




**MINERALS PROGRAM INSPECTION REPORT**  
**PHONE: (303) 866-3567**

The Division of Reclamation, Mining and Safety has conducted an inspection of the mining operation noted below. This report documents observations concerning compliance with the terms of the permit and applicable rules and regulations of the Mined Land Reclamation Board.

<b>MINE NAME:</b> Cucharas Pit	<b>MINE/PROSPECTING ID#:</b> M-2002-109	<b>MINERAL:</b> Borrow material	<b>COUNTY:</b> Huerfano
<b>INSPECTION TYPE:</b> Monitoring	<b>INSPECTOR(S):</b> Patrick Lennberg	<b>INSP. DATE:</b> December 12, 2019	<b>INSP. TIME:</b> 13:00
<b>OPERATOR:</b> A. Blasi & Son Trucking & Earthmoving, LLC	<b>OPERATOR REPRESENTATIVE:</b> None	<b>TYPE OF OPERATION:</b> 110c - Construction Limited Impact	
<b>REASON FOR INSPECTION:</b> Normal I&E Program	<b>BOND CALCULATION TYPE:</b> Complete Bond	<b>BOND AMOUNT:</b> \$7,756.00	
<b>DATE OF COMPLAINT:</b> NA	<b>POST INSP. CONTACTS:</b> None	<b>JOINT INSP. AGENCY:</b> None	
<b>WEATHER:</b> Clear	<b>INSPECTOR'S SIGNATURE:</b> 	<b>SIGNATURE DATE:</b> December 18, 2019	

**The following inspection topics were identified as having Problems or Possible Violations. OPERATORS SHOULD READ THE FOLLOWING PAGES CAREFULLY IN ORDER TO ASSURE COMPLIANCE WITH THE TERMS OF THE PERMIT AND APPLICABLE RULES AND REGULATIONS. If a Possible Violation is indicated, you will be notified under separate cover as to when the Mined Land Reclamation Board will consider possible enforcement action.**

<p><b>INSPECTION TOPIC:</b> Availability Of Records</p> <p><b>PROBLEM:</b> The Division does not have a current valid Legal Right of Entry for the mining operation as required by Rule 6.3.7.</p> <p><b>CORRECTIVE ACTIONS:</b> The operator must provide proof of Legal Right of Entry and conduct reclamation operations.</p> <p><b>CORRECTIVE ACTION DUE DATE:</b> 2/15/20</p>
<p><b>INSPECTION TOPIC:</b> Mine Sign</p> <p><b>PROBLEM:</b> The mine identification sign was not posted at the entrance of the mine site. This is a problem for failure to post a mine identification sign as required by Section 3.1.12(1) of the rule.</p> <p><b>CORRECTIVE ACTIONS:</b> The operator shall, at the entrance of the mine site, post a sign which shall be clearly visible from the access road with the following: the name of the operator, a statement that a reclamation permit for the operation has been issued by the Colorado Mined Land Reclamation Board; and the permit number. The operator shall submit photo documentation that a proper sign has been posted by the corrective action date.</p> <p><b>CORRECTIVE ACTION DUE DATE:</b> 2/15/20</p>

**INSPECTION TOPIC:** Reclamation Success

**PROBLEM:** Failure to follow approved reclamation plan, or current reclamation plan needs to be updated and clarified pursuant to C.R.S. 34-32.5-116 (1). The operator must follow approved reclamation plan or provide sufficient information to describe or identify how the operator intends to conduct reclamation.

**CORRECTIVE ACTIONS:** The operator shall submit a Technical Revision, with the required \$216 revision fee, to update and clarify the current approved reclamation plan to reflect existing and proposed activities by the corrective action date.

**CORRECTIVE ACTION DUE DATE:** 2/15/20

**INSPECTION TOPIC:** Noxious Weeds

**PROBLEM:** Tamarisk (salt cedar) trees are present within or have volunteered into the permit area and are becoming established. This is a problem for failure to employ weed control methods for a state listed noxious weed species within the permitted area, and to reduce the spread of weeds to nearby areas as required by Rule 3.1.10 (6).

**CORRECTIVE ACTIONS:** The operator will provide photo documentation that the Tamarisk trees and stumps have been removed from the site.

