

STATE OF  
COLORADO

Zuber - DNR, Rob &lt;rob.zuber@state.co.us&gt;

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**DRMS inspection report for Tri-County Pit**

1 message

**Zuber - DNR, Rob** <rob.zuber@state.co.us>

Fri, Nov 22, 2024 at 12:39 PM

To: "Bartuska, Tyra L (United Companies)" &lt;tyra.bartuska@unitedco.com&gt;, "Farmer, Jesse (United Companies)" &lt;jesse.farmer@unitedco.com&gt;, "Burkey, Jason K (CRH Americas Materials)" &lt;jason.burkey@na.crh.com&gt;

Hello, All -

Here is my report from my inspection last month. I understand that we did not work out all of the issues, but I wanted to get this out since it has been over four weeks since Jesse and I met at the site.

We can work out remaining issues through your responses to my cited problems. That said, I am also willing to discuss this more via email and telephone.

I am mostly busy today, but I will be working Monday through Wednesday next week. Also, the deadline for the submittal of a TR is the end of January, so we have some time for any necessary discussions.

Regards,  
Rob

Rob Zuber, P.E.  
Environmental Protection Specialist  
Active Mines Regulatory Program



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

***I am working remotely and can be reached by cell at 720.601.2276.***

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**M1977205\_DRMS report\_inspection date of 23October2024\_with figures and photos.pdf**  
2827K



**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> Tri-County Gravel	<b>MINE/PROSPECTING ID#:</b> M-1977-205	<b>MINERAL:</b> Sand and gravel	<b>COUNTY:</b> Delta
<b>INSPECTION TYPE:</b> Monitoring	<b>WEATHER:</b> Clear	<b>INSP. DATE:</b> October 23, 2024	<b>INSP. TIME:</b> 08:15
<b>OPERATOR:</b> Oldcastle SW Group, Inc. dba United Compas County	<b>OPERATOR REPRESENTATIVE:</b> Jesse Farmer	<b>TYPE OF OPERATION:</b> 112c - Construction Regular Operation	

<b>REASON FOR INSPECTION:</b> Normal I&E Program	<b>BOND CALCULATION TYPE:</b> None	<b>BOND AMOUNT:</b> \$303,108.00
<b>DATE OF COMPLAINT:</b> NA	<b>POST INSP. CONTACTS:</b> None	<b>JOINT INSP. AGENCY:</b> None
<b>INSPECTOR(S):</b> Robert Zuber, P.E.	<b>INSPECTOR'S SIGNATURE:</b> 	<b>SIGNATURE DATE:</b> November 22, 2024

**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.**

**INSPECTION TOPIC:** Gen. Compliance with Mine Plan

**PROBLEM/POSSIBLE VIOLATION:** Problem: The current mine plan and reclamation plan need to be updated and clarified pursuant to C.R.S. 34-32.5-112 (1)(c)(VI). The operator must provide sufficient information to describe or identify how the operator intends to conduct the operation. Map C-2 should be updated to better reflect the existing and proposed conditions. Exhibit D should be updated to discuss all ponds and facilities at the site. Exhibit E should be updated to describe the maximum amount of highwall that requires reclamation in all relevant pits. Exhibit L should be updated, as necessary, to include all reclamation tasks in sufficient detail.

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

**CORRECTIVE ACTION DUE DATE:** 1/31/25

**INSPECTION TOPIC:** Signs & Markers

**PROBLEM/POSSIBLE VIOLATION:** Problem: The affected area boundary markers were not observed per the requirements of Rule 3.1.12. Boundary markers were seen in some places but missing at the southwest portion of the polygon that encompasses the office and scale. Also, near the middle portion of the pond (in the north/south direction), on the west side, it appears that the markers are not located properly.

**CORRECTIVE ACTIONS:** The boundaries of the affected area must be marked by monuments or other markers that are clearly visible and adequate to delineate such boundaries. Proof of the addition of markers should be provided to the Division by the resolution due date. This should include photographs and GPS points of the added markers.

**CORRECTIVE ACTION DUE DATE:** 1/03/25

## INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND

The Tri-County Gravel Pit (M-1977-205) is located approximately one mile northeast of Hotchkiss and accessed from Hwy 92 via Back River Road. This site was inspected as part of the Division of Reclamation, Mining and Safety's (Division's) normal monitoring program. Jesse Farmer, representing the Operator (United Companies of Mesa County, aka United), was present during this inspection. Photographs are included with this report to illustrate some of the conditions observed.

The site is a 112c operation, and the Division's Permit System indicates a total of 274.27 permitted acres. This is potentially inaccurate, and the Division will work with United to correct this value, if necessary.

The site has three planned pits, with reclamation to occur concurrently with mining. The southern portion of Pit 1 is a constructed pond. A dike separates this pond from the northern portion of Pit 1. The most recent Annual Report (November 29, 2023) indicates that the only reclamation onsite is the pond area, not the northern portion of Pit 1. The pits and other important features at the site are shown on Figure 1, which is an annotated version of the Annual Report Map. This figure shows three non-contiguous parcels at the southwest corner of the permit area. There was no apparent mining-related disturbance in the two northern parcels during this inspection. United has indicated that they plan to remove these from the permit with an Acreage Release application.

