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Inspection Report, Coal Complete, September 9-10, 2025, C1981019

1 message

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

Wed, Sep 17, 2025 at 1:11 PM

Tony,

Please find attached the Division's report for our September 9-10, 2025 inspection of the Colowyo Coal Mine. Feel free to reach out with any questions.

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



COLORADO
Division of Reclamation,
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 [InspReport_9_9_2025_C1981019.pdf](#)
9242K



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: September 9, 2025 Inspection Start Time: 11:30 Inspection End Date: September 10, 2025 Inspection End Time: 13:30	Inspection Type: Coal Complete 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: September 17, 2025

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
 R - Backfill & Grading
 R - 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
 R - Revegetation
 N - Subsidence
 N - Slides and Other Damage
 R - 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 complete 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). Tom Fry of Colowyo accompanied the Division on the first and second day of inspection. Weather during the inspection days was clear and windy with temperatures around 85° F.

An application for Technical Revision 167 (TR-167) was received on July 14, 2025 and called complete by the Division on July 24, 2025. TR167 proposed to reduce the permit boundary to remove Phase III areas applied for bond release under SL-24. TR167 was approved by the Division on September 8, 2025.

An application for a Permit Revision (PR-05) was received by the Division on August 6, 2025 and called complete on August 14, 2025. PR-05 proposes to revise the post mine land use for the Gossard rail loop area to Moffat County Road 51 from Rangeland to Other Treatment Facility area. The Division is currently in the process of reviewing this revision application.

The Division notified Colowyo of a Notice of Surety Increase (SI-2) on July 1, 2025. The Division's Notice of Proposed Decision for SI-2 was sent out on September 15, 2025. The end of public comment for the Divion's Proposed Decision is September 24, 2025.

An application for a Phase I, II and III Bond Release (SL-25) of 1.8 acres in the East Pit (Streeter South Side Ditch) was received by the Division on May 22, 2025. SL-25 proposes to release areas that have been backfilled, regraded and revegetated. The bond release application was called complete by the Division on June 18, 2025. The Division conducted a bond release inspection on July 17th and is currently compiling its Findings Document.

AVAILABILITY OF RECORDS – Rule 5.02.4(1):

Records were checked at the mine office. See details at the end of report.

SIGNS ANDMARKERS – Rule 4.02:

Mine identification signs were located at the mine entrance and throughout the site. All information for compliance was observed.

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TOPSOIL – Rule 4.06 Removal 4.06.2; Substitute Materials 4.06.4(4); Storage and Protection 4.06.3; Redistribution 4.06.4:

Topsoil piles across the site contained appropriate markers and were well vegetated (e.g. Photo 2).

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:**South Taylor**

Active backfill operations were observed during this inspection of the South Taylor Pit. Haul trucks were noted to be distributing spoil material into the southwestern corner of the pit (Photo 19.). At the time of inspection, material was being excavated from the northeastern edge of the South Taylor Pit temporary spoil pile.

West Pit

West Pit has been almost entirely backfilled and is mostly in its revegetation phase. West Pit was inspected from within its reclamation areas (Photos 15-17). A large southern portion of the West Pit area was recently approved for a Phase I Bond Release under SL-24. Mature bunch grasses and various wildlife were observed in the active revegetation areas and no major erosion rills or gullies were noted.

Collom

Active backfill operations were noted in the large, western Collom Pit (Photo 7). Backfill in the eastern box cut area did not appear to have progressed much since the Division's last inspection.

RECLAMATION SUCCESS - Rule 4.15, Rule 3: REVEGETATION – Rule 4.15 Vegetative Cover; Timing:

Evidence of weed spray crew activity was observed on site throughout revegetating areas. Grasses, forbs and other vegetation have begun to go dormant for the fall / winter season. Areas in the southern end of West Pit which were seeded earlier this year / late last year are showing signs of growth of predominantly native grass vegetation.

EXCESS SPOIL and DEVELOPMENT WASTE – Rule 4.09 Placement; Drainage Control; Surface Stabilization:

The West Taylor Valley Fill area was inspected from below at the West Taylor Pond (Photo 29). The face of the valley fill is well covered with vegetation, made up of sagebrush and native grasses and no erosional issues were visible. Side ditches, which divert water from the face of the fill, were observed to be stable.

