



State of Utah
 DEPARTMENT OF NATURAL RESOURCES
 MICHAEL R. STYLER
Executive Director
Division of Oil, Gas and Mining
 JOHN R. BAZA
Division Director

Technical Analysis and Findings

Utah Coal Regulatory Program

September 2, 2016

PID: C0070005
TaskID: 5255
Mine Name: SKYLINE MINE
Title: VEGETATION UPDATES

Summary

The Division conducted an evaluation on the Skyline Mine with regard to the reference sites selected to determine revegetation success at the time of bond release. All disturbed areas and reference locations were examined during this evaluation.

During this evaluation, the Division realized that Plate 2.7.1-2 had not been updated to include several new reference sites that had been added over the years through new amendments (Winter Quarters, NOG, the extended Waste Rock Site, or Swens Canyon). Although these locations were identified in supporting reports and appendices, the reference sites were never added to the "Vegetative Reference Area" plate as referred to on page 2-58a of the MRP.

Additionally, an ambiguous commitment within the MRP was brought to attention and this amendment has clarified the commitment for reference site monitoring. The commitment is on page 4-47 and under the subtitle "4.7.5 Monitoring Procedures, Portal, Train Loadout, Waste Rock Disposal Site, South Fork Breakout Areas and Other Small Areas". It states, "The reference areas will be surveyed by the S.C.S. at five year intervals to determine their condition class".

This amendment updates plate 2.7.1-2 to clarify locations of reference areas from the original pre-disturbance report, and adds relevant reference areas from subsequent reports for projects to date. Plate 2.7.1-1a is removed and replaced by Plate 2.7.1-1 which is updated to show vegetation types in Eccles Canyon, east to the rail load out. Data from Welsh's 1980 inventory were used to expand this plate.

The permit amendment consists of: 1) update to text in sections 2.7 and 4.7,2) updates to plates 2.7.1-2 and 2.7.1-1, and 3) removal of plate 2.7.1- 1a.

Deficiencies Details:

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Reclamation Plan

Revegetation Standards for Success

Analysis:

The amendment meets the State of Utah R645-301-321 requirements for vegetation resource information.

Vegetation is described in numerous reports located in Appendix A-2-1 and summarized in Sections 2.7 and 4.7 of the MRP. A vegetation map of the permit and adjacent area is provided on Plate 2.7-.1-1. Reference areas to be used to determine reclamation success are shown on Plate 2.7.1-2.

Plate 2.7.1-2 has been modified in a way that changes the location of the reference areas identified on the previous map. The old reference areas were specific to the vegetation communities against which they were to be measured (Aspen, Spruce, Sagebrush, and Riparian). It was understood that areas seeded with the seed mix specified to the reference vegetation community would be compared to that specific site. This new map clearly shows the different reference sites that can be compared to the seed mix type.

The use of best technology currently available, (GPS coordinates) are provided to document and record each location for ease of future reconnaissance.

The Division accompanied mine personnel and verified all reference are still appropriate for reclamation success standards. On 8/25/2016, Lisa Reinhart, Division Biologist, met with Jeremiah Armstrong and inspected the remaining Welsh reference areas that were previously inaccessible earlier during the year due to snow coverage. The inspection included the Aspen, Sagebrush, and Riparian reference areas for the Portal, Rail Loadout, Conveyor, and South Fork Breakout.

On 5/13/16, the Waste Rock Site (Aspen and Spruce Fir), Winter Quarters (Sagebrush/Grass), Portal, Rail Loadout, Conveyor, SouthFork (Spruce Fir), and Swens (Sagebrush/Grass) reference areas were inspected. The Waste Rock Site (Aspen and Spruce Fir) was again evaluated during an OSM Oversight Inspection on 6/13/16.

All reference areas were found to be in good range condition and are managed accordingly to the post mining land use; livestock grazing and wildlife habitat. The reference sites are still appropriate for reclamation success standard comparisons. These sites will be re-evaluated with the next mid-term evaluation.

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