

Oro Blanco Mining Company, LLC
120 Oro Quay Rd.
Sandia Park, NM 87047

RECEIVED

APR 13 2023

MINING & MINERALS DIVISION

April 10, 2023

Ms. Carmen Rose, Senior Reclamation Specialist
Mining & Minerals Division
1220 S. St. Francis Dr.
Santa Fe, NM 87505

Dear Ms. Rose,

The purpose of this letter is to request a permit modification for the Silver Silica Mine, Permit No SF003ME. I am requesting the release of the financial assurance currently required on the permit. I have attached a copy of the Silver Silica Mine Inspection and Survey Report which was conducted in September of 2022.

As reflected in the report: 'there are a total of 2.5 acres of disturbed area, of which 0.5 acres have been reclaimed and revegetated in 2008. This disturbance and reclamation was incorporated into Permit Mod 09-1 and \$9,100 were posted in the form of a CD. The 0.5 acre is now eligible for release, and the operation can drop below two acres to release the bond currently held by MMD.'

The reclamation work of the .05 acres involved being re-countoured by bringing new topsoil in during June and July of 2008. The area was planted in late July of 2008 with Blue Gramma, Western Wheatgrass and Sand Dropseed. Watering with water trucks was conducted until the seeds took by the fall of 2008. Afterwards, natural elements supported the growth of the plantings.

I understand that the release of this financial assurance mandates no further mining activity can be done on that section (0.5 acres) of the disturbed area.

I intend to keep the mining permit active for the foreseeable future. I will contact the Mining and Minerals Division should any plans develop which would require changing the parameters of the permit.

I appreciate your time in reviewing this request. The CD that is held as collateral matures on May 23, 2023 and I respectfully request that the release be performed by that date, if possible.

Please do not hesitate to contact me should you need further information to support this request for modification.

Sincerely,



Elizabeth K. Chavez, Owner

Oro Blanco Mining Company, LLC

(505) 286-0027 (h)

(505) 269-3174 ©

maxmaintenance6@gmail.com

STATE OF NEW MEXICO
ENERGY, MINERALS AND NATURAL RESOURCES DEPARTMENT
Mining and Minerals Division
1220 St. Francis Dr.
Santa Fe, New Mexico 87505
Telephone: (505) 476-3400

MINING INSPECTION & VEGETATION SURVEY REPORT

Name of Operator:	Oro Blanco Mining Co. LLC/Beth Chavez		
Name of Mine:	Silver Silica Mine		
Address:	120 Oro Quay Rd. Sandia Park, NM 87047		
Permit Number:	SF003ME		
Commodity:	Silica	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> SURFACE	<input type="checkbox"/> UNDERGROUND
Date of Inspection:	September 15, 2022		
Time of On-Site Inspection:	9am – 10:45am		
Weather Conditions:	Sunny, ~65°F		
Purpose of Inspection:	Annual		
Lead Inspector:	Carmen Rose		
Present During Inspection:	Oro Blanco Mining Co.: Beth Chavez MMD: Carmen Rose & Linda DeLay		
ENFORCEMENT ACTION TAKEN:	None		
NOTICE OF VIOLATION: #	___	YES: ___	NO: <u>X</u>
CESSATION ORDER:		YES: ___	NO: <u>X</u>
Time: On-Site:	<u>2</u>	Permit Review:	<u>0.5</u> Travel: <u>2</u> Report Writing: <u>1</u>
TOTAL INSPECTION TIME:	<u>5.5</u> HOURS		
NOTE:	<p>Site Access: Continue south through Golden, NM along Hwy. 14 to the intersection of Hwy. 344 and Hwy. 14. Go east (left turn) on Hwy. 344 for approx. 2.5 miles then turn left (north) onto Oro Quay Road. Proceed north along this gravel road past a stop sign and old ranch house to a locked gate. There is a key to the gate hanging on the second post to the left of the gate. Proceed through gate and continue north along gravel road, the Silver Silica Mine (white highwall) will become visible on the hillside to the east.</p>		