**CORRECTIVE ACTION DUE DATE:** 2/15/20

## **OBSERVATIONS**

The Cucharas Pit was inspected by Patrick Lennberg with the Division of Reclamation, Mining and Safety (Division/DRMS). The inspection was completed as part of the Division's routine monitoring inspection program. The site was last inspected on May 21, 2015 as part of a Surety Reduction and an Acreage Reduction requests. Anthony Blasi, Operator, was contacted about the inspection but stated that he could not attend. The weather was windy and the sky was clear.

The site is located approximately 14 miles northeast of Walsenburg, Colorado, on land owned by Mr. Jim Pace. During a permit review it was noted that the Division does not have a valid Legal Right of Entry on file as required by Rule 6.3.7 and this is being cited as a problem within this report. This is a 110c operation permitted for 6.4 acres to mine sand and gravel for use in road construction and maintenance and accessed off of Co Rd 121. The original access road was not used for this inspection, as it has been reclaimed per the landowner's request. The access road to the adjacent permitted site (Permit No. M-2011-003) operated by Huerfano County was used to access the Cucharas Pit. In doing this, one must park on the county pit and cross the barbed wire fence that runs north-south separating the two sites. A mine sign was not observed as required by Rule 3.1.12 and has been cited as a problem within this report.

Mining consisted of extracting approximately 8 feet of material from the top of a small plateau, leaving a relatively flat surface. Mined material was processed on site with mobile equipment. The approved reclamation plan calls for grading all mined slopes to 3H:1V or flatter, replacing topsoil at an average depth of 6 inches, and revegetating disturbed land to a post-mining land use of rangeland. The site was not active at the time of inspection.

It does not appear that there has been any activity at the site since the 2015 inspection which noted that there had been no activity since 2007. During the inspection the Division noted that there are still several product and overburden stockpiles on site. It was noted in the previous inspection report that the landowner may wish to have some of the processed stockpiles to remain for personal use. The stockpile can remain after reclamation if the operator submits a signed and dated letter from the landowner stating his desire to leave the stockpiles. Additionally, there is a berm or relic highwall, ~900 feet long, that ranges in height from 3 to 8 feet that forms the perimeter of the mined area. Failure to complete reclamation in a timely manner as indicated in the approved reclamation plan is being cited as problem within this report. The operator shall submit a Technical Revision to update and clarify the current approved reclamation plan to reflect existing and proposed activities.

As noted in the previous inspection, the topsoil is fairly rocky in these areas, and native vegetation has volunteered into the disturbed areas and is fairly well-established and diverse, being comprised of native grasses, some forbs and trees, fringed sagebrush, and yucca. However, there were five Tamarisk (salt cedar) trees that have become established within the permit boundary. Tamarisk trees are a list B noxious weeds a fact sheet for Tamarisk has been included with this report. The number of Tamarisk trees at the site is being cited as a problem within this report and will have to be removed.

The Division was not able to GPS all the permit boundary markers but was able to identify some of the tee-posts being used as boundary markers.

The Division evaluated the financial warranty and determined the current bond amount held by the Division is adequate at this time.

Photographs taken during the inspection are attached.

Please contact Patrick Lennberg (303)866-3567 ext. 8114 or email at [patrick.lennberg@state.co.us](mailto:patrick.lennberg@state.co.us) if you have any questions regarding this report.

**Inspection Contact Address**

Anthony Blasi  
A. Blasi & Son Trucking & Earthmoving, LLC  
38043 CR 32.4  
Trinidad, CO 81082

