025	10/31/2027

Approximate date(s) when any Discharge(s) may commence (+/- 30 days)

Description	Discharge Estimated Start Date	Discharge Estimated End Date
Dewatering	06/01/2026	10/31/2027

Project Description (Nature of Activity, include all features)

Clearing of land to facilitate mining operations. Mining operations include removal of overburden, transporting and processing of gold bearing materials, and reclamation of the disturbed area.

Project Purpose (Describe the reason(s) for discharge)

The economic recovery of placer gold resources in the lower reaches of the West Fork of Comeback creek.

FILL MATERIAL WILL BE DISCHARGED INTO WELAND AREAS OF THE COMEBACK CREEK DRAINAGE TO CREATE A SAFE WORKING AREA AND ACCESS ROAD FOR RECOVERY OF PLACER GOLD RESOURCES.

Is any portion of the work already complete?

No

Description of current activity site conditions

The site currently has been explored and prospected by means of sonic drilling equipment mounted on rubber tracks. Access routes through the area are tractor trails.

Relevant Site Data, Photographs that Represent Current Site Conditions, or other Relevant Documentation

USACE Application Pages for DEC.pdf - 07/15/2025 11:18 AM

Comment

NONE PROVIDED

Is this a linear project? (i.e., utility line, road, etc.)

No

Project Address

[NO STREET ADDRESS SPECIFIED]

[NO CITY SPECIFIED], AK [NO ZIP CODE SPECIFIED]

Visit the link below to help with conversion between DMS and Latitude/Longitude

[DSM - Lat/Long converter](#)

Project Location

66.25561235991127,-155.70787757939442

Visit the following link if you need to convert the lat/long to get the **PLSS information**
[Converter for Section, Township, and Range](#)

PLSS Location (Public Land Survey System)

State Tax Parcel ID	Borough/Municipality	Meridian	Section	Township	Range
NONE PROVIDED	Yukon-Koyukuk Census Area	Kateel River	20	10N	15E

Directions to Site

From Fairbanks Alaska, 245 Miles WNW to private air strip (2AK6)
located at: 66 10.664'N, 155 41.303'W.

Federal Agency Contact (1 of 2)

Have you been working with anyone in the Federal Agency?
Yes

Federal Contact Role
USACE

Federal Agency Contact

First Name	Last Name	
Tyler	Marye	
Title		
Project Manager		
Organization Name		
US Army Corps of Engineers, Alaska District		
Phone Type	Number	Extension
Business	9077535887	
Email		
tyler.j.marye@usace.army.mil		

Federal Agency Contact (2 of 2)

Have you been working with anyone in the Federal Agency?
Yes

Federal Contact Role
USACE

Federal Agency Contact

First Name	Last Name	
John	Sargent	
Title		
Regulatory Project Manager, Biologist		
Organization Name		
US Army CORPS of Engineers		
Phone Type	Number	Extension
Business	907-347-1801	
Email		
John.C.Sargent@usace.army.mil		

Dredge Material to be Discharged

Is dredging involved?
No

Tier Analysis

A tier analysis is comprised of a layered approach to determine the need for testing the dredge material to aid in generating physical, chemical, toxicity and bioaccumulation information, but not more information than is necessary to make factual determinations. The tier analysis is a series of tiers (I - IV) or levels of intensity (and cost) of investigation. It is necessary to proceed through the tiers only until information is sufficient to make factual determinations, no further testing is required.

- Tier I - Site Evaluation and History.** The initial tier (Tier I) uses readily available, existing information (including all previous testing). For certain dredge materials with readily apparent potential for environmental impact (or lack thereof), information collected in Tier I may be sufficient for making factual determinations.
- Tier II - Chemical Testing** is concerned solely with sediment and water chemistry.
- Tier III - Biological Testing (bioassay and/or bioaccumulation testing)** is concerned with well-defined, nationally accepted toxicity and bioaccumulation testing procedures.
- Tier IV - Special Studies** allows for case-specific laboratory and field testing, and is intended to for use in unusual circumstances.

For more information regarding a Tier analysis, see below references

- [EPA Inland Testing Manual](#)
- [USACE Seattle District Civil Works DMMP User Manual](#)

Fill Material to be Discharged

Will Fill Material be Discharged?

