



STATE OF
COLORADO

Wein - DNR, Clayton <clayton.wein@state.co.us>

New Horizon North Mine, C-2010-089, June 2024 Bond Compliance Inspection Report

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Thu, Jul 18, 2024 at 11:16 AM

To: "Tennyson, Tony (Colowyo)" <tony.tennyson@tristategt.org>

Hi Tony,

I realized that I accidentally put yesterday's date on my inspection report. Attached is a copy of my inspection report with today's date.

Clayton Wein
Environmental Protection Specialist



COLORADO
Division of Reclamation,
Mining and Safety
Department of Natural Resources

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New Horizon North Mine, C-2010-089, June 2024 Bond Compliance Inspection Report_CCW(R).pdf
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PERMIT INFORMATION

Permit Number: C-2010-089 Mine Name: New Horizon North Mine Operator: Elk Ridge Mining and Reclamation, LLC Operator Address: Mr. Tony Tennyson P.O. Box 628 27646 West 5th Avenue Nucla, CO 81424	County: Montrose Operation Type: Surface Permit Status: Active Ownership: Private
	Operator Representative Present: Mindy Sickles
Operator Representative Signature: (Field Issuance Only) 	

INSPECTION INFORMATION

Inspection Start Date: June 20, 2024 Inspection Start Time: 11:15 Inspection End Date: June 20, 2024 Inspection End Time: 12:10		Inspection Type: Coal Partial Inspection Inspection Reason: Surety Related Weather: Cloudy	
Joint Inspection Agency: None		Joint Inspection Contacts: None	
Post Inspection Agency: None		Post Inspection Contacts: None	
Inspector(s): Clayton Wein	Inspector's Signature: <i>Clayton Wein</i> Signature Date: 7/18/2024		

Inspection Topic Summary

NOTE: Y=Inspected N=Not Inspected R=Comments Noted V=Violation Issued NA=Not Applicable

N - Air Resource Protection

R - Availability of Records

N - Backfill & Grading

N - Excess Spoil and Dev. Waste

N - Explosives

R - Fish & Wildlife

R - Hydrologic Balance

R - Gen. Compliance With Mine Plan

N - Other

N - Processing Waste

N - Roads

R - Reclamation Success

Y - Revegetation

N - Subsidence

N - Slides and Other Damage

N - Support Facilities On-site

R - Signs and Markers

N - Support Facilities Not On-site

N - Special Categories Of Mining

R - Topsoil

COMMENTS

This report documents the Division's observations taken during a Bond Compliance Inspection conducted at the New Horizon North Mine. The inspection was conducted on June 20, 2024 by Clayton Wein of the Division. Elk Ridge Mining and Reclamation, LLC. Was represented by Mindy Sickles during the inspection. The weather was cloudy with a temperature of 84° F. Ground conditions were dry during the inspection.

The purpose of this inspection was to compare what the Division currently has bonded for the New Horizon North Mine with what is approved in the Permit Application Package and what is currently on the ground at the mine site.

AVAILABILITY OF RECORDS – Rule 5.02.4(1):

The Permit Application Package for the New Horizon North Mine was utilized to inventory all structures, disturbances and hydrologic control features for the mine site. Specifically the operations plan and reclamation plan were reviewed. The Division also reviewed the previous site-wide cost estimate from Permit Renewal No. 2, Bond Release SL-3, and Bond Release SL-4. The cost estimate for RN-2 was approved in April of 2022. The estimate for SL-3 was calculated and approved in September of 2022. The Reclamation Cost Estimate for SL-4 was calculated and approved in June 2024.

FISH and WILDLIFE – Rule 4.18:

During the inspection several sets of deer tracks and scat were observed at the site. The tracks and scat were observed on both the older reclamation, as well as, the reclamation completed in 2023.

