

EPA's heartbreaking tragedy

Tragic news on the weekend in Colorado, US, with the polluting of the Animas River. It's perhaps made more tragic by the fact the breach was made by American EPA officers investigating an issue. It is indeed heart-breaking for those who rely on the river.

I think it's worth looking at the fundamental differences between the Gold King mine in Colorado and our proposal near Majors Creek. Those significant key differences include:

- 1) The Gold King mine was established in the late 1800s and closed in 1923. Even before this spill, Gold King and literally thousands of other old mines in the region had left a terrible legacy. It's difficult to point the finger at the conduct of miners over a 100 years earlier, but the technology and regulatory environment we're in today is light years ahead.
- 2) The breach was from water that accumulated in the historic mine workings. Our mine will be backfilled and sealed at the end of its life, so water will not accumulate.
- 3) The surrounding hydrology is very different. Any water in our tailings storage facility (TSF) will be recycled for use in the plant, and little water will pool on the surface in comparison.
- 4) That terrible, distinctive orange colour looks to be more than sediment. It suggests that the old mine is seeping acidic water – or acid mine drainage (AMD). At our site, the surrounding rock is granite which will naturally neutralise any acid generation.
- 5) Again our TSF isn't a dam and won't collect surface water run-off or ground water. Instead, surface water is channelled around the facility. We'll have no discharge.

For me this is a reminder to us all of the clear benefits of our very robust and stringent regulatory system.

At Unity Mining, we're not just thinking about the next financial year, or even the operational life of the mine. Our horizon goes to the site's rehabilitation and centuries beyond.