Yes

For fill material, identify the material source

Materials local to the worksite.

Types of material being discharged and the amount of each type (cubic yards)

Type	Cubic Yards
Soil Overburden	127,000.0

Surface area in (acres or linear feet) of wetlands or other waters filled

Surface Area	Units
18.5	Acres

Discharge Location Information (1 of 1)

Identify the location and nature of any potential discharge that may result from the proposed project and the location of receiving waters

Discharge Location ID (001, 002, 003, - increment by one)

002

NOTE: if you have a receiving water that is Wetlands, just enter the generic term "Wetlands". Do not enter "Wetlands of Tanana River", for example.

Please select 'Other' if your waterbody is not in the list below.

You can start typing the name of the waterbody to filter the list.

Receiving Waterbody / Wetlands Name

Wetlands

Discharge Location

66.25650697222508,-155.70970764160015

Other Pollutant Sources

Contaminated Site Information

Determine if your project is **within 1,500 feet** of a known Alaska DEC Contaminated Site. See the *Alaska DEC Contaminated Web Map* below. This will help you to identify if any potential pollutants/parameters of concern may be present on your project site., see DEC's website:

- [Contaminated Sites Web Map](#)
- [Contaminated Sites Database Search website](#)

Is the project within 1,500 feet of a known contaminated site?

No

Parameters of Concern that may be present in discharge

Parameter(s) of Concern

Identify the parameters of concern that may be present in your discharge from the dredge and/or fill material.

Note, **TURBIDITY** and **SEDIMENT** are routine parameters associated with dredge and/or fill activities.

Consider if other parameters may be present from past activities in the area such as contaminated site data, impaired waters or other relevant water quality data, or other parameters of concern identified during the application process.

Parameter(s)

Turbidity

Sediment

If known, describe respective concentrations, persistence, and potential impacts to the receiving water and data on parameters that may alter the effects of the discharge to the receiving water

Any discharges will be in compliance with the mechanical placer miner discharge permit parameters.

Impaired Waters

An **impaired waterbody** are those listed as a **Category 4 [304(b)]** or **Category 5 [303(d)]** in the current EPA approved *Alaska's Integrated Water Quality Monitoring and Assessment Report*.

For the most recently *Approved Integrated Water Quality Monitoring And Assessment Report (Integrated Report)*, see DEC's website:

- [Integrated Water Quality Monitoring And Assessment Report https://dec.alaska.gov/water/water-quality/integrated-report](https://dec.alaska.gov/water/water-quality/integrated-report)

Does a discharge of any parameter identified above occur to an impaired waterbody?

No

If determined necessary and requested by the Department, submit sufficient and credible baseline water quality information for the receiving water which meets the requirements of 18 AAC 70.016(a)(6)(A-C).

Avoidance & Minimization BMPs and Mitigation Measures

Describe how impacts are being avoided and minimized on the project site. Include best management practices (BMPs) for sediment and erosion controls that will be implemented to minimize environmental impacts, and any methods and means proposed to monitor the discharge and the equipment or measures planned to treat, control, or manage the discharge.

Include a description of any methods and means proposed to monitor the discharge and the equipment or measures planned to treat, control, or manage the discharge

Stormwaters entering the site will be collected and directed around the worksite by means of a bypass channel.

Avoidance Measures

Thorough exploration has identified what areas of the deposit are economically viable, allowing for marginal or non-economical portions of the deposit to be avoided entirely.

Minimization Measures

Where possible, stockpiling and disturbance is focused in areas upland, minimizing the required disturbance to aquatic resources.

Mitigation Measures

Upon completion of the mining operations, reclamation operations will reclaim the materials stored within the aquatic resource boundaries and construct additional water features (ponds & connections) to achieve a restoration ratio of 1:1 or greater.

Social / Economic Importance

Social or Economic Importance

(18 AAC 70.016(c)(5): Provide information that demonstrates the accommodation of important social or economic development. The applicant shall complete either a social OR economic importance analysis (or both) for each affected community in the area where the receiving water for the proposed discharge is located.

