



OSMRE
Colowyo Mine
South Taylor/Lower Wilson EA
Purpose and Need
Proposed Action Overview



PURPOSE AND NEED

- The purpose of OSMRE preparing this Environmental Assessment (EA) is to reevaluate the environmental effects resulting from the originally proposed and currently approved mining plan modification (PR02) for the South Taylor/Lower Wilson Permit Expansion Area, pursuant to the requirements of the National Environmental Policy Act, (NEPA) in order to make a new decision to approve, disapprove, or approve the mining plan modification with conditions.
- The need for the action is established by a May 8, 2015 Order issued by the United States District Court, the District of Colorado. See *WildEarth Guardians v. U.S. Office of Surface Mining et. al.*, Case 1:13-cv-00518-RBJ (D. Colo. 2015)

PROPOSED ACTION OVERVIEW

- The Proposed Action is to mine leased federal coal in the South Taylor/Lower Wilson Permit Expansion Area as originally proposed by Colowyo in 2006, approved by CDRMS and OSMRE in 2007, and in accordance with subsequent CDRMS approved revisions.
- The South Taylor/Lower Wilson Permit Area totals 6,050 acres.
- The Expansion Area includes 5,219.2 acres of federal coal in 3 federal leases, 2,223.4 acres of federal surface, 3,826.7 acres of private surface, and 830.9 acres of private coal.
- In 2006, Colowyo proposed to disturb approximately 1,589 acres of which 1,190 acres were previously undisturbed, 311 acres were already disturbed under the previous approved permit revision, and 114 acres were under partial or final reclamation.
- General Operations Sequence
 - Construct sediment ponds and diversion ditches
 - Salvage and stockpile topsoil from areas to be mined and disturbed
 - Begin removing overburden from the South Taylor Pit area
 - Develop two permanent valley fills and two temporary overburden stockpiles
 - Mine the coal with loader and trucks
 - Haul the coal to the primary crusher, then to the Gossard loadout
 - Begin reclamation during the mining operations
 - Complete mining of the South Taylor Pit
 - Complete reclamation
- From 2008 to 2015 mining operations have actually disturbed 789 acres. About 20 acres of additional disturbance is planned for the remainder of the South Taylor Operations, for a total projected disturbance of 809 acres, 780 acres less than proposed.