From: Christie Kearney
To: Johnson, Bill H (DNR)
Cc: Oswald, Caroline (She/Her/Hers) (DNR); Ciardelli, Mark C; Kramka, Larry; Colin Marsh; Lucas Miller
Subject: RE: Query 12 - Mine Site Equalization Basin
Date: Tuesday, August 11, 2026 7:00:52 AM
Attachments: image001.png
image002.png
image003.png
image004.png
image005.png
image006.png

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Good morning, Bill and Caroline! Please see my response below in red.

Please let me know if you have further questions about this topic.
Best,
Christie

Christie Kearney, P.E.
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NEWRANGE COPPER NICKEL

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From: Johnson, Bill H (DNR) <bill.johnson@state.mn.us>
Sent: Sunday, August 9, 2026 4:08 PM
To: Christie Kearney <christie.kearney@newrangecoppernickel.com>
Cc: Oswald, Caroline (She/Her/Hers) (DNR) <caroline.oswald@state.mn.us>
Subject: NWR: EXTERNAL SENDER Query 12 - Mine Site Equalization Basin

Hello Christie. This is Query 12 to support DNR's consideration of NewRange's request and material evidence for the NewRange NorthMet Mining Project.

This query has three parts to better understand contact water management at the Mine Site without a WWTF in the revised project:

Part 1
Table 1, Primary Project Changes, states on .pdf page 7 that "[m]ine site contact water collected from the mine pits, rock storage facilities, OSP, and ancillary mine features is managed in an equalization basin in the West Pit." In the original PolyMet NorthMet Project, contact water like this was proposed to be collected and routed to the WWTF for treatment.

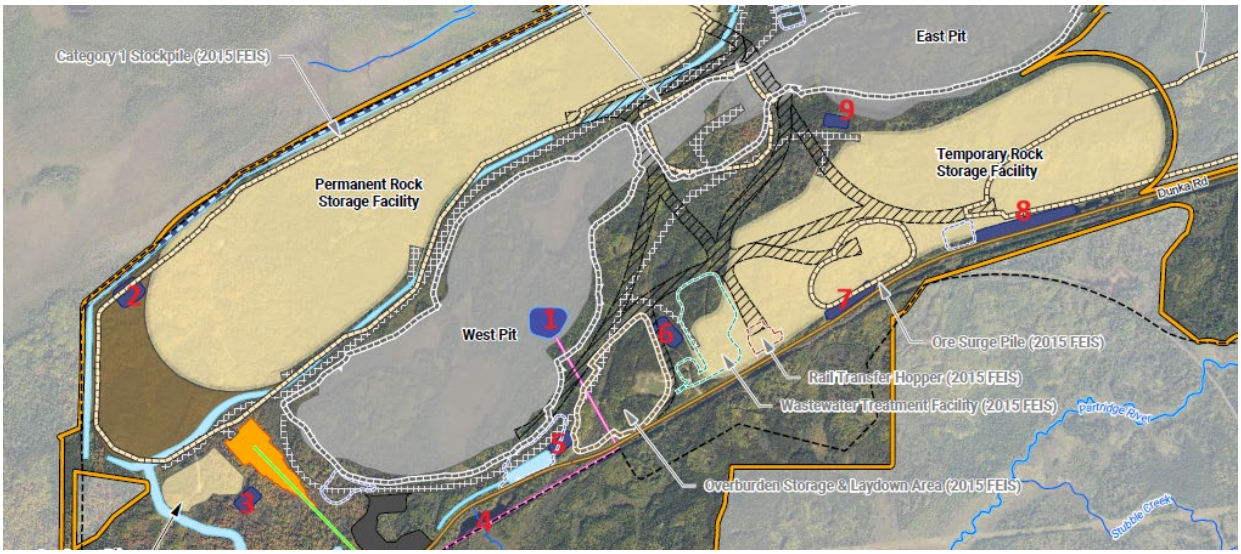
In the 2015 FEIS at Table 5.2.2-20, proposed WWTF Basins were described as "using equalization basins with leak detection system and geomembrane underliners." The text at 2015 FEIS at 5-101 states: "Groundwater seepage through lined and unlined mine features would begin migrating in the surficial aquifer and bedrock toward the Partridge River during operations."

Question: DNR is just confirming whether this facility will be lined or not?

NewRange Response: In the 2015 FEIS, Mine Site contact water was collected and routed to equalization basins at the Mine Site for the WWTF. In the 2018 permitted project, Mine Site contact water was collected and routed to equalization basins at the Mine Site and sent to the WWTS at the Plant Site for treatment and reuse. Under both of 2015 and 2018 projects, the equalization basins were aboveground and lined. Under the 2026 NewRange NorthMet Project, the unlined equalization basin is located in the pit within the cone of depression from pit dewatering. This unlined basin will be similar to an unlined pit sump, which maintain an inward gradient of flow, as compared to an aboveground pond, which typically has an outward gradient of flow.

<u>Part 2</u>

Below is a cutout from Figure 2 at the Mine Site. According to the legend, the 9 locations that are numbered below should each represent an equalization basin.



Question: Is it correct that there are 9 equalization basins proposed for the Mine Site? Will these be lined or not?

NewRange Response: There are two different blue polygons in the legend, one is the equalization basin with a light blue outline (there is one, located within the West Pit) and the other are the contact water ponds with a dark blue outline (there are 7). What you have labeled as #4 is an existing pond shown on the aerial photo, which just happens to be close to the same color as our contact water ponds.

<u>Part 3</u>

Part 3 focuses on the equalization basin listed at No. 1 in the red numbering in the cutout. No. 1 is also the basin being referenced in Part 1 above).

Question: Is No. 1 the basin that is to receive “water collected from the mine pits, rock storage facilities, OSP, and ancillary mine features…[where] water within the equalization basin is pumped via a pit-to-plant pipeline…to the Plant Site for re-use” as stated in Table 1? It seems like this collection contact water is more dispersed across the site but maybe not.

NewRange Response: Yes, the basin you show as #1 above is the equalization basin that “will store contact

water collected at the Mine Site before it is pumped via a pit-to-plant pipeline to the Plant Site for reuse." Mine Site contact water is collected from the mine pits, RSF, OSP, and ancillary facilities in the Mine Site contact water ponds and sumps and pumped to the equalization basin. This is the same way Mine Site contact water was managed in the 2015 FEIS and 2018 permitting – collected at ponds and sumps at the source and then pumped to the equalization basins before being routed to its destination (WWTF or Plant Site, respectively).

Thanks in advance for your assistance with this matter. Please provide your response as soon as possible to facilitate DNR's consideration of the request and material evidence. Let me know if you have any questions. Bill J. and Caroline O.

Bill Johnson
Planning Director | EWR Environmental Policy & Review Unit

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