HYDROLOGIC BALANCE - Rule 4.05

Drainage Control 4.05.1, 4.05.2, 4.05.3; Siltation Structures 4.05.5, 4.05.6; Discharge Structures 4.05.7, 4.05.10; Diversions 4.05.4; Effluent Limits 4.05.2; Ground Water Monitoring 4.05.13; Surface Water Monitoring 4.05.13; Drainage – Acid and Toxic Materials 4.05.8; Impoundments 4.05.6, 4.05.9; Stream Buffer Zones 4.05.18:

Number of Partial Inspection this Fiscal Year: 8

Number of Complete Inspections this Fiscal Year: 4

There are three groundwater monitoring Locations within the permit boundary. Each location consists of a cluster of three monitoring wells each. The first cluster is located in the northeast portion of the permit area. Wells GE-N50, GW-N51 and GW-N52 were stable and in good condition. Each of the well's PVC pipe was easily identified. Each well casing had a PVC cap on it. The second cluster of wells, GW-N53, GW-N54 and GW-N55, is located in the central western portion of the permit area (Photo 1). The PVC Wells were easy to locate and in good condition. Each well casing had a cap covering the well. The third cluster of monitoring wells, GW-N56, GW-N57 and GW-N58, are located in the southwest corner of the permit area. All three PVC wells were in good condition. The PVC caps were all intact.

Pond 001 was reclaimed and reduced in size to a stock pond as per the approved post mining-land use (Photo 2). The embankments for the stock pond remained similar to that of previous Division inspections. The documented rills had not enlarged. The stock pond was stable.

GENERAL MINE PLAN COMPLIANCE:

The Division reviewed the last site-wide Reclamation Cost Estimate along with the permit application package for the new horizon mine to inventory tasks associated with disturbances, structures and hydrologic control structures. These items were then verified in the field during the June 20, 2024 inspection for accuracy. The Division found that all items remaining in the reclamation estimate concur with the current approved permit application package. No major discrepancies were identified. The next Midterm Review is scheduled to be completed by December 7, 2024. The Reclamation Cost Estimate will be updated and recalculated at that time.

RECLAMATION SUCCESS - Rule 4.15, Rule 3:

The western (Photo 3), southern (Photo 4) and eastern sections of the mine permit area were Phase I reclaimed in 2023. SL-04 approved the Phase I release of these areas. The reclamation was backfilled, graded, topsoiled and seeded. Vegetation on the newly reclaimed areas was filling in well and helping stabilize the area. The post mining land use approved for these areas is dryland pasture. There were no off site impacts observed.

In the middle of the southern reclamation a couple of large rills have formed. The rills were documented in the Division's May 2024 Inspection Report. Since may the rills had enlarged and lengthened (Photos 5 and 6). The cause of the rills was identified to be runoff from the irrigated pasture located at the center of the permit area. A center pivot waters the irrigated area. The rills formed in a low spot and continued from north to south and then turn west right before the permit boundary. Water transported in the rills appeared to flow to an armored inlet of a culvert that goes underneath AA Road. This culvert is approved as a permanent post mining feature to allow runoff to flow under AA Road and into a drainage on the south side of the road. Since the date of the June 20, 2024 inspection, the operator has placed waddles above the rills to help reduce erosion for the duration of the irrigation season. After irrigation season, the operator will submit a revision to the division to propose a permanent solution to repair the rills and implement a permanent feature to allow the future irrigation runoff to flow across this area.

The middle of the permit area reclaimed to irrigated pasture was stable with no erosional features observed. The hay grown on the pasture this season had been cut and baled (Photo 7).

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The gated entrances located at the eastern and southern permit boundary are approved to remain as permanent features at the request of the landowners. The entrances were in good condition and stable. No erosional features were noted.

SIGNS AND MARKERS – Rule 4.02:

Throughout the inspection of the mine site, several mine identification signs were observed posted on the fence delineating the permit boundary. The signs were posted on the fence with no obstructions masking the signs. The signs were noted to be legible and contained information about the permit, the permittee and the Division.

TOPSOIL – Rule 4.06

Removal 4.06.2; Substitute Materials 4.06.4(4); Storage and Protection 4.06.3; Redistribution 4.06.4:

One topsoil pile remains at the New Horizon North Mine named the Progresso Topsoil Stockpile 1 (Photo 8). The topsoil stockpile has been approved to remain as a permanent post mining feature at the request of the landowners. The topsoil stockpile was stable with vegetative cover. There were no erosional feature observed. The perimeter ditch was stable with no obstructions. There was no loss of topsoil resource observed.

