



Memo to File

Date: March 5, 2024

To: Laserfiche File

From: Hunter Ridley, Environmental Protection Specialist

RE: Houchin Gravel Pit; Curt Houchin.; Permit No. M-1980-249

On March 5, the Division of Reclamation, Mining and Safety (Division) issued Administrative Revision 1 (AD-1) for the Houchin Gravel Pit, Permit No. 1980-249, operated by Curt Houchin. This revision was initiated by the Division in response to an inspection conducted at the site on December 14, 2022. The corresponding inspection report cited acreage discrepancies within the approved permit.

The approved mine plan describes approximately 3.8 acres of disturbance, including up to two acres of industrial/commercial area and 1.8 acres of sloped area that is to be excavated as part of the mining operation. Based on the map submitted with the original permit application, the excavation portion appears to be limited to about 410 feet from the SW boundary near Hwy 24 and encompass 4.43 acres. This map also includes a topsoil stockpile location on the upgradient side of the excavated area, which is considered affected area. Mr. Houchin confirmed the existence of the topsoil stockpile in this area during a telephone conversation on January 22, 2024. There is a strip of sloped, unvegetated area along the NW boundary outside the permit boundary. A review of USGS Quad topography (Cascade Quadrangle, 1950) suggests a ridge existed in this area prior to mining. An additional review of Google Earth historic images indicates no change in disturbance to this strip since 1999. Furthermore, there is an undated letter from the El Paso County Land Use Department in the original 1980 Application stating, "extraction of gravel from this site began in the 1930's and has continued to date." As such, the DRMS has determined this area along the NW side is considered pre-law mine disturbance.

Google Earth was used to measure the disturbed area, which was about 3 acres, based on older 2019 imagery. Permit boundary markers were GPS-ed at the site and align with the permittee's property boundary. The acreage of this boundary is 4.21 acres. Therefore, it is the Division's conclusion that the original permit application intended for the entire property boundary to be permitted. Therefore, the actual acreage of the site should be set to the property acreage of 4.21 acres. This allows the topsoil pile to the east to be included in the permit boundary. This administrative revision revised the acreage values for Houchin Gravel Pit within the Permit System to reflect this correction. The revised permit acreage is 4.21 acres.

