



COLORADO

Division of Reclamation,
Mining and Safety


Department of Natural Resources

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: Castillo Pit	MINE/PROSPECTING ID#: M-2000-053	MINERAL: Gravel	COUNTY: Las Animas
INSPECTION TYPE: Monitoring	WEATHER: Clear	INSP. DATE: April 24, 2025	INSP. TIME: 10:14
OPERATOR: Las Animas County	OPERATOR REPRESENTATIVE: Keith Woodring	TYPE OF OPERATION: 112c - Construction Regular Operation	

REASON FOR INSPECTION: Normal I&E Program	BOND CALCULATION TYPE: None	BOND AMOUNT: \$0.00
DATE OF COMPLAINT: NA	POST INSP. CONTACTS: None	JOINT INSP. AGENCY: None
INSPECTOR(S): Amber M. Gibson	INSPECTOR'S SIGNATURE: 	SIGNATURE DATE: June 10, 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: Reclamation Success

PROBLEM: Reclamation has not been carried to completion within five years of last mining activity at the site as required by Rule 3.1.3.

CORRECTIVE ACTIONS: The Operator shall, conduct final backfilling and grading, seed with the approved seed mixture, and suitably restrict grazing during the seeding's initial establishment at the site. The Operator shall submit documentation that final reclamation has been completed by the corrective action date.

CORRECTIVE ACTION DUE DATE: 9/30/25

OBSERVATIONS

The Castillo Pit was inspected by Amber Gibson with the Division of Reclamation, Mining and Safety (Division/DRMS). The inspection was completed as part of the Division's routine monitoring inspection program. The site was previously inspected by the Division on September 24, 2020 as a routine monitoring inspection. Keith Woodring (representing the Operator: Las Animas County), accompanied me during the inspection. The sky was clear and the weather was hot.

The Castillo Pit is located in Las Animas County approximately 12 miles west of Trinidad, Colorado and sits on an alluvial or colluvial terrace on the south side of the Purgatoire River. The pit is a 18.74-acre 112c Construction Materials Reclamation Permit. The primary commodity being mined at the site is gravel. The approved post-mining land use is rangeland.

Availability of Records:

The Castillo Pit was originally permitted by Las Animas County in 2000 as a 110c operation for 9.90 acres. In 2004, 8.84 acres were added to the permit through a conversion revision (CN1), converting the 110c permit to a 18.74 acre 112c permit. There are no outstanding infractions at this site, although the previous few inspection reports remind the Operator that if mining has ceased that reclamation needs to begin and be completed within 5 years of the cessation of mining. The annual report, map, and fee is paid and current through June 12, 2025.

Financial Warranty:

The Castillo Pit is permitted to and operated by Las Animas County. The Division does not hold a financial warranty for County operations.

General Compliance with the Mine Plan:

Mining has not taken place at this site for many years. The site is primarily being used for storage of recycled asphalt material, used for paved parking areas around the county, stored in the flat parking area central to the site (Photo 1). There are a couple small stockpiles of what appear to be overburden and topsoil. There is a small pile just northeast of the paved area (Photo 2). One of the piles is located within the area circled in yellow on Figure 1. The area circled in blue corresponds the topsoil location shown on the Applicant's 2024 annual report map. The Operator shall use the remaining stockpiled material to conduct reclamation across the site.

Reclamation Success:

Much of the site has been reclaimed. This site had historically been coal mined and partially reclaimed. Although much of the reclaimed coal areas were not re-disturbed, there is a road leading from the central flat area down to an area just east of the cemetery that had been mined (Photos 3-6). The slopes in that area only have sparse vegetation established (Photo 5 and 7). There is also a reclaimed road leading from the mined areas on the west side, to the mined areas on the east side (Photos 8-10). The road between these two sections has been reclaimed, and the east mining area has been reclaimed as well.

Because the current reclamation plan does not allow for any structures to remain, the road leading down to the area west of the cemetery, the flat parking area, and the west portion of the access road within the site need to be reclaimed. The imported stockpiles need to be removed from the site, and the overburden and topsoil stockpiles onsite need to be used to reclaim the remaining affected areas. During the inspection, it was discussed whether the access road could stay. Because it is not in the approved reclamation plan or on the reclamation map, it will need to be reclaimed. However, if the landowner wants it to stay, the Operator may submit a technical revision to update the reclamation plan where an affidavit from the landowner is included,

and an updated reclamation plan map showing that the road will remain after reclamation will be required.