DOCUMENTS RECEIVED: None

OTHER (SPECIFY): None

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ENFORCEMENT ACTIONS/COMPLIANCE

No enforcement actions were initiated as a result of this inspection, nor are any pending.

Number of Partial Inspection this Fiscal Year: 8

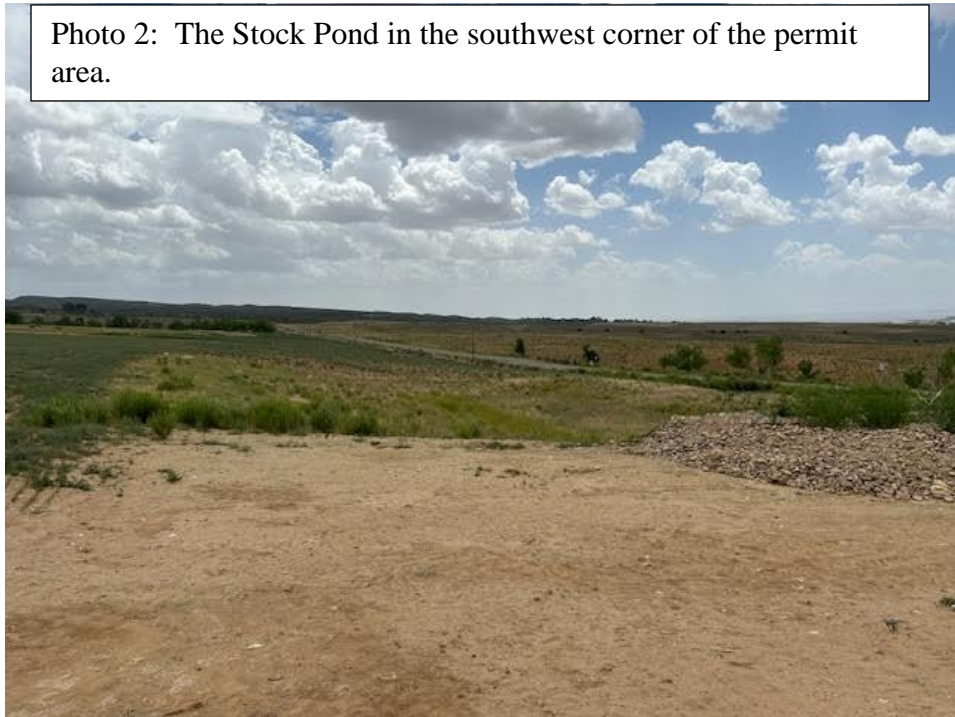
Number of Complete Inspections this Fiscal Year: 4

PHOTOGRAPHS

Photo 1: The GW-N 53, GW-N54 and GW-N55 Wells.



Photo 2: The Stock Pond in the southwest corner of the permit area.



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Photo 3: The southern permit area Phase I reclamation.



Photo 4: The northwestern Phase I reclamation.



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Photo 5: The width of the rills located in the south-central portion of the permit area.