Regrade of the South Taylor and Collom spoil piles continue as backfill in various areas of the South Taylor Pit and Collom progresses.

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:**Collom Pit**

The following ponds in Collom Pit were inspected this month: Section 26, Sidehill, Section 36, Middle, and Section 25. All ponds, except Sidehill and Section 25 Pond, were seen to be holding water, although

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water was very low in all ponds that did hold water. All inlet / outlet areas were free of obstructions and no issues with erosion were noted (Photos 5 and 6 & 9-11).

The following ditches in Collom Pit were inspected this month: Ditches D-1, D-2, D-3, and D-4 (Photos 1-4). Ditches were walked where accessible and checked for erosional issues and stability, for which no issues were observed. All ditches appeared to be functioning as designed. Small vegetation is present in un-riprapped lengths of the ditches.

The Wilson Storage Pond and Temporary Facilities Ponds were inspected and both found to be dry and heavily vegetated (Photos 12 and 13). The Coal Stockpile Pond in Collom Pit was inspected and mostly dry with stable slopes (Photo 8).

West Pit

The following stock ponds in the West Pit area were inspected this month: TD1, TD2 and ETD1 (Photos 15-17). All stock ponds appeared to be dry, with no erosional issues or concerns noted.

The following ditches in the West Pit area were inspected this month: East Taylor Ditch and Taylor Ditch (Photos 15-17). Both ditches were inspected from within the West Pit reclaimed area. No signs of erosion or cutting were visible along any of the observed West Pit ditches and inlet / outlet design for stock ponds appeared to be functioning properly.

East Pit

The following stock ponds in the East pit were observed during this inspection: PD1, PD2 and NTEP1 (Photos 20 -22), NTEP1 was the only stock pond holding water. EP1, EP2 and EP3 and were observed from above at the Section 15 Ditch. Only EP2 appeared to be holding any water and was flowing into Reach 2 of the Final East Pit Ditch as designed.

Section 15 Pond and Ditch (Photo 18) were observed in East Pit. Section 15 Pond was completely dry and was free of any stability or erosional issues. Section 16 Pond was inaccessible due to ongoing grading and excavation activity in the South Taylor temporary spoil pile areas.

Upper and Lower Section 3 Ponds were inspected and were both dry. No erosional or stability issues were noted at the berm between the two ponds or on the outslope of the Lower Section 3 Pond (Photo 14).

Taylor Creek

West Pit Pond, East Taylor and West Taylor Pond were inspected this month along Taylor Creek (Photos 23-25, and 29). East Taylor and West Taylor ponds were holding water and had stable embankments. Inlet and outlet structures were free of obstructions. West Pit Pond was dry and vegetated. No issues were noted.

The test pilot water treatment plant at East Taylor Pond, approved under MR-263, is fully constructed and operating (Photo 23). The system was observed to be pumping water from the spoil spring outfall at the pond into the test evaporation system. At the top of every hour, water is misted across the black evaporation system. Colowyo will be assessing the success of this system in preparation for the future necessity of perpetual water treatment for East Taylor Pond water.

Gossard Loadout

The Stoker Siding, Rail Loop, and Gossard Ponds were observed in the loadout area. A train was being loaded with coal on the first day of inspection. All ponds were holding water and were free of any issues

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(Photos 26, 30, and 31).

FISH and WILDLIFE – Rule 4.18:

No negative impact to wildlife was observed. A herd of adult and adolescent Pronghorn were observed across several areas of the site. A coyote and various waterfowl were noted across the site as well.

The wildlife buffer zone in place in Collom Pit, south of Topsoil Pile 26A and Ditch D-2, regarding the April 2025 sighting of a pair of burrowing owls, has expired as of August 31.

SUPPORT FACILITIES - Rule 4.04:

The pilot test plant for water treatment at the East Taylor Pond is discussed above in the ‘Taylor Creek’ subheading of the Hydrologic Balance section.

GENERAL MINE PLAN COMPLIANCE:

No active highwall mining operations in Collom Pit were observed during this month’s inspection. Haul truck teams were noted in the area to be working on backfilling of previously mined highwall areas (Photo 7). A train was noted at the loadout during the first day of inspection.