Silver Silica Mine

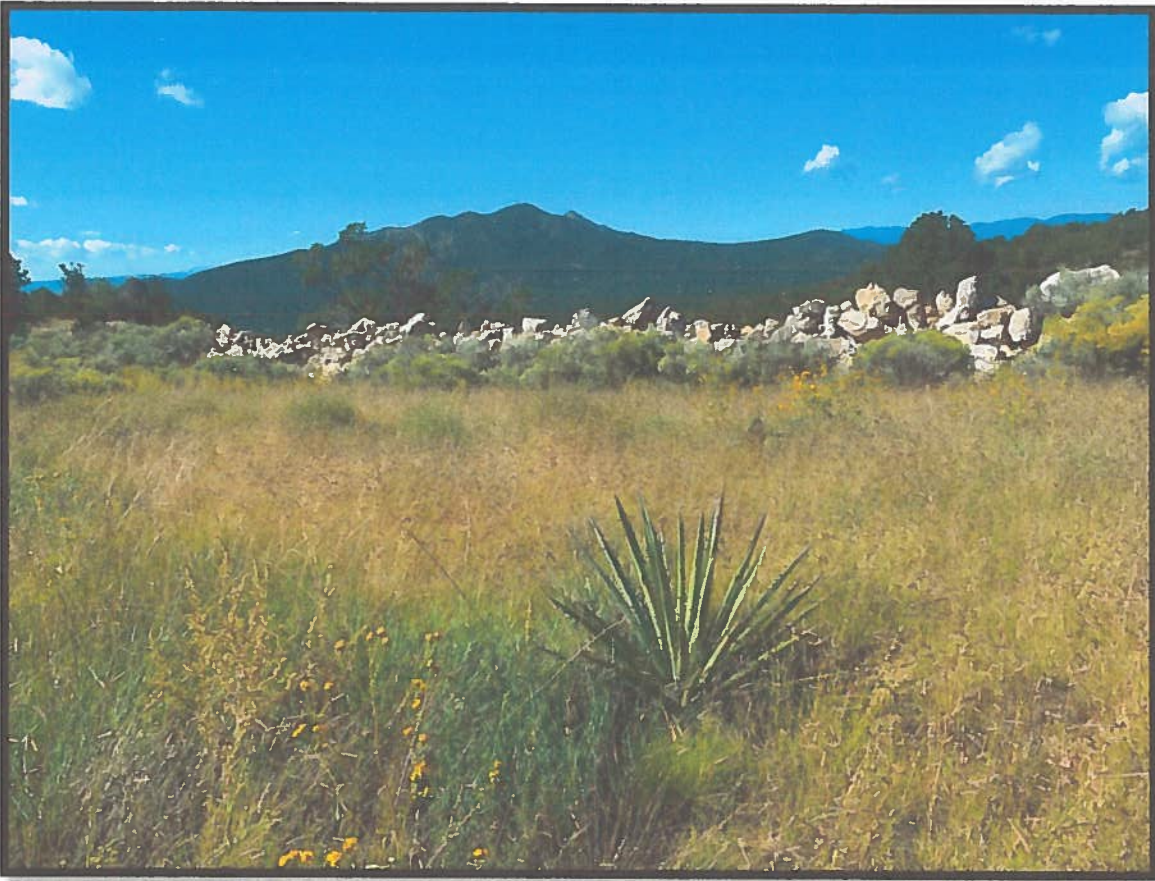


Figure 1: Reclamation at Silver Silica Mine

PERMIT UPDATE:

There are a total of 2.5 acres of disturbed area, of which 0.5 acres have been reclaimed and revegetated in 2008. This disturbance and reclamation was incorporated into Permit Mod 09-1 and \$9,100 were posted in the form of a CD. The 0.5 acre is now eligible for release, and the operation can drop below two acres to release the bond currently held by MMD. The purpose of this inspection was to do vegetation surveys on the reclaimed 0.5 acre and perform a qualitative assessment of the area as a self-sustaining ecosystem.

INSPECTION NARRATIVE:

MMD met with Ms. Chavez at the locked gate to access the mine site, but Ms. Chavez did not accompany the MMD inspectors on site. Upon arrival, MMD performed a visual assessment of the area for any signs of erosion within the reclaimed 0.5 acre area and walked the perimeter with a hand-held GPS

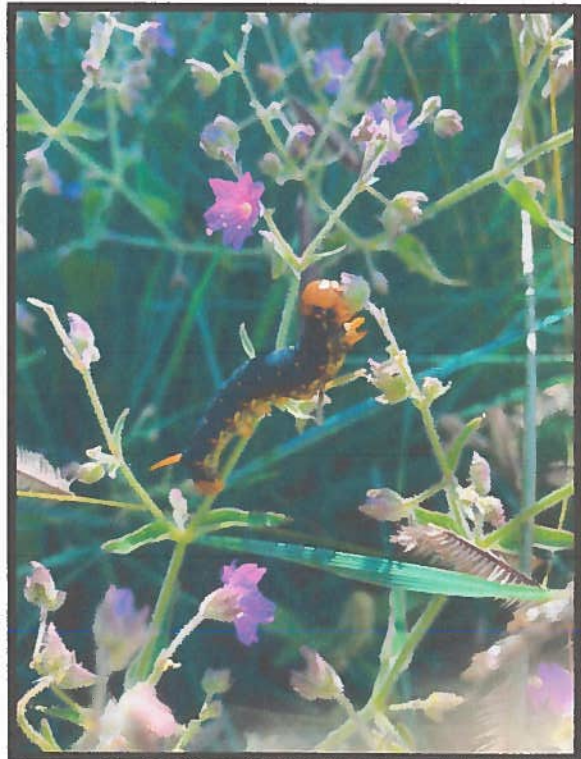


Figure 2. Caterpillar enjoying some dwarf four o'clock

INSPECTION & VEGETATION SURVEY REPORT

September 15, 2022

Silver Silica Mine

unit to record the exact acreage that was reclaimed. Boulders and/or earthen berms were established along the perimeter of the reclamation with an opening at the southern tip to allow discharge of stormwater onto native undisturbed ground. The reclamation is somewhat domed in the center to discourage ponding. No signs of erosion were found.