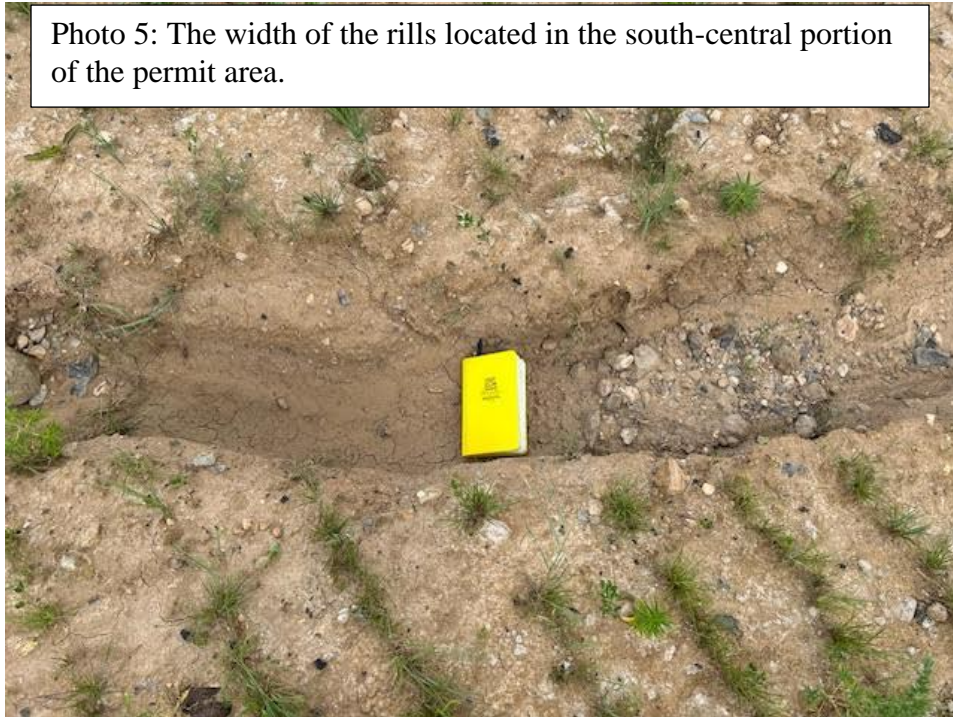
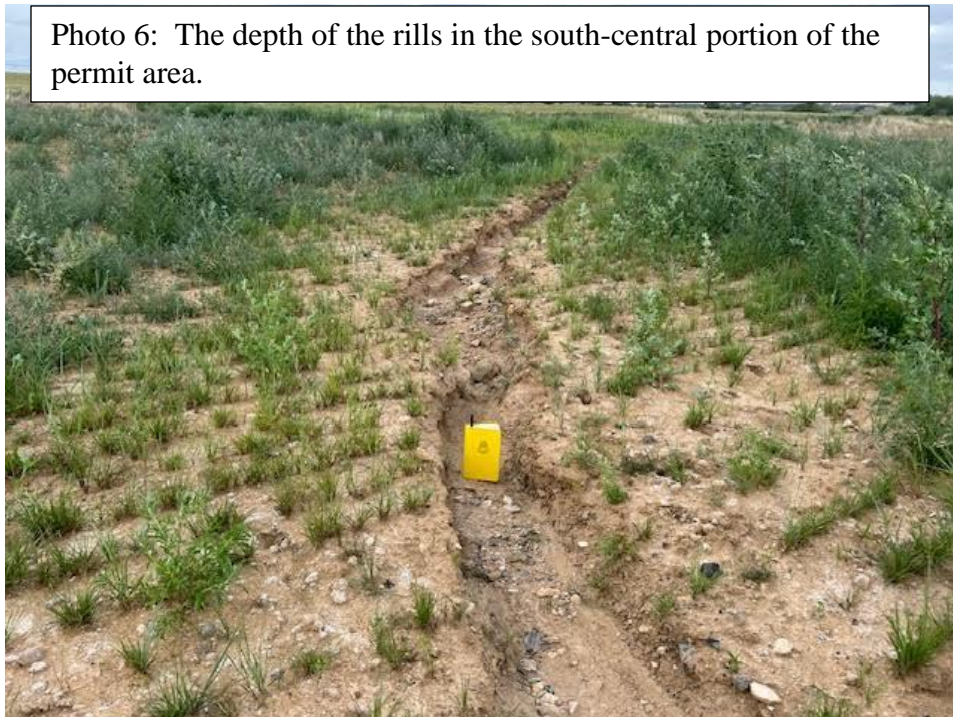


Photo 6: The depth of the rills in the south-central portion of the permit area.



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Photo 7: The irrigated pasture at the center of the permit area.