The 2024 annual report indicates that the last activity at the mine was conducted on June 10, 2016. Per Rule 3.1.3, reclamation must be conducted within five years of the cessation of mining operations. As this has been mentioned in the Division's recent inspection reports, **this has been cited as a problem above**. The Operator shall finish final reclamation, and provide evidence to the division that this has been completed, by the corrective action date.

Sediment Control and Hydrologic Balance

No standing water was observed onsite during the inspection. All the disturbance onsite is either surrounded by low berms or regraded slopes, or it slopes towards those areas. No evidence of sediment or stormwater runoff leaving the site was observed during the inspection. No signs of excessive erosion were observed during the inspection.

Signs and Markers:

A permit sign is posted at the entrance to the site, in compliance with Rule 3.1.12(1). The permit boundary is marked by t-posts around the site in compliance with Rule 3.1.12(2). The coordinates for the permit boundary markers were collected during the inspection using the Esri FieldMaps application. The placement of the permit boundary markers appears to closely resemble the permit boundary shown on the mining plan map. The Operator and the Inspector walked around the boundary and collected markers (Map 1). There's an additional marker in the northwest side that was beyond a fence that the inspector did not collect (Photo 14).

In addition to the permit boundary, the fence put around the cemetery in the northeast portion of the permit is still standing and acting as an internal boundary (Photo 16).

Conclusion:

This concludes the Division's Inspection Report; a map and figure displaying topics discussed during the inspection, and a subset of corresponding photographs that were taken during the time of the inspection, are included below. If you need additional information or have any questions, please contact me by email at amber.gibson@state.co.us or by telephone at (720) 836-0967.

Inspection Contact Address

Keith Woodring
Las Animas County
2000 N. Linden Ave.
Trinidad, CO 81082

CC: Jared Ebert, DRMS

GENERAL INSPECTION TOPICS

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

(AR) RECORDS----- <u>Y</u>	(FN) FINANCIAL WARRANTY----- <u>Y</u>	(RD) ROADS----- <u>N</u>
(HB) HYDROLOGIC BALANCE----- <u>Y</u>	(BG) BACKFILL & GRADING----- <u>Y</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>N</u>	(RV) REVEGETATION---- <u>Y</u>
(SM) SIGNS AND MARKERS----- <u>Y</u>	(SP) STORM WATER MGT PLAN---- <u>N</u>	(RS) RECL PLAN/COMP-- PB
(ES) OVERBURDEN/DEV. WASTE----- <u>N</u>	(SC) EROSION/SEDIMENTATION--- <u>Y</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

