

Skyline Mine

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Existing Landuses

Existing landuses of the Skyline Mines project area and adjacent areas consist of grazing, recreation, and forestry. Four National Forest sheep allotments are contained partially within the project area. Recreational use of the areas to be affected by the mining operations consists primarily of hunting, fishing, sightseeing, and snowmobiling. Forestry uses are limited to cutting fence posts and firewood, with occasional timber sales to salvage bug-killed spruce timber.

Capability and Productivity of Permit Area Affected by Surface Operations

The area to be affected by surface mine operations and facilities is capable of supporting 765 animal units for one day or 26 animal unit months. Assuming an annual three month grazing period, the proposed disturbed area is capable of supporting an equivalent of nine animal units annually.

There are approximately 20.1 acres of the spruce-fir timber type and 17.7 acres of the aspen timber type within the area to be affected by mining activities. Based upon the available timber volume per acre of 10,000 board-feet per acre for spruce-fir timber and 5300 board-feet per acre for aspen timber (U.S. Forest Service, 1979), there could be approximately 201,000 board-feet of spruce-fir timber and 93,800 board-feet of aspen timber within the proposed surface area for mine operations and facilities.

Previously Mined Areas

The only known mine previously operated within the Skyline Mine permit area is the abandoned Eccles Canyon coal mine located immediately west of and within the National Forest boundary. The mine was an underground coal mine operated intermittently from 1899 to 1952 (Doelling, 1972).

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Local Landuse Classifications

Emery and Carbon county zoning ordinances classify the Skyline Mine permit area as a recreation, forestry and mining zone to be used for "recreation, forestry, grazing, wildlife, and mining purposes".

Ninety nine percent of the permit area is located within the Manti-LaSal National Forest and is therefore subject to the "Land Management Plan" of the U.S. Forest Service (1979). All of the permit area within the National Forest is designated in the land management plan as "Coal Lands Management Area A". The management objectives related to the Skyline Mine permit area, as set forth by the U.S. Forest Service in the land management plan, are to improve and maintain watershed conditions, improve desirable plant species and vegetative cover, decrease soil erosion and maintain soil stability and productivity, coordinate mineral activities with other resource uses, manage and protect archaeological and paleontological resources, harvest timber and forest products on a sustained yield basis, provide quality recreational opportunities, coordinate transportation systems, and protect and maintain wildlife and fish habitats. (U.S. Forest Service, 1979).

BIBLIOGRAPHY

LANDUSE

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