

Postmining Land UseRails to Trails

The primary postmining land use is grazing land for livestock. Wildlife habitat is an additional use. In January of 2020, the Town of Hayden entered a lease with Hayden Gulch Terminal, LLC and Sage Creek Land & Reserve, LLC for 225 acres of the permitted area for recreational use. Exhibit 20-1, Post-Mining Land use, is an updated map that shows the proposed postmining land use for this portion of the permitted area. These proposed uses are consistent with current land use in the area, while integrating long term plans for recreational land use that the town of Hayden has incorporated into its planning and budget. All reseeded cropland, improved pasture north of Walker Ditch, and native range areas in and adjacent to the permit area have historically been fenced and managed for livestock grazing. The vegetation plan has been developed to restore grazing potential on all reclaimed lands. Appendix 20-1, Postmining Land use and Permanent Features, contains comments from the landowners of record on the proposed postmine land use.

As an alternative to pasture land use north of the Walker Ditch, on both sides of highway 40, the land use can be industrial /commercial with commitment from the landowner and a letter of intent for development.

Wildlife use of the area has not been excluded in the past, however, management of wildlife species has been centered on managing wildlife populations through harvest (hunting). Wildlife use will continue to be unrestricted following reclamation of the facilities. With the exception of where the rail loop crosses Dry Creek, this important habitat area will not be disturbed. The reclaimed communities will contain a greater composition of herbaceous species than native undisturbed plant communities, however, the interspersion of these reclaimed areas with native plant communities will increase edge and diversify and enhance the habitat. Many wildlife species present in the lower elevations in the spring will benefit from an early greening and nutritious herbaceous vegetation. In particular, big game in gestation/lactation cycles will be benefited. The inclusion of tall statured species such as basin wildrye and fourwing saltbush will provide hiding and nesting cover for small mammals and various avian species.

Revegetation

Seedbed Preparation. Following redistribution of topsoil, seedbed preparation will be initiated. Redistributed topsoil will be monitored for excessive compaction. Any areas deemed to be excessively compacted will be deep ripped. Final seedbed preparation for all ripped and non-ripped topsoil will consist of disking. Additional disking operations may be used to control annual weedy vegetation prior to permanent seeding operations. All operations will be maintained on the contour where practicable.