

STATE OF
COLORADO

Ridley - DNR, Hunter <hunter.ridley@state.co.us>

Inspection Report, Colowyo, C-1981-019

1 message

Ridley - DNR, Hunter <hunter.ridley@state.co.us>
To: "Tennyson, Tony" <tony.tennyson@tristategt.org>

Wed, Jan 22, 2025 at 8:36 AM

Tony,

Please find attached the report for the coal partial inspection conducted on 1/14. Feel free to reach out with any questions as you review the report.

Kind regards,
Hunter Ridley (she/her/hers)
Environmental Protection Specialist I

**COLORADO**
Division of Reclamation,
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Department of Natural Resources

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**InspReport_1_14_25_C1981019.pdf**
3069K



PERMIT INFORMATION

Permit Number: C-1981-019 Mine Name: Colowyo Coal Mine Operator: Colowyo Coal Company L.P. Operator Address: Mr Tony Tennyson 5731 State Highway 13 Meeker, CO 81641	County: Moffat, Rio Blanco Operation Type: Surface Permit Status: Active Ownership: Private
	Operator Representative Present: Tony Tennyson
Operator Representative Signature: (Field Issuance Only) 	

INSPECTION INFORMATION

Inspection Start Date: January 14, 2025 Inspection Start Time: 07:30 Inspection End Date: January 14, 2025 Inspection End Time: 12:00		Inspection Type: Coal Partial Inspection Inspection Reason: Normal I&E Program Weather: Clear	
Joint Inspection Agency: None		Joint Inspection Contacts: 	
Post Inspection Agency: None		Post Inspection Contacts: 	
Inspector(s): Hunter Ridley	Inspector's Signature: <i>Hunter Ridley</i>		Signature Date: January 22, 2025

Inspection Topic Summary

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

N - Air Resource Protection

N - Availability of Records

R - Backfill & Grading

Y - Excess Spoil and Dev. Waste

N - Explosives

R - Fish & Wildlife

R - Hydrologic Balance

R - Gen. Compliance With Mine Plan

N - Other

N - Processing Waste

R - Roads

N - Reclamation Success

N - Revegetation

N - Subsidence

N - Slides and Other Damage

Y - Support Facilities On-site

R - Signs and Markers

N - Support Facilities Not On-site

N - Special Categories Of Mining

R - Topsoil

COMMENTS

This was a partial inspection of the Colowyo Coal Mine; DRMS Permit No. C-1981-019, operated by Colowyo Coal Company (Colowyo). The inspection was conducted by Hunter Ridley with the Colorado Division of Reclamation, Mining, and Safety (Division) and focused on the South Taylor, East, West, and Gossard Loadout areas. Tom Fry of Colowyo accompanied the inspection. Weather during the inspection was clear with temperatures around 21° F. Weather conditions prohibited access to some areas of the site. These are described below.

An application for a Phase I, II and III release of 5.5 acres in the East Pit (SL-23) was received by the Division on September 16, 2024. SL-23 proposes to release Streeter Ditch and Streeter Pond. The Division conducted the required inspection for SL-23 on October 30, 2024. The Division issued a proposed decision to approve SL-23 on January 7, 2025. The public comment period for the proposed approval of SL-23 ends on February 21, 2025.

An application or Technical Revision 165 (TR-165) was received by the Division on December 12, 2024. TR-165 proposes an incidental permit boundary revision to reduce the permit boundary to remove the Streeter Ditch and Pond. As of the date of this report, the Division has completed technical review of the application. The decision due date was extended to March 7, 2025, to allow for the final issuance of SL-23 before approval of TR-165.

SIGNS AND MARKERS – Rule 4.02:

Mine identification signs were located at the mine entrance, throughout the site, and along State Highway 13. All information for compliance was observed.

ROADS – Rule 4.03 Construction 4.03.1(3)/4.03.2(3), Drainage 4.03.1(4)/4.03.2(4), Surfacing and Maintenance 4.03.1(5) and (6)/4.03.2(5) and (6), Reclamation 4.03.1(7)/4.03.2(7):

Certified Haul Roads A and B and in pit haul roads were plowed, easily navigable and in good condition. A small off-road vehicle was used to access more snow-covered areas such as Section 28, Section 15, and Section 16 Ponds.

BACKFILL and GRADING – Rule 4.14 Contemporaneous Reclamation 4.14.1; Approximate Original Contour 4.14.2; Highwall Elimination 4.14.1(2)(f); Steep Slopes 4.14.2, 4.27; Handling of Acid and Toxic Materials 4.14.3; Stabilization of Rills and Gullies 4.14.6:

Number of Partial Inspection this Fiscal Year: 4

Number of Complete Inspections this Fiscal Year: 2

West Pit

West Pit reclamation was observed from atop the spoil pile south of West Pit (Photo 1). West Pit is near completion in terms of backfill operations. Vegetation in this area is partially established, with some areas waiting out the 10-year liability period and others awaiting reseeding efforts.

