




**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> La Veta Site	<b>MINE/PROSPECTING ID#:</b> M2020-003	<b>MINERAL:</b> Gravel	<b>COUNTY:</b> Huerfano County
<b>INSPECTION TYPE:</b> Illegal(Unpermitted Operation)	<b>INSPECTOR(S):</b> Patrick Lennberg	<b>INSP. DATE:</b> January 16, 2020	<b>INSP. TIME:</b> 09:30
<b>OPERATOR:</b> Meridiam Partners	<b>OPERATOR REPRESENTATIVE:</b> Brittany Ciarlo and Jason Buesing	<b>TYPE OF OPERATION:</b> ILL - Illegal	
<b>REASON FOR INSPECTION:</b> Citizen Complaint	<b>BOND CALCULATION TYPE:</b> None	<b>BOND AMOUNT:</b> No Bond Held	
<b>DATE OF COMPLAINT:</b> 1/10/2020	<b>POST INSP. CONTACTS:</b> None	<b>JOINT INSP. AGENCY:</b> None	
<b>WEATHER:</b> Cloudy	<b>INSPECTOR'S SIGNATURE:</b> 	<b>SIGNATURE DATE:</b> January 21, 2020	

**GENERAL INSPECTION TOPICS**

This list identifies the environmental and permit parameters inspected and gives a categorical evaluation of each. No problems or possible violations were noted during the inspection. The mine operation was found to be in full compliance with Mineral Rules and Regulations of the Colorado Mined Land Reclamation Board for the Extraction of Construction Materials and/or for Hard Rock, Metal and Designated Mining Operations. Any person engaged in any mining operation shall notify the office of any failure or imminent failure, as soon as reasonably practicable after such person has knowledge of such condition or of any impoundment, embankment, or slope that poses a reasonable potential for danger to any persons or property or to the environment; or any environmental protection facility designed to contain or control chemicals or waste which are acid or toxic-forming, as identified in the permit.

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

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

## **OBSERVATIONS**

This inspection was prompted by a complaint received by the Division of Reclamation, Mining and Safety (Division/DRMS) indicating that unpermitted mining was occurring at the site and material was being transported off-site. The complaint located the site approximately a quarter mile south from the junction of Colorado Highway 12 and US Highway 160 in Huerfano County. The complainant wished to remain anonymous and did not attend the inspection. Patrick Lennberg represented the Division during the inspection and was joined by Brittany Ciarlo, Huerfano Co. Recovery Manager, Jason Buesing with Meridiam Partners, and Matt and Kelli Bjorum, owners of the land where the activity in question was taking place. The weather was windy and the sky was cloudy.

The site is located on County Road (CR) 356 which is ¼ mile from the junction of Colorado Highway 12 and US Highway 160. The pit is 1/3 mile southeast on CR 356 from the junction with Highway 12. The site was not active at the time of the inspection.

The Huerfano County Recovery Manager, Brittany, is managing numerous flood and/or fire recovery projects, including this site, to ensure that federal, state and county monies associated with the Spring Creek Fire in 2018 are used correctly and projects are completed in the time frame allowed. Meridiam Partners, Jason Buesing, was selected to complete the various mitigation and recovery projects in Huerfano County.

Excavation has occurred in an area that was previously used for material on the land managed by the previous owners. The current owners indicated that Huerfano County was interested in the location, a few years ago, for a new county pit but test pits indicated that the material did not meet their specifications. Currently, the majority of material that has been excavated from the site and processed has been used on the landowner's property as part of flood mitigation efforts. The material was used to fill approximately 1,400 lineal feet of HESCO flood control barriers, in some locations the barriers were stacked two units in high. Jason stated that a minor amount of material, 100 cubic yards, was used on other recovery projects where onsite material was not readily available. Jason indicated that they have used other permitted pits in the area to source the material used in their projects.

The excavation is occurring in a proper manner and meets the performance standards that the Division typically associates with permits, side slopes are graded to 3H:1V or shallower, topsoil has been salvaged, and it does not appear that storm water is being impounded. The landowners indicated that the excavated area was going to be used to build another barn or storage building well away from any potential flood impacts.

The vast majority of material that was excavated remained and was used onsite and was not hauled or transported on a public road. A small amount of material was used off site but was done so in support of flood mitigation and recovery projects. Given this, the Division will not require the operator or landowner to obtain a Reclamation Permit at this time. However, if any additional material leaves the site for any purpose, including use on another owned parcel of land, from the date of this inspection report, the owner (Matt and Kelli Bjorum), operator (Meridiam Partners), and county should be aware that the Division will require a permit to be obtained.

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**

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Huerfano County Recovery Manager  
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Meridiam Partners  
PO Box 102380  
Denver, CO 80210

Matt and Kelli Bjorum  
PO Box 696  
La Veta, CO 81055

cc: Jared Ebert, DRMS

**PHOTOGRAPHS**



**Photo 1:** The western most end of the flood control barrier



**Photo 2:** Looking east along the flood barrier wall from the west end





**Photo 3:** Looking east along the flood barrier wall, ~1/4 of the over length



**Photo 4:** Looking east along the flood barrier wall about half way along the overall length where the flood barrier wall is stacked





**Photo 5:** Looking east along the flood barrier wall after the stacking has begun



**Photo 6:** Looking west along the flood barrier wall





**Photo 7:** Looking west along the flood barrier wall from the eastern end of wall



**Photo 8:** Structures being protected by the flood barrier wall





**Photo 9:** Home being protected by the flood barrier wall



**Photo 10:** Warehouse being protected by the flood barrier wall





**Photo 11:** Pit area looking east from the western end of disturbance



**Photo 12:** Eastern end of pit with side slopes graded to a 3H:1V slope



**Photo 13:** Northeastern area of the pit, the expansion of the previous disturbance was from the grizzly to the north (right) and east (lower left hand corner of picture)



**Photo 14:** Remaining stockpile of material





**Photo 15:** Salvaged topsoil material, center foreground






**Photo 16:** Looking from the pit area south towards the river and farm where the flood barrier is located



## M2020-003

Citizen complaint Huerfano County  
near the junction of  
US Highway 160 and Colorado Highway 12

### Legend

-  Current Area of Disturbance 1.2 acres
-  HESCO Flood Wall
-  Previous Area of Disturbance = 0.9 acres