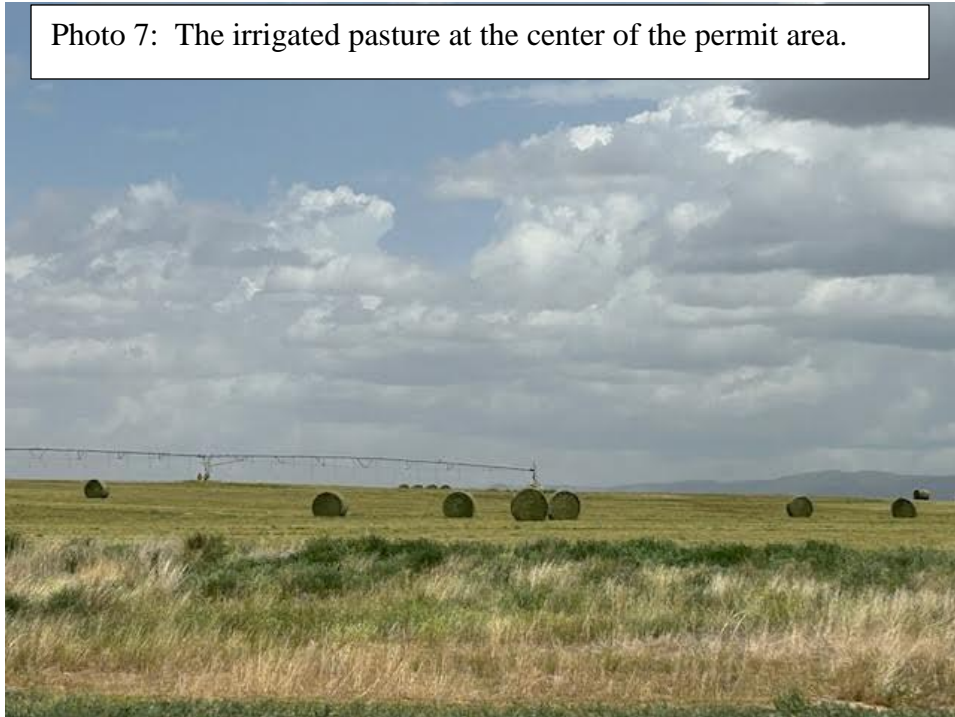
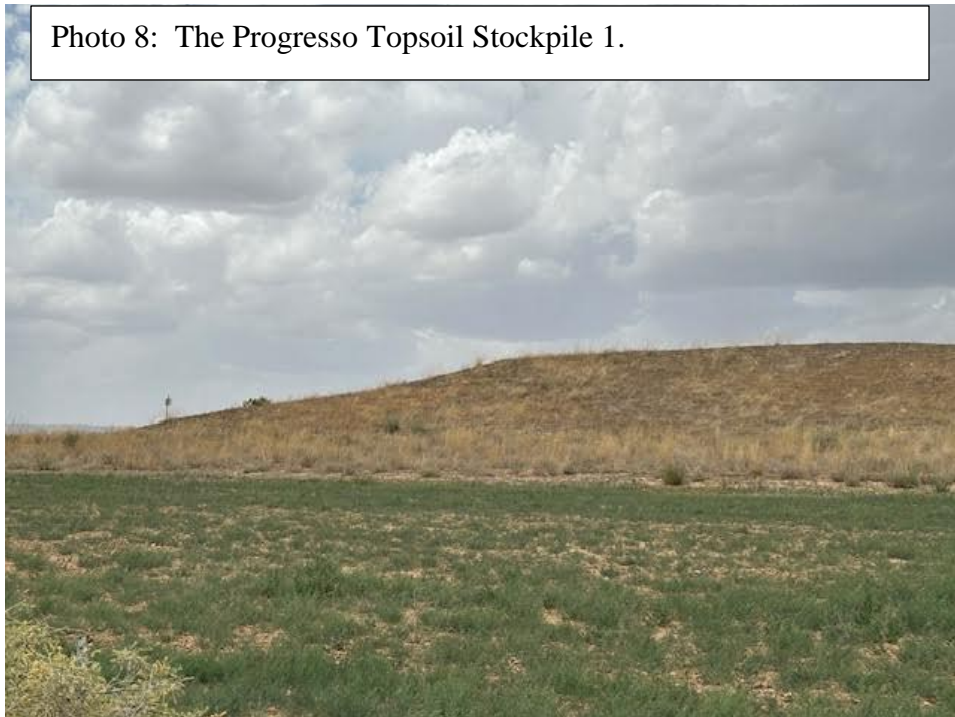


Photo 8: The Progresso Topsoil Stockpile 1.



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