ENFORCEMENT ACTIONS/COMPLIANCE

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

PHOTOGRAPHS

Photo 1: View south of ditches D2 and D1.

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Photo 2: View north of ditch D2 and topsoil pile 26A.



Photo 3: View northwest of the eastern end of ditch D2.

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Number of Complete Inspections this Fiscal Year: 1



Photo 4: Ditch D3.



Photo 5: Sidehill Pond.

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Number of Complete Inspections this Fiscal Year: 1



Photo 6: Section 26 Pond.



Photo 7: View into the Collom Pit, backfilling operations in progress.

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Photo 8: Coal Stockpile Pond in Collom Pit.



Photo 9: Section 36 Pond.

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Number of Complete Inspections this Fiscal Year: 1



Photo 10: Middle Pond.



Photo 11: Section 25 Pond.

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Number of Complete Inspections this Fiscal Year: 1



Photo 12: Temporary Facilities Pond, west of Gossard Loadout.



Photo 13: Wilson Storage Pond, west of Gossard Loadout.

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Photo 14: View west of Lower Section 3 Pond.



Photo 15: View southwest of Taylor Ditch & TD1.

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Photo 16: TD2 along Taylor Ditch.



Photo 17: ETD1 along Taylor Ditch.

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Photo 18: Section 15 Pond.



Photo 19: Active backfill area in South Taylor Pit.

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Photo 20: Stock Pond PDI.



Photo 21: Stock Pond PD2.

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Photo 22: Stock pond NTEP1.



Photo 23: Pilot test plant at East Taylor Pond for water treatment.

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Photo 24: East Taylor Pond.



Photo 25: West Pit Pond.

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Photo 26: Gossard Pond.



Photo 27: Section 28 Pond.

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Photo 28" Prospect Pond, off Highway 13.



Photo 29: West Taylor Valley Fill and West Taylor Pond.

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Photo 30: Rail Loop Pond.



Photo 31: Stoker Siding Pond.

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AVAILABILITY OF RECORDS

PERMIT RECORDS

DRMS Permit
Permit Application w/Revisions

Exp. 11/5/27
Ok

Findings Document

RN-08

Insurance Certificate

3/1/26

Bond Document

Ok

Phased Bond Release

SL-24

Documents/Findings

95MF1040/16MF1324F

Air Emission Permits

SUP08-10 & C-05-05

County Special Use Permits

N/A

UG Mining Landowner

Notification

N/A

Subsidence Monitoring Reports

N/A

Subsidence Monitoring Data

N/A

Rill & Gully Survey

2025

Vegetation Monitoring Data

2024 ARR

Specific Variance Approvals

Ok

Annual Reclamation Reports

2024

Midterm Review Documents

MT-09

DRMS/OSM Inspection

Thru August 2025

Reports/Enforcement Actions (3
Years)

Ok

Transfers/Succession of Operator

N/A

Temporary Cessation Notification

RN-08

Reclamation Cost Estimate

Thru 3rd Q 2025

CERTIFICATIONS

Pond Certifications

Ok

Annual Certifications for
Impoundments

Thru 3rd Q 2025

Fill Certifications for Excess Spoil
or Underground Development

Ok

Waste

- Quarterly Inspections
- Compaction Testing
- Final Certification

Thru 3rd Q 2025

Coal Processing Waste Banks

N/A

Haul Road Certifications

N/A

Access Road Certifications

Ok

Ok

HYDROLOGIC RECORDS

NPDES Permit

CO 0045161

NPDES Records

Thru September
2024

Stormwater Management Plan

Ok

SPCC Plan

Ok

MSHA Pond Inspections

N/A

State Engineer's Pond Inspection

Thru August

Quarterly Pond Inspections

2025

Annual Hydrology Reports

- Ground Water Monitoring

Ok

- Surface Water Monitoring

Ok

- Spring & Seep Monitoring

Ok

- Mine Water Discharge
Monitoring

Ok

- Mine Inflow Study

N/A

- Water Consumption Records

Ok

Well Permits

Ok

BLASTING RECORDS

Blasting Publication

2025

Blasting Records (3 years)

Thru 2nd Q 2025

ATFE Explosives Permit

Ok

Blasting Variances

N/A

Pre-Blast Surveys

Ok

ADDITIONAL RECORDS (specify)

COMMENTS:
