

**STATE OF
COLORADO****Girardi - DNR, Chris** <chris.girardi@state.co.us>

Hardship Lode Quarry, M1987027- Inspection Report

1 message

Girardi - DNR, Chris <chris.girardi@state.co.us>

Tue, Mar 18, 2025 at 3:48 PM

To: nicole@coloradoquarries.com

Cc: Jared Ebert - DNR <jared.ebert@state.co.us>

Good afternoon,

Attached to this email is a pdf of the inspection report for the inspection conducted on February 7, 2025 at the Hardship Lode Quarry permit, permit number M-1987027.

An updated cost estimate to complete reclamation at the permit was also conducted. A pdf of the Division's cost estimate is attached to this email.

A hard copy will not be mailed unless requested.

Please feel free to contact me if you have any questions.

Thanks,

Chris Girardi

Environmental Protection Specialist Intern



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

P: (720) 793-3041

Physical: 1313 Sherman Street, Room 215, Denver, CO 80203

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2 attachments



HardshipLodeQuarry_2025CostEstimate.pdf
250K




HardshipLodeQuarry_Feb2025_InspectionReport.pdf
4464K



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.

MINE NAME: Hardship Lode Quarry	MINE/PROSPECTING ID#: M-1987-027	MINERAL: Stone	COUNTY: Custer
INSPECTION TYPE: Monitoring	WEATHER: Windy	INSP. DATE: February 7, 2025	INSP. TIME: 12:00
OPERATOR: Colorado Quarries Inc	OPERATOR REPRESENTATIVE: Aaron Tezak	TYPE OF OPERATION: 112c - Construction Regular Operation	
REASON FOR INSPECTION: Normal I&E Program	BOND CALCULATION TYPE: Complete Bond	BOND AMOUNT: \$97,325	
DATE OF COMPLAINT: NA	POST INSP. CONTACTS: None	JOINT INSP. AGENCY: None	
INSPECTOR(S): Chris Girardi	INSPECTOR'S SIGNATURE: 	SIGNATURE DATE: March 18, 2025	

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: Revegetation

PROBLEM: There are state-listed noxious weeds present on site. This is a problem for failure to employ weed control methods for state listed noxious weed species within the permitted area, and to reduce the spread of weeds to nearby areas as required by Section 3.1.10 (6) of the rule.

CORRECTIVE ACTIONS: Implement approved weed control plan and provide proof to the Division that this has been done. If a weed control plan is not already in place, the operator shall develop a weed control and management plan in accordance with Section 3.1.10 (6) of the Rule. This plan should be developed in consultation with the county extension agency, or weed control district office and should include specific control measures to be applied, a schedule for when control measures will be applied and a post-treatment monitoring plan. This weed control plan shall be submitted to the Division as a Technical Revision to the approved plan with the appropriate Technical Revision fee of \$216.00 by the corrective action date.

CORRECTIVE ACTION DUE DATE: 5/17/25

INSPECTION TOPIC: Signs & Markers

PROBLEM: The mine identification sign observed does not meet the requirements of Rule 3.1.12. The Operator shall, at the entrance of the mine site post a sign, which shall be clearly visible from the access road, with a minimum size equaling one hundred and eighty-seven (187) square inches, such as eleven (11) inches in height and seventeen (17) inches in width, with appropriate font size, with the following: the name of the Operator, a statement that a reclamation permit for the operation has been issued by the Colorado Mined Land

Reclamation Board; and the permit number. The permit number displayed on the observed sign was incorrect.
CORRECTIVE ACTIONS: Please revise the mine identification sign to indicate the correct permit number of M-1987-027.

CORRECTIVE ACTION DUE DATE: 4/17/25

OBSERVATIONS

The Hardship Lode Quarry permit was inspected on February 7, 2025, by Chris Girardi and with the Division of Reclamation, Mining, and Safety (Division/DRMS) as part of the DRMS's routine monitoring inspection program. The site was last inspected on March 28, 2020. Aaron Tezak represented Colorado Quarries Inc (Operator) during the inspection. The weather was cool and extremely windy.

The Hardship Lode Quarry is a 112c stone and road gravel operation with a permitted area of 55 acres and an affected area of approximately 13 acres. The site is located approximately 2.5 miles north of Westcliffe, CO. The current land use surrounding the site is rangeland and the approved post-mining land use is rangeland.

The site is accessed from a locked gate at the entrance. A mine identification sign (see Photo 1) was observed next to the entrance gate. However, the sign displayed a permit number of "M198702". This has been cited as a problem. In accordance with Rule 3.1.12(1), please correct the mine entrance sign to display "M1987027". The permit boundary is enclosed with a fence. The affected area is delineated with T-posts (see Photo 4).

General Compliance With Mine Plan:

The site consists of rolling hills and grassy vegetation, including Rubber rabbitbrush, Yucca, wheatgrasses, and Knapweed. The site overalls slopes to the south. At the time of the inspection, no mining was being conducted. The site consists of a large, sloped pit from the extraction of a rhyolite outcrop, as well as stockpiles of mined material, a topsoil stockpile, and equipment. The pit is approximately 13-acres in size and ranges from eighteen (18) to approximately fifty (50) feet in depth. According to the mining plan, the operation is still mining the Pit Number One Area, while the Pit Number Two area to the south remains unaffected. The pit is progressing to the north via a highwall close to 50 feet in depth with a slope ranging between 3:1 and 4:1 (horizontal to vertical ratio) (see Photos 2 and 8). The pit highwall along the eastern portion is approximately 18 feet in depth with a slope at close to 3:1 with some portions exhibiting a steeper slope (see Photos 5 and 13). No erosional features were observed along the pit slopes. The pit floor contains several stockpiles of processed fine-grained material, sand, gravel, and a small pile of boulders. A small amount of water was present on the pit floor (see Photo 9). However, the Operator stated the ponding was due to recent snow melt.

Topsoil was observed in a vegetated stockpile to the east the pit and the unaffected portion of the permit area (see Photo 6). The topsoil stockpiled was vegetated with native grasses and minor amounts of Knapweed. The pit floor contained several stockpiles of material, including sand, gravel, and boulders at various locations in the pit floor (see Photos 3 and 10). A wheel dozer (see Photo 3) was observed in the pit floor near a gravel stockpile. The laydown area contained portable conveyers, grizzly screeners, a pile of lumber wood, concrete blocks, and storage tanks on trailers (see Photos 8-10). No problems were observed regarding the laydown area.

Noxious weeds observed included a significant amount of Knapweed and a minor amount of Mullein within the unaffected portion of the permit area and minor amounts of Knapweed along the eastern portion of the highwall (see Photos 5-7). This has been cited as a problem. The Division conducted an inspection of the permit area on February 12, 2020, and the subsequent Inspection Report cited a problem for noxious weeds and requested a weed control plan be submitted in the form of a Technical Revision in order to address the noxious weed problem. Correspondence between the Operator and Fremont County Weed Management

(dated February 19, 2020) indicated that Fremont County Weed Management would conduct a site visit and assist with the knapweed problem from June to July during peak growing season. Any further actions or documentation of the site visit from Fremont County Weed Management was not provided to the Division. In accordance with Rule 3.1.10(6) of the Construction Materials Rules and Regulations governing weed control, the Division will require the Operator to develop a weed control plan to be employed to control the current infestation and prevent the spread of weeds to the surrounding area.

In addition, annual report map submittals have included Google Earth imagery of the site with a red circle indicating where the site is located. This reporting is inadequate. Please refer to the Division's Minerals Reclamation Permit Annual Report form, item #22, which requests a map that accurately depicts the permit boundary, current affected area, topsoil reserved for reclamation, locations of acres reclaimed, acreage to be affected in the next report year, and acres to be reclaimed in the next report year. For the 2025 annual report map, please include a report map with the above-referenced features.

Financial Warranty:

The Division currently holds a reclamation bond in the amount of \$69,000. for this operation. The Division has estimated the reclamation liability at the site and found it to be \$97,325. This is an increase of \$28,325 from the bond currently held. The Operator will have 14 days (April 1, 2025), from the issuance of this report to submit any questions regarding the updated cost estimate. If no questions are received, the Division may issue a Surety Increase notice for the difference. The Operator will have 60 days from the date of the notice to submit and obtain acceptance of the increase in financial warranty from the Division in accordance with Rule 4.2.1(2).

Photographs taken during the inspection are attached. If you need additional information or have any questions, please contact me at the Division of Reclamation, Mining and Safety, 1313 Sherman Street, Room 215, Denver, CO 80203, by telephone at (720) 793-3041, or by email at chris.girardi@state.co.us.

PHOTOGRAPHS



Photo 1: Permit identification sign at entrance gate.