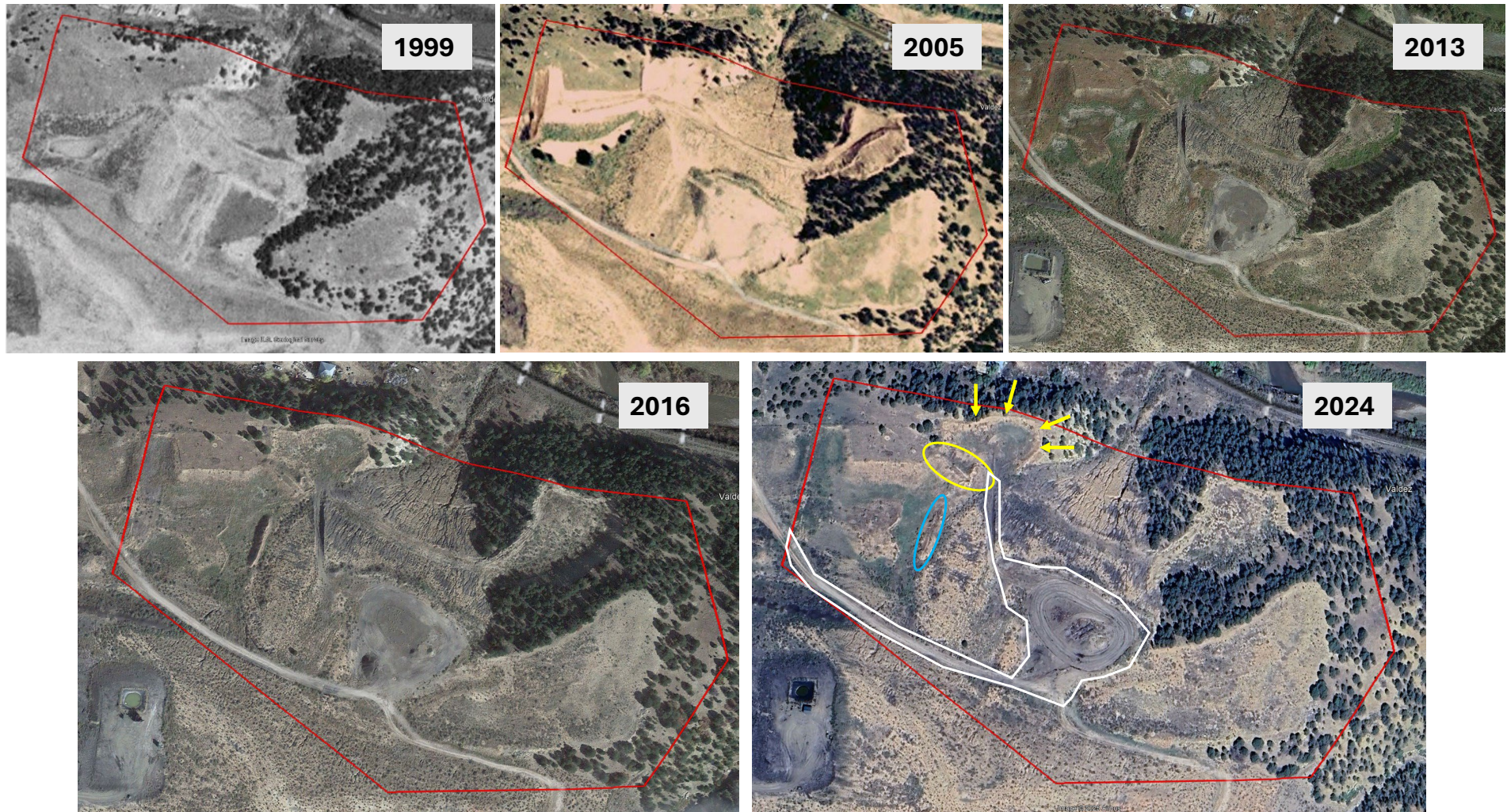
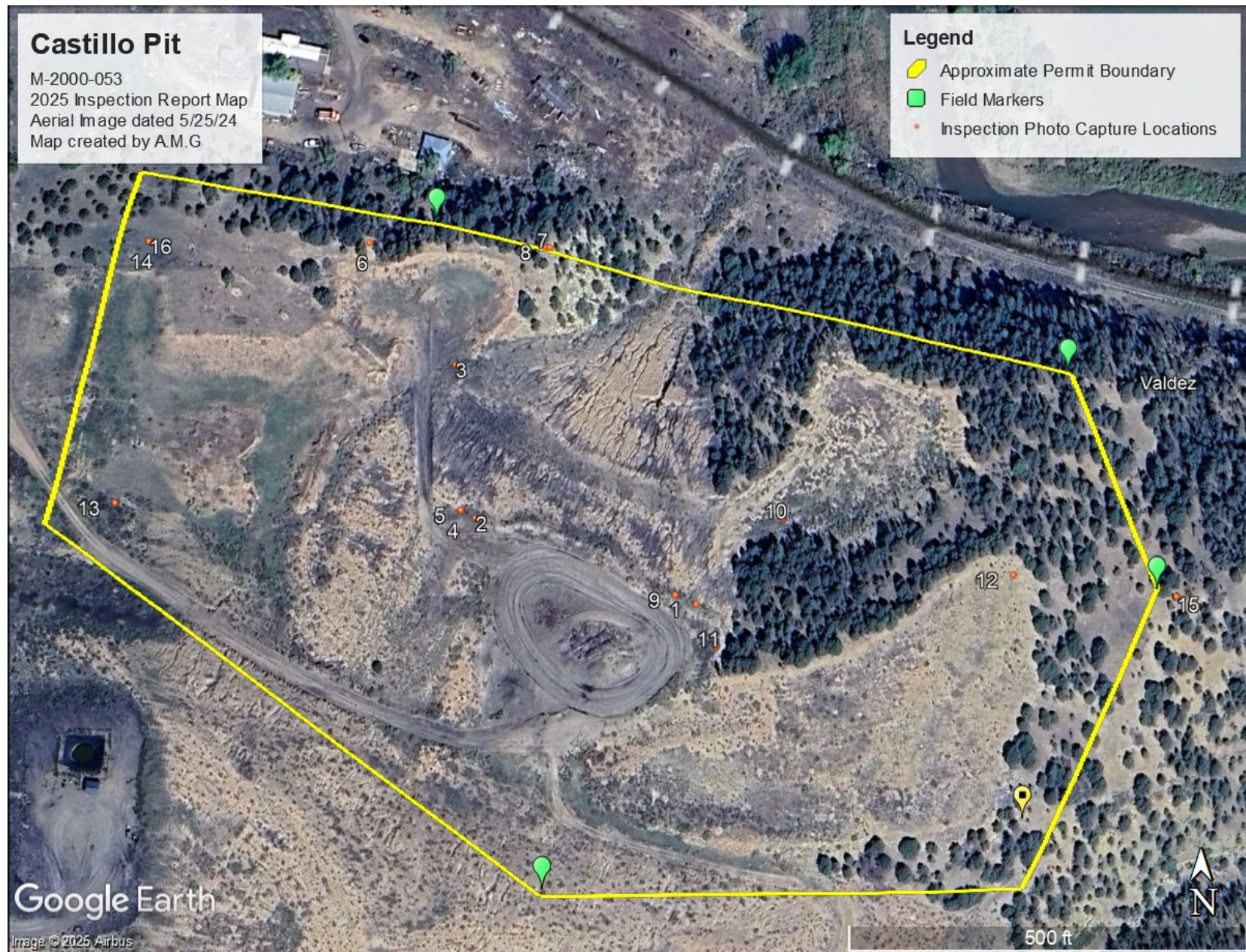


Figure 1: Progression of mining and reclamation across the site from prior to permit issuance (1999) through the most recently available aerial imagery (2024). The yellow arrows point to where slopes may need to be reseeded. The yellow circle indicates potential material to be used for reclamation. The blue circle indicates potential topsoil material to be used for reclamation. The white outline indicates the remaining areas that need to be topsoiled and seeded.



Map 1: Inspection Report Map for the 2025 inspection created using Google Earth Pro. The yellow marker in the southeast side indicates where a fence goes through the permit area. The numbers next to the inspection photos correspond with the photos within this report.

PHOTOGRAPHS



Photo 1: Looking west at the flat area. The arrow points to imported material that has been temporarily stored onsite that will need to be removed. A pile of woody debris is stockpiled within this area too from the landowner, this pile will need to be removed prior to the permit's release.



Photo 2: Available stockpiled material onsite.



Photo 3: The steep road leading down to the east mining areas.



Photo 4: Looking west from the road in Photo 3 at the reclaimed slopes on the south side of the cemetery.



Photo 5: Looking north from the road in Photo 3 at a reclaimed mining area on the east side of the cemetery.



Photo 6: Looking southeast at the steep road leading down to the west mining areas. The material near the road may potentially be stockpiled material, or a steeper reclaimed slope.



Photo 7: Looking west across the northwest mining area. The slopes within this area may need to be reseeded and the debris needs to be removed.



Photo 8: Looking at the reclaimed path (yellow arrow) leading from the west mining areas, across the reclaimed coal waste, the east mining area (red arrow).



Photo 9: Looking at the reclaimed east mining area from on top of the coal waste.



Photo 10: Looking at the reclaimed east mining area.



Photo 11: Looking towards the flat central area from the reclaimed southeast mining area.



Photo 12: Looking across the reclaimed southeast mining area.



Photo 13: Mine sign posted at the site's entrance.



Photo 14: Circled is the permit marker that lies beyond a fence in the northwest portion of the permit.



Photo 15: Near a permit marker on the east side. This area had not been mined, showing that the native vegetation/grasses is sparse at this site.



Photo 16: Looking south along the fence surrounding the cemetery.