South Taylor

Active backfill operations were observed in the South Taylor Pit during the inspection. Spoil material was being hauled from the eastern side of the South Taylor Pit (Photo 2) and was being deposited towards the southeast corner of the South Taylor pit (Photo 5). A highwall of product remains to the west for possible future use.

East Pit

Upper and Lower Section 3 Ponds in the East Pit are complete. These sediment ponds function in series, with the Lower Section 3 Pond being a non-discharging structure. Due to snow and berms, the Division was unable to drive directly to the ponds during this inspection. However, the ponds were visible through a small cut in the road berm and were observed to be stable (Photo 9). Spring melt will test the ponds' full functionality later in the year.

HYDROLOGICBALANCE - 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:

West Pit / South Taylor Pit

The West Pit stock ponds were observed from above the South Taylor Spoil Pile and appeared to be stable. Taylor Ditch and East Taylor Ditch were snow covered but appeared to have no issues observed from afar.

Train Loadout Area

The following ponds in the Loadout Area were inspection this month: Gossard Pond (Photo 12), Stoker Siding Pond (Photo 10) and Rail Loop Pond (Photo 11). No problems or erosional concerns were noted. All inspected ponds were noted to be holding water, but frozen over. The Rail Loop and Gossard Ponds are both designed for containment rather than discharge.

East Pit / Reclaimed Section 16 Pit

Ditches in the East Pit area were not visited directly due to steep and snowy conditions. However, the southern end of these pits was observed from along the slope adjacent to Section 15 Ditch. Final East Pit Ditch and EP1 (Photo 7), EP2 (Photo 8), and EP3 (Photo 7) were visible from this vantage point. All ditches were partially snow covered but looked to be stable. EP2 and EP1 were holding water but frozen over.

Section 15 (Photo 6) and Section 16 (Photo 3) Ponds and Ditches were accessible with the use of a small off-road vehicle. Both ponds were frozen over, snow covered and had no issues.

Highway 13 Areas

The Prospect Pond and Section 28 Pond, accessible via Hwy 13, were inspected. Section 28 (Photo 14) and Prospect (Photo 13) Ponds held water at the time of inspection but were entirely frozen over. All embankments appeared stable and vegetated under snow cover. No issues were noted.

TOPSOIL – Rule 4.06:

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Topsoil piles across the site contained appropriate markers. Markers have been maintained throughout the winter season thus far, with signs being present for even remote topsoil areas in East and South Taylor Pit (Photo 4).

FISH and WILDLIFE – Rule 4.18:

No negative impact to wildlife was observed. Waterfowl were seen using small seep areas that weren't frozen and numerous small animal tracks were noted to have traversed almost all areas of the site. A small heard of male and female elk were observed in the East Pit and three more elk were seen along the site entrance haul road.

GENERAL MINE PLAN COMPLIANCE:

No active mining was observed during this inspection. The Division's upcoming inspection will visit Collom Pit and report on the extent of recent mining activity. No train was observed at the Gossard Loadout area during the inspection, but Mr. Fry stated that several trains still come each week to receive product.

Maintenance Items:

- Monitor the slump area at Section 26 Pond
- Monitor the small erosional feature in D4, repairs will be necessary if conditions worsen

ENFORCEMENT ACTIONS/COMPLIANCE

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

PHOTOGRAPHS



Photo 1: View north of West Pit reclamation.

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Photo 2: Material is being hauled from the temporary spoil pile in the South Taylor area for use in backfill operations.



Photo 3: View east of Section 16 Pond.

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Photo 4: Topsoil pile located to the west of Section 16 Pond.



Photo 5: Active backfill operations in the South Taylor Pit.

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Photo 6: Section 15 Pond.



Photo 7: View east of Final East Pit Ditch and EP1 & EP3.

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Photo 8: View north of EP2 in the Final East Pit Ditch.



Photo 9: View of Section 3 Ponds from the eastern side of the haul road.

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Photo 10: View north of the Stroker Siding Pond.



Photo 11: View northwest of the Rail Loop Pond.

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Photo 12: View of Gossard Pond located in the rail loop area.



Photo 13: View west of Prospect Pond.

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Photo 14: View north of Section 28 Pond.

Number of Partial Inspection this Fiscal Year: 4

Number of Complete Inspections this Fiscal Year: 2