Photo 2: Overview of the northern portion of the affected area, facing west.



Photo 3: Overview of the southern portion of the affected area, including pit floor and material stockpiles. Facing southwest.



Photo 4: T-post marking the affected area to the southeast, facing north.



Photo 5: East highwall and knapweed, facing east.



Photo 6: Vegetated topsoil stockpile located in the unaffected area to the east of the pit, facing east.



Photo 7: Knapweed located amongst the topsoil stockpile.



Photo 8: Northern portion of the pit highwall, facing west.



Photo 9: Minor amount of ponding on the pit floor, facing west.

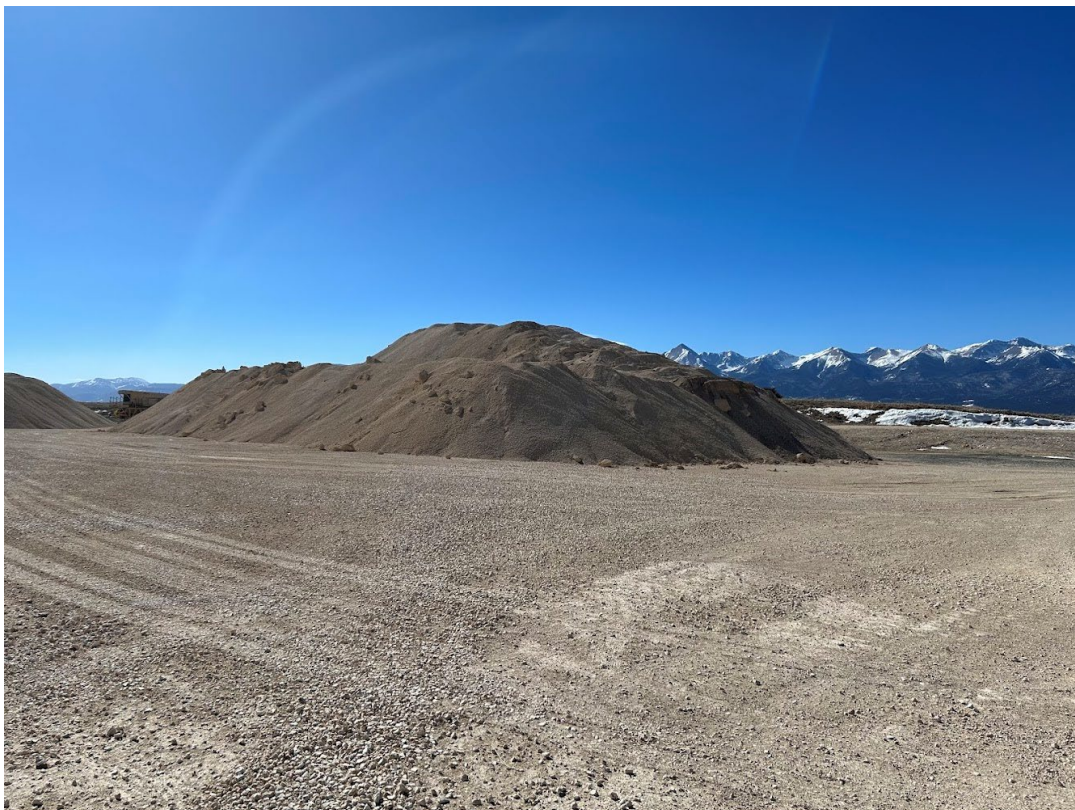


Photo 10: Fine-grained material stockpile after processing within the pit floor, facing southwest.



Photo 11: Conveyers in the laydown area, facing east.



Photo 12: Small storage tanks strapped to trailers in the laydown area, facing east.



Photo 13: View of the pit highwall along the eastern portion, facing east.

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>N</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>Y</u>	(FW) FISH & WILDLIFE----- <u>Y</u>	(RV) REVEGETATION---- <u>PB</u>
(SM) SIGNS AND MARKERS----- <u>Y</u>	(SP) STORM WATER MGT PLAN---- <u>N</u>	(RS) RECL PLAN/COMP-- <u>N</u>
(ES) OVERBURDEN/DEV. WASTE----- <u>N</u>	(SC) EROSION/SEDIMENTATION-- <u>N</u>	(ST) STIPULATIONS----- <u>N</u>
(AT) ACID OR TOXIC MATERIALS----- <u>N</u>	(OD) OFF-SITE DAMAGE----- <u>N</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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