

*Adaptive Management Procedure
For In-Stream Mining Permits*

PURPOSE

The purpose of this policy is to outline procedures for the annual review of monitoring reports, mining plans and associated enhancement plans for permitted in-stream mining activities in the Alexander Valley Reach of the Russian River.

GENERAL

The monitoring requirements and authority for annual review and approval of mining plans is set forth in the Aggregate Resources Management Plan and the approved use permits for instream mining activities. Some instream mining permits require the County to hire a team of Scientific Review Consultants (SRC) with expertise in hydrology/geomorphology, fisheries and biology/ecological habitat restoration. The SRC is intended to be a third party reviewer of annual monitoring reports and mining and enhancement plans and to provide advice to the County as the mining authority responsible for approval of mining plans.

Some mining permits also allow for an adaptive management approach in which specific performance criteria are used as indicators for further analysis of potential issues arising from mining in a dynamic river system. The adaptive management approach would allow the County to adjust the monitoring requirements or mining standards to respond to conditions in the river.

PROCEDURE

As part of the annual review process of monitoring reports and mining plans, the County shall engage the Scientific Review Consultants' expertise to peer review the reports and plans and to conduct annual site inspections. The County will also solicit input from the resource agencies with permitting authority over the mining operations as well as stakeholders, via the Stakeholder Group discussed below. The County will lead the selection, interagency, and stakeholder processes described below, including scheduling and noticing the required meetings and distributing monitoring reports and mining and enhancement plans. The schedule of meetings will be consistent with any timelines required under the approvals for a particular project. Given the short time lines necessary for annual approval of mining and enhancement plans, the County's review and approval should not be delayed because of non-participation by members of the interagency group or stakeholder group. At each process level, the County and participants will make best efforts to reach consensus recommendations and outcomes within the limited timeframe.

Scientific Review Consultants Selection Process

The SRC shall be selected by the County in consultation with the Stakeholder Group. The County would issue a Request for Qualifications (RFQ) that would be reviewed by County staff and stakeholder groups to select the most qualified firm or firms. The RFQ will be open to firms of all

sizes who have the necessary qualifications to apply. A Request for Proposals would then be issued to the qualified firm or firms for submittal of a detailed cost proposal. Alternatively, with the consent of the Stakeholder Group, the County may pursue an alternative process, such as declining to issue an RFQ and proceeding directly to a Request for Proposals. The proposal(s) would then be reviewed by the County and Stakeholder Group to determine the firm or firms best qualified to provide the annual reviews. The selected team would be under contract to the County for a term of at least 5 years, which could be extended by the County after consultation with the SRC, resource agencies, and Stakeholder Group. All costs associated with the SRC and County staff would be paid by the mining operator.

Interagency Group

The interagency group consists of representatives from each of the agencies involved in the permitting of instream mining activities including Dept. of Fish and Game, Regional Water Quality Control Board, U.S. Army Corps and National Marine Fisheries. The interagency group meets to review mining and reclamation plans in an effort to coordinate permitting between the various agencies.

Stakeholder Group

Participants in the Stakeholder Group include the mining operator, conservation groups such as Trout Unlimited and Russian Riverkeeper, and landowners. The purpose of the Stakeholder Group is to engage collaboratively in the annual review procedure with the County and resources agencies, and provide input and recommendations to the County.

ANNUAL REVIEW PROCEDURE

1. The operator is responsible for hiring qualified professionals to collect all required monitoring data annually and submitting monitoring reports and proposed mining and enhancement plans for the upcoming year no later than the end of the first full week in January of each year to the County, the SRC and Stakeholder Group by electronically posting to a shared website. Monitoring reports and proposed mining and enhancement plans shall be submitted in hard copy form to the County.
2. The parties including the County, agency staff and Stakeholder Group review the monitoring reports and proposed plans at the first meeting of the Interagency Group in January (3rd Wednesday).
3. If monitoring reports trigger any of the performance criteria in the applicable conditions of approval, then the County may request additional studies or that the operator prepare modified mining or enhancement plans to address the concern. Additional meetings of the Interagency Group and Stakeholder Group will be held to review any additional studies or modified plans in February-April and to provide input and recommendations to the County on any revisions to the mining and enhancement plans for the following mining season.

4. If the monitoring reports do not trigger any performance criteria, then the focus of the SRC, Interagency Group and Stakeholder Group shall be on the review of the annual mining and enhancement plan to determine if they are in compliance with the adopted standards and conditions.
5. Site inspections shall be conducted in May (third Wednesday) by the County and SRC, and Stakeholder Group/representatives will be invited to attend.
6. If site inspections reveal any changes in site conditions either at the previous year's mining or enhancement site or the current year proposed mining or enhancement site, then revised plans or studies may be required by the County.
7. Upon completion of the site inspections and after consideration of any timely recommendations of the SRC, resource agencies and Stakeholder Group the County will:
 - A. Approve the annual mining and/or enhancement plans, if the monitoring reports and the site inspections do not reveal any changes warranting changes in the plan or suspension of mining.
 - B. Require revisions to the annual mining and/or enhancement plans (including but not limited to reducing the mining footprint and/or increasing the offset from baseline) if the monitoring reports and the site inspections indicate revisions to the mining or enhancement plans are needed to meet the performance criteria.
 - C. Require additional studies and suspend mining, if a monitoring report or a site inspection reveals any change warranting suspension of mining activities.

Approved by: _____
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