

Off-Site Impacts in Montana (EY2011)

For the purpose of oversight, a negative off-site impact is defined as anything resulting from a surface coal mining and reclamation activity or operation that causes a negative effect on people, land, water, or structures outside the permit area. In addition, the impact on the resource must be substantiated and be related to mining and reclamation activity. It must be outside the area authorized by the permit for conducting mining and reclamation activities. As a part of oversight for EY2011, MT-DEQ and CFO developed an oversight work plan to evaluate and document the effectiveness of the Montana program in protecting the environment and the public from negative off-site impacts resulting from surface and underground mining operations in Montana.

Several sources of information have been selected for identifying off-site impacts. These include but are not limited to: State and OSM inspection reports, enforcement actions, civil penalty assessments, citizens' complaints, special studies and information from other environmental agencies. If an off-site impact is identified, the sources of information and the basis used to identify and report these impacts will be clearly recorded.

Summary – Off-Site Impacts

Field evaluations for off-site impacts were conducted during routine inspections by MT-DEQ. CFO conducted one complete and four partial oversight inspections. One of the partial inspections was an independent inspection. Off-site impacts were not identified during the reporting period.