Inspectors chose three random starting locations for 50-foot transects within the 0.5 acre reclamation. A pin flag was spun to determine the direction of each transect. Data was collected using the line-point intercept method, and samples were taken every two feet along each 50-foot transect. A summary table of the results are found in Table 1, below.

	Transect 1	Transect 2	Transect 3	AVERAGE
% Foliar Cover	92%	96%	96%	94.67%
% Foliar Cover (natives only)	92%	76%	96%	88%
% bare ground	4%	0%	4%	2.67%
% basal cover	12%	12%	24%	16%
No. species observed	7	11	4	7.3

Table 1. Results of vegetation survey

Overall, the site has excellent foliar cover, averaging almost 95% across transects, or 88% across transects not including Russian thistle, an invasive species. Diversity is somewhat low as the quality of the soils is high, favoring the grasses that were originally included in the seed mix. However, yucca and prickly pear have started volunteering into the area, and the site does vary in plant structure across the small area. For instance, a small section has an abundance of dwarf four o'clock (Figure 2). A list of all identifiable plant species found on site can be found in Table 2. In terms of wildlife habitat, MMD discovered ledges that had been scraped out for nests along the high wall over the reclamation and one hole for a terrestrial mammal (Figure 3). While leaving the site, MMD inspectors nearly stepped on a rattlesnake (Figure 4).

Silver Silica Observed Plant Species List					
Common Name	Scientific Name	Plant Form	Native	Identified in survey?	In original seed mix?
blue grama	<i>Bouteloua gracilis</i>	grass	yes	yes	yes
western wheatgrass	<i>Pascopyrum smithii</i>	grass	yes	yes	yes
sand dropseed	<i>Sporobolus cryptandrus</i>	grass	yes	yes	yes
Russian thistle	<i>Salsola spp.</i>	forb	no	yes	no
Rubber rabbitbrush	<i>Ericameria nauseosa</i>	shrub	yes	yes	no
Abert's creeping zinnia	<i>Sanvitalia abertii</i>	forb	yes	yes	no
purple prairie verbena	<i>Glandularia bipinnatifida</i>	forb	yes	yes	no
cowpen daisy	<i>Verbesina encelioides</i>	forb	yes	yes	no
slimlobe beggarticks	<i>Bidens tenuisecta</i>	forb	yes	yes	no
dwarf four o'clock	<i>Mirabilis albida</i>	forb	yes	no	no
sideoats grama	<i>Bouteloua curtipendula</i>	grass	yes	no	no
mullein	<i>Verbascum thapsus</i>	forb	no	no	no
curlycup gumweed	<i>Grindelia squarrosa</i>	forb	yes	no	no
snakeweed	<i>Gutierrezia spp.</i>	forb	yes	no	no
ragleaf bahia	<i>Amauriopsis dissecta</i>	forb	yes	no	no
yellow sweet clover	<i>Melilotus officinalis</i>	forb	no	no	no
prickly pear	<i>Opuntia spp.</i>	cactus	yes	no	no
banana leaf yucca	<i>Yucca baccata</i>	shrub	yes	no	no

Table 2. Plant species identified during this inspection and vegetation survey

Silver Silica Mine

PHOTOS:

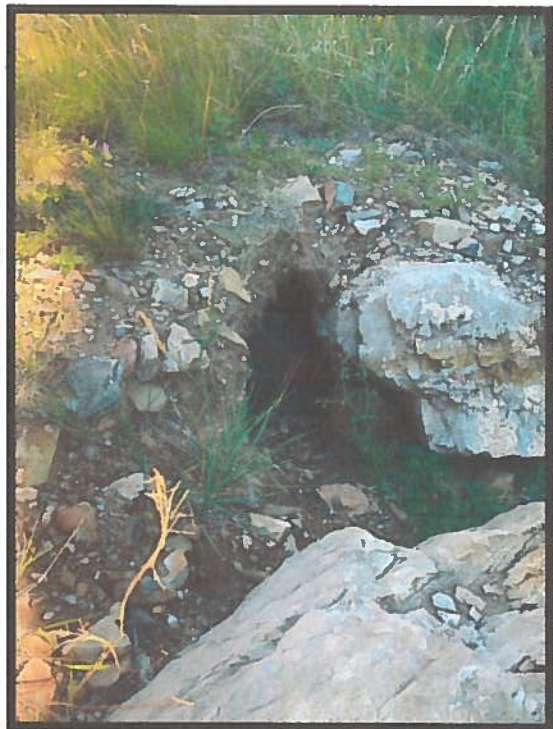


Figure 3. Mammal home