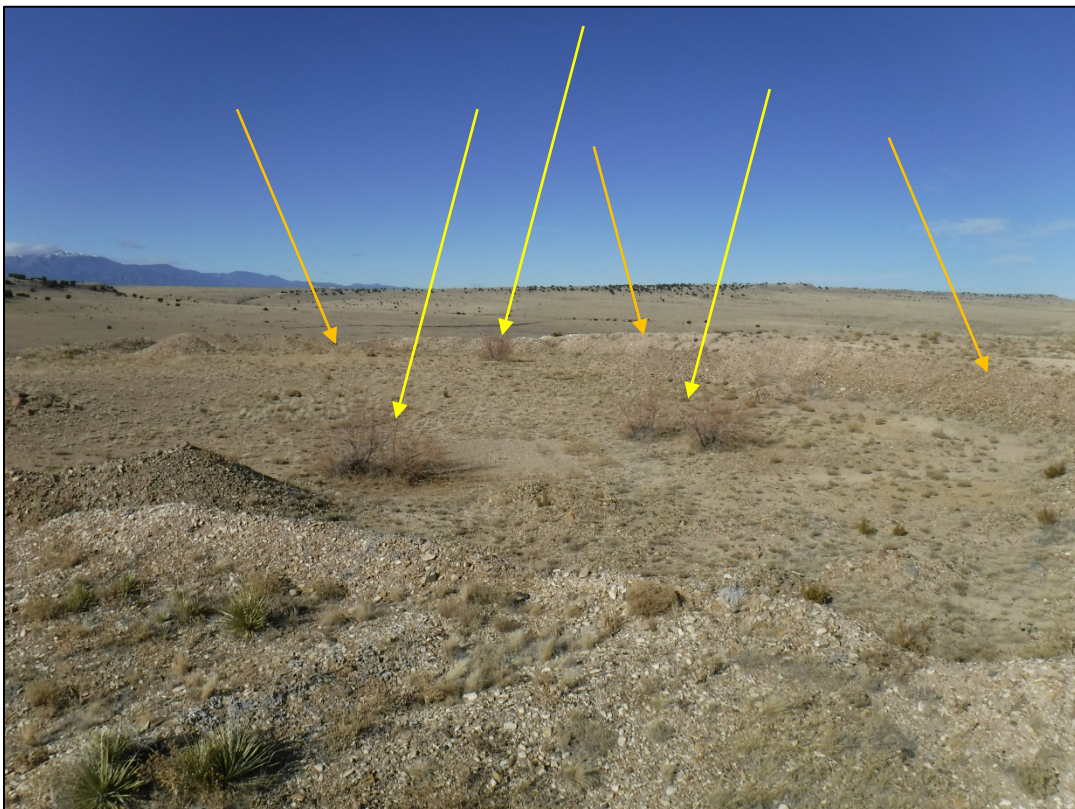
Enclosure: Salt Cedar (Tamarisk) Fact Sheet

cc: Jared Ebert, DRMS

**PHOTOGRAPHS**



**Photo 1:** The northeast portion of mined area, tamarisk trees yellow arrows, and highwall indicated by orange arrow



**Photo 2:** Looking west across the pit, tamarisk trees yellow arrows highwall orange arrows





**Photo 3:** Various product and overburden stockpiles, tamarisk tree yellow arrow



**Photo 4:** Tamarisk trees and highwall





**Photo 5:** Looking east from the west rim of pit



**Photo 6:** Conditions of the southern permit area





**Photo 7:** Looking north from a product stockpile to the pit area



**Photo 8:** Permit boundary marker



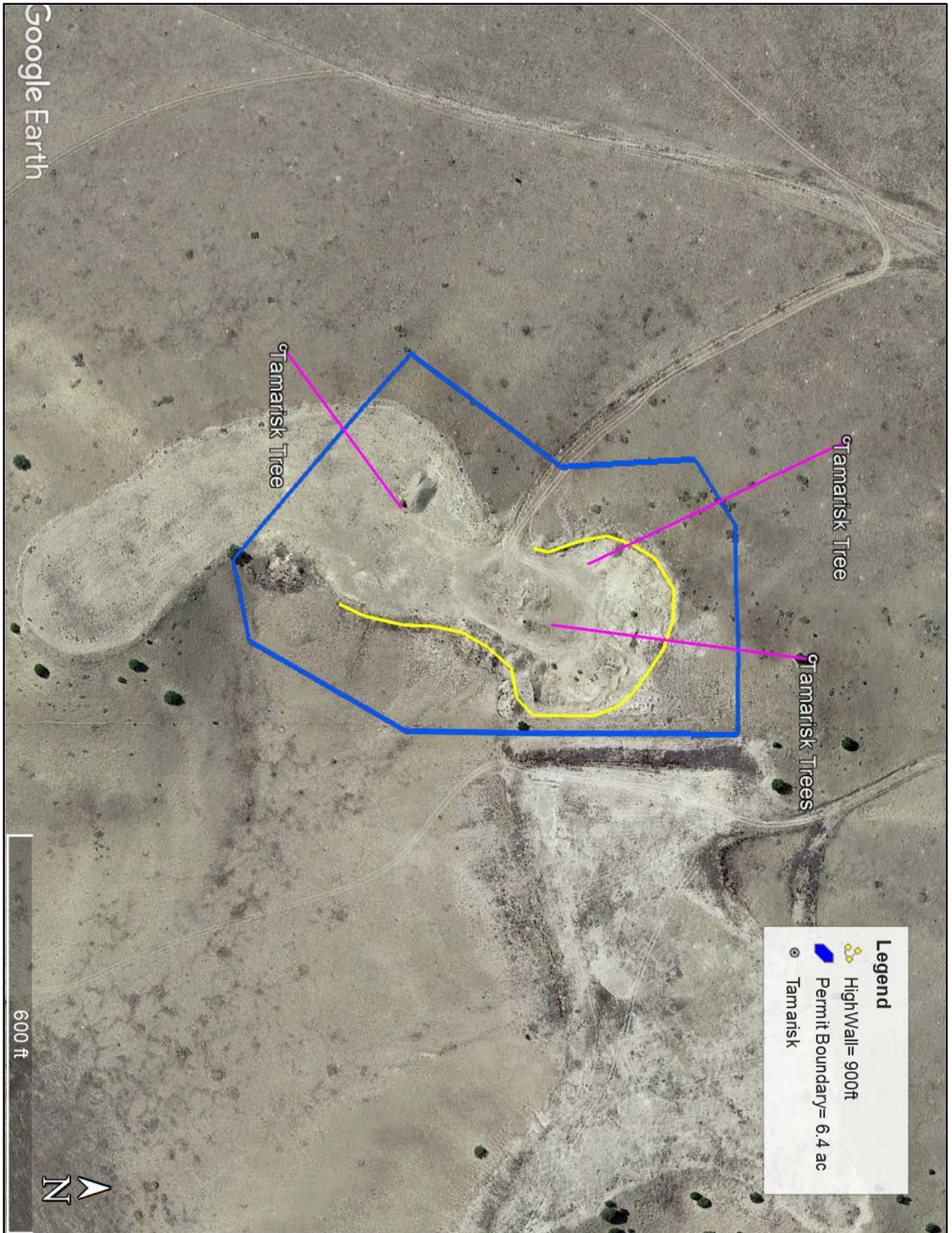


**Photo 9:** Eastern highwall



**Photo 10:** Northern highwall







### GENERAL INSPECTION TOPICS

The following list identifies the environmental and permit parameters inspected and gives a categorical evaluation of each

(AR) RECORDS----- <b><u>PB</u></b>	(FN) FINANCIAL WARRANTY----- <b><u>Y</u></b>	(RD) ROADS----- <b><u>N</u></b>
(HB) HYDROLOGIC BALANCE----- <b><u>N</u></b>	(BG) BACKFILL & GRADING----- <b><u>Y</u></b>	(EX) EXPLOSIVES----- <b><u>N</u></b>
(PW) PROCESSING WASTE/TAILING---- <b><u>N</u></b>	(SF) PROCESSING FACILITIES----- <b><u>N</u></b>	(TS) TOPSOIL----- <b><u>Y</u></b>
(MP) GENL MINE PLAN COMPLIANCE- <b><u>Y</u></b>	(FW) FISH & WILDLIFE----- <b><u>N</u></b>	(RV) REVEGETATION---- <b><u>Y</u></b>
(SM) SIGNS AND MARKERS----- <b><u>PB</u></b>	(SP) STORM WATER MGT PLAN---- <b><u>N</u></b>	(RS) RECL PLAN/COMP-- <b><u>PB</u></b>
(ES) OVERBURDEN/DEV. WASTE----- <b><u>N</u></b>	(SC) EROSION/SEDIMENTATION--- <b><u>N</u></b>	(ST) STIPULATIONS----- <b><u>Y</u></b>
(AT) ACID OR TOXIC MATERIALS----- <b><u>N</u></b>	(OD) OFF-SITE DAMAGE----- <b><u>N</u></b>	

Y = Inspected and found in compliance / N = Not inspected / NA = Not applicable to this operation / PB = Problem cited / PV = Possible violation cited