

# Tui Mine Cleanup

## Project update

Welcome to the Tui Mine Cleanup newsletter where we update you on progress to remediate the site of the abandoned mine on the western slopes of Mount Te Aroha.

### Phase 2 of the project launched

The most critical phase of the project to clean up the Tui Mine was launched at Tui Pā in October and involves works to stabilise and remediate the tailings and tailings dam area.

Following the launch, Tui Pā hosted an open day for the public, with visitors watching video footage from inside the mine, talking to the project team and learning about progress on the mine site.

The phase 2 work is projected to cost \$16.2 million and is being undertaken to mitigate the present risks to community safety and health, and environmental damage to the mountain, streams and rivers.

The 'worst case scenario' is a dam failure caused by an earthquake or extreme weather event, resulting in the toxic tailings liquefying and flowing down the mountain and into Te Aroha.

The work being undertaken will ultimately eliminate this risk and make the site safe. Work currently underway includes:

- a new drainage network to reduce the amount of water entering the tailings dam
- stabilisation works on shallow tailings and preparation of work to build cement columns that will help stabilise the base of the dam
- constant checking and monitoring of both the dam and local rainfall
- inspecting the dam following weather events.

As phase 2 works progress the risk of dam failure, and the risk to the community and environment, continues to reduce.

During each stage of construction we will inspect and review the dam's geotechnical stability.

### Iwi Advisory Group update

The Iwi Advisory Group is actively involved in the Tui Mine remediation project. Over the last few months, the group has been involved in:

- consent compliance planning activities
- cultural induction of all contractors onsite
- blessing of the site
- leading the coordination of, and hosting, the ministerial visit for the official launch of phase 2 of the project
- accommodating the public open day at Tui Pā
- providing cultural advice to the project governance and management groups.



Environment Minister Nick Smith launched phase 2 of the Tui Mine remediation project at Tui Pā on 19 October. About 80 people, including members of the community, Green Party MP Catherine Delahunty, Department of Conservation staff and local government representatives were at the launch. After a powhiri, the group travelled to the old mine site to learn more about the project.

### Be prepared

In the worst case scenario of a dam failure there are simple steps you can take:

- Avoid coming into contact with the toxic material or ingesting it.
- If you are in the affected area and come into contact with the material you should decontaminate yourself by washing thoroughly and disposing of all affected articles of clothing.
- Stay indoors or away from the affected area and listen to your radio for further information.
- Visit [www.waikatoregion.govt.nz](http://www.waikatoregion.govt.nz) and wait to get further advice from authorities.

### Christmas closedown

**Work on the Tui Mine cleanup will halt over the Christmas period from 23 December 2011 to 8 January 2012.**

Even though work won't be happening during this time, it's still not safe for people to visit the mine site or to use the DoC tracks near the Tui Mine site.

**Tracks that are closed are signposted for your safety.**

## Work to protect people, property and environment

It's been a busy few months at the mine site, with progress being made to protect people, property and the environment. Recently completed work at the site includes:

- Tui Road has been sealed to provide better access for heavy vehicles to the site.
- Vegetation has been cleared to allow space for drainage works around the outside of the tailings dam.
- Drains have been constructed to collect stormwater from above the tailings dam and divert it into the stream.
- The existing treatment pond has been enlarged to accommodate additional run off from the site, and it has been fenced off. The treatment pond removes contaminated sediment from water before it enters the stream.
- The first part of borehole testing has been completed. Testing was undertaken to

check the depth of the tailings.

Results show that depths of the tailings upstream of the dam are similar to what was originally anticipated in the design.

Further borehole testing will be undertaken at the dam in May 2012.

- Water quality sampling and testing has been undertaken. Initial results show there has already been an improvement in water quality from level 5 discharges. Full results of water quality testing will be available in January and will be shared at our open day at Te Aroha's Domain Day on Sunday, 18 March 2012.
- A stockpile of ore, consisting of crushed rock-like pebbles, has been cleared from within the bush. The ore had stopped natural bush from growing in some areas and it is expected that bush will regenerate now the contaminated ore has been removed.

- Stabilisation of the shallow parts of the tailings (Stage 1A-up to 3m in depth) has begun. Stabilisation involves adding a cement and lime mix to the tailings to chemically neutralise and solidify the tailings and make them more secure. Over the course of phase 2 of the project, the stabilisation work will continue to cover the whole tailings mass. The dam and tailings will be reformed as a new stable landform.
- Lime has been injected into level 5 of the mine site to help stop the drainage of acids and heavy metals into nearby waterways. Several more lime injections will be completed by February 2012.