Social Importance Analysis

Community services provided

Economic Importance Analysis

Employment, job availability, and salary impacts

Access to resources

Describe Social and/or Economic Importance of the project

Taiga Mining Company, Inc. has been operating at Hogatza since 1990. Throughout its 30+ year operational history at Hogatza, Taiga Mining has provided seasonal jobs to many Alaskans, both from local native communities and other parts of the state. Local labor sourced from the Villages of Huslia, Hughes, and others, often begins with little or no skill in general labor or heavy equipment operation. Many employees have learned heavy equipment operation while working for Taiga Mining.

Description of Social or Economic Importance, if needed

NONE PROVIDED

Comment

NONE PROVIDED

List of Other Permits or Certificates

*Would include but is not restricted to zoning, building, and flood plain permits.

Include a list of all other federal, interstate, tribal, state, territorial, or local agency authorizations required for the proposed project, including all approvals or denials already received.

Agency	Type of Approval*	Identification Number	Date Applied	Date Approved	Date Denied
ADF&G	Habitat	FH13-III-0198-3	NONE PROVIDED	07/15/2021	12/31/2025
AKDEC	Mechanical Placer Gebneral Permit	AKG370491	NONE PROVIDED	06/01/2021	02/28/2026
AKDNR	APMA-MLUP	Not Yet Assigned	09/01/2025	NONE PROVIDED	NONE PROVIDED

Other Agency or Local Contacts (1 of 1)

Contact Role

OTHER_REG_CNTCT

Other Agency and or Local Contacts

First Name

Michael

Last Name

LaDouceur

Title

Geologist 3 - APMA Permitting and Compliance

Organization Name

Alaska Department of Natural Resources (Mining Section)

Phone Type**Number****Extension**

Business

9074512784

Email

michael.ladouceur@alaska.gov

Attachments

Copy of Federal Application (USACE, EPA, or FERC, etc.)

[Comeback Creek West Fork Application Packet \(2025-05-15\).pdf - 07/15/2025 11:18 AM](#)

Comment

NONE PROVIDED

Figures and/or Drawings/Plan Sets. To include a map or diagram of the proposed activity site, including the proposed activity boundaries in relation to local streets, roads, and highways.

[USACE Application Pages for DEC.pdf - 07/15/2025 11:26 AM](#)

[Comeback Bypass Channel.pdf - 07/15/2025 11:27 AM](#)

[Comeback Access Disturbances.pdf - 07/15/2025 11:28 AM](#)

Comment

NONE PROVIDED

Document Attachments

NONE PROVIDED

Comment

NONE PROVIDED

Delegation of Authority for Submission of Application

NONE PROVIDED

Comment

NONE PROVIDED

As per 18 AAC 15.030 signing of applications, all permit or approval applications must be signed as follows:

- 1) in the case of corporations, by a principal executive officer of at least the level of vice president or his duly authorized representative, if the representative is responsible for the overall management of the project or operation;
- 2) in the case of a partnership, by a general partner;
- 3) in the case of a sole proprietorship, by the proprietor; and
- 4) in the case of a municipal, state, federal or other public facility, by either a principal executive officer, ranking elected official, or other duly authorized employee.

The project proponent hereby certifies that all information contained herein is true, accurate, and complete to the best of my knowledge and belief. The project proponent hereby requests that the certifying authority review and take action on this CWA 401 certification request within the applicable reasonable period of time.

Agreements and Signature(s)

As per 18 AAC 15.030 signing of applications, all permit or approval applications must be signed as follows:

- 1) in the case of corporations, by a principal executive officer of at least the level of vice president or his duly authorized representative, if the representative is responsible for the overall management of the project or operation;*
 - 2) in the case of a partnership, by a general partner;*
 - 3) in the case of a sole proprietorship, by the proprietor; and*
 - 4) in the case of a municipal, state, federal or other public facility, by either a principal executive officer, ranking elected official, or other duly authorized employee.*
- The project proponent hereby certifies that all information contained herein is true, accurate, and complete to the best of my knowledge and belief. The project proponent hereby requests that the certifying authority review and take action on this CWA 401 certification request within the applicable reasonable period of time.*

Signed
By Drew Miller on 07/15/2025 at 11:34 AM