Per Jesse Farmer, no overburden is stored onsite.

The Division currently holds a financial warranty amount of \$303,108.00 for this site. The reclamation cost estimate was last updated by the Division in 2008. Related to this inspection, the Division has not yet finalized an updated reclamation costs estimate, since revisions to the Mining and Reclamation Plans are needed.

## OBSERVATIONS

An adequate mine identification sign was clearly visible at the entrance to the site.

Small product piles were seen near the office and scale area by the entrance. Larger piles were seen in the pit. There was minimal activity on site, with no mining or processing. During the inspection, some material was loaded onto a trailer and a truck from piles in the pit. Mr. Farmer stated that a crusher will be brought to the site in late 2024.

Permit boundary markers were seen in some places but missing at the southwest portion of the polygon that encompasses the office and scale. Also, near the middle portion of the pond (in the north/south direction), on the west side, it appears that the markers are not located properly.

At the south end of the pond, a topsoil pile was in place. It is approximately 40 feet in diameter and 20 feet high. The operator should vegetate the topsoil stockpile to limit wind and rain erosion, thus preserving this soil for reclamation. At least, a berm or other best management practice should be used to limit the loss of this material from rainfall runoff.

Reclamation of the pond banks has been completed; however, the vegetation growth is poor in some areas. At the north end, a large amount of Russian thistle (an undesirable species) was seen.

The CDPS discharge point was observed. The water was flowing out at a significant flow rate (0.6 feet deep in the flume), and the water appeared to be free of sediment or other contaminants. Water was flowing into the pond through a pipe from Pit 1.

A flood-control dike exists between the river and Pit 1. It is approximately four feet high and approximately 1,400 feet long. Per United, this is a permanent feature.

Around the Pit 1 pit area, a drainage ditch leads to a pump for diverting water to the pond. Water was flowing into Pit 1 from Pit 3. A water truck was seen near the pump area, and no fugitive dust issues were observed. The walls around Pit 1 are approximately 20 feet in height. It appears that most of the circumference of the northern portion of Pit 1 still needs to be reclaimed, with the banks graded from 2H:1V to 3H:1V.

The area north of Pit 1 is undisturbed. The area that is marked as Pit 2 on the C-2 map (Mining Plan) is an agricultural field.

In Pit 3, a large pile of pit run material was observed. Also, in this pit, two levels of highwall were observed. The upper one is approximately 10 feet high, and the lower one is approximately 15 feet high. There is a road in between them that is approximately 50 feet wide. The highwall is approximately 750 feet long. The locations of these can be seen on Figure 2.

It appears that the operator is not following the Reclamation Plan closely. The plan states that the maximum length of highwall to be reclaimed is 3,000 feet. However, there is approximately 3,000 feet to be reclaimed in Pit 1 (from 2:1 to 3:1), as well as approximately 750 feet of highwall to be reclaimed in Pit 3 (from near vertical to 3:1). A Technical Revision is required to update Exhibit E (as well as any related exhibits such as Exhibit L) for this permit to show the revised plan.

Map C-2 should be updated to better reflect the on-the-ground conditions. For example, the topsoil pile or piles should be shown in the accurate location, and storage of the landowner's equipment should be shown. Features that do not exist (and will not in the future) should be removed from the map. Another reason to update Map C-2, as well as Exhibit D, is the need to illustrate and explain the small ponds that are on the west side of the larger pond.

Near the entrance, two structures were seen: the office (which appears to have a footer foundation) and a Quonset hut (on a concrete slab) for storage of a loader. United has indicated that these will be demolished and removed when mining is completed at the site, and the area will be reclaimed for wildlife habitat. It appears that the Quonset hut should be added to the list of facilities in Exhibit D. Also, United should ensure that Exhibit L includes tasks for all facilities that require demolition.

Two diesel tanks were observed near the office. Each appears to be a 1,000 gallon-capacity tank. They were both inside secondary containment structures that look to be adequate to contain any spills.

Responses to this inspection report should be directed to Rob Zuber at the Division of Reclamation, Mining and Safety, via email at [rob.zuber@state.co.us](mailto:rob.zuber@state.co.us) or by phone (720.601.2276).

**Figure 1. Tri-County Gravel Pit – 2023 Annual Report Map with Features from DRMS Inspection**

*Notes: Bold red polygons do not match thin red polygons from Map C-2.*

*Blue circles show locations of topsoil stockpiles.*





**Figure 2 Tri-County Gravel Pit – Pits 1 and 3**



**PHOTOGRAPHS**





### Entrance sign



**Topsoil pile near south end of pond**



**South end of pond with good vegetation**



**West side of pond with poor vegetation**





**South end of Pit 1 with pump area and water truck**



**North end of Pit 1 (looking south)**



**Pit 3 highwall and floor**



**Upper part of Pit 3 highwall**





**Pit 2 – currently an agricultural field**



**Diesel fuel storage near office**



**North end of pond (from hill next to highway)**



**South end of pond (from hill next to highway)**

### GENERAL INSPECTION TOPICS

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

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

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

#### Inspection Contact Address

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