



January 8, 2020

Mrs. Janet Binns
Environmental Protection Specialist III
Colorado Division of Reclamation, Mining and Safety
1313 Sherman Street, Room 215
Denver, CO 80203

**RE: New Horizon Mine (Permit No. C-1981-008)
Technical Revision No. 94 (TR-94)
Preliminary Adequacy Review Response**

Dear Mrs. Binns:

Tri-State Generation & Transmission Association (Tri-State) has received your adequacy review email for TR-94, dated January 7, 2020, and provides the following responses to your comments on behalf of the Elk Ridge Mining and Reclamation's New Horizon Mine.

- In permit section 2.04.3, proposed page 2.04.3-5, the first paragraph under heading "4.0 Description of Pre-Mine Land Use Areas", the third and fourth sentences state, "The entire permit area is 634.27 acres. Of this total, 565.67 acres will be disturbed."*
Response: The sentences quoted by the Division are incorrect and should have been updated during the initial submittal of TR-94. These sentences have been revised to correctly reflect the permit acreage and approximate disturbance acreage, and an additional sentence has been added.
- Upon the approval of TR94, the correct permit acreage will be 535.65 acres. (Table 2.04.3-1 and Table 2.04.3-2). Since the revised permit acreage will be less than the total disturbed acreage, perhaps the best way to keep these values in agreement would be to add a sentence explaining that prior to bond releases and permit boundary reductions the permit was 634.27 acres, and after approved bond releases and approved permit boundary reductions, the permit encompasses 535.65 acres (TR94). Keeping the referenced acreages consistent throughout the permit avoids problems as the permit continues to achieve bond releases in the future.*
Response: Tri-State disagrees with the Division proposal, and has not added any language to the permit as noted. Please see the response to the first comment.

Also included with this adequacy response package are materials revised in response to your comments, and a change of index sheet to ease incorporation of this material into the permit document. If you have any questions regarding the enclosed adequacy review responses, please contact Tony Tennyson at (970) 824-1232 or ttennyson@tristategt.org.





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Sincerely,

Daniel J. Casiraro
Senior Manager
Environmental Services

DJC:TT:der
Enclosures

cc: Frank Ferris (via email)
Chris Gilbreath (via email)
Tony Tennyson (via email)
File: G474-11.3(21)b-4

CHANGE SHEET FOR PERMIT REVISIONS, TECHNICAL REVISION, AND MINOR REVISIONS

Mine Company Name: New Horizon Mine

Date: **January 7, 2020**

Permit Number: **C-1981-008**

Revision Description: **TR-94 Remove NH1
from Permit, Update Bonding Info**

Volume Number	Page, Map or other Permit Entry to be REMOVED	Page, Map or other Permit Entry to be ADDED	Description of Change
1	Section 2.04.3, page 2.04.3-5 (1 page)	Section 2.04.3, page 2.04.3-5 (1 page)	Section 4.0 has been updated.
2			No changes
3			No changes
4			No changes
5			No changes
6			No changes
7			No changes
8			No changes
9			No changes
10			No changes

4.0 Description of Pre-Mine Land Use Areas

See Map 2.04.3 for the exact location of all of these areas. Detailed descriptions of the pre-mine vegetation types are included in Section 2.04.10 Vegetation Information. The entire permit area is 535.65 acres. Of this total, approximately 463 acres are disturbed. Please see the annual reclamation report for detailed disturbance acres.

4.1 Cropland - Irrigated Orchards (ICO) This category includes a few abandoned fruit tree orchards from decades ago. They were not well kept during initial permitting in 1987.

4.2 Cropland - Irrigated Alfalfa Hay (IC) These areas have some combination of grass and alfalfa which are well-managed, irrigated consistently with application of fertilizer and harvested. Alfalfa is the predominant plant. These lands have primarily prime farmland soils, as determined by the NRCS in 2008. See discussion in this section on Prime Farmlands and prime Farmland Soils.

4.3 Cropland - Irrigated Small Grain (ICSG) These areas were historically used for small grain production. Within the permit area, soils where this type is delineated are generally shallow and boggy, and not considered to have a high crop production potential. During the baseline sampling year (1987) it was noted that the two ICSG areas were not tilled after harvest the previous year and were allowed to volunteer barley, along with annual and perennial weeds.

4.4 Pastureland - Irrigated Hay (IPH) These areas have some combination of grass and alfalfa which are not as well-managed as cropland, and not irrigated consistently but better managed than irrigated pasture. IPH areas are generally baled, where irrigated pasture areas are not. Vegetation cover is still very good, depending on the soils of the actual site.

4.5 Pastureland - Irrigated Grass (IP) These areas are primarily grasses but are not as well managed as Pastureland - Irrigated Hay, have poorer soils and do not yield as much vegetation. None of these areas are baled.

4.6 Pastureland - Irrigated Swales (IPSW) These areas are generally low lying areas which drain irrigated fields around them. They are not directly irrigated but usually have substantial water from the surrounding fields. They can have wetland plants and these areas are not managed or baled.

4.7 Rangeland - Sagebrush (SG), Sagebrush-1 (SG-1) and Sagebrush-2 (SG-2) These areas are natural dryland areas that have extensive shrub cover but few trees and herbaceous cover. Sagebrush is the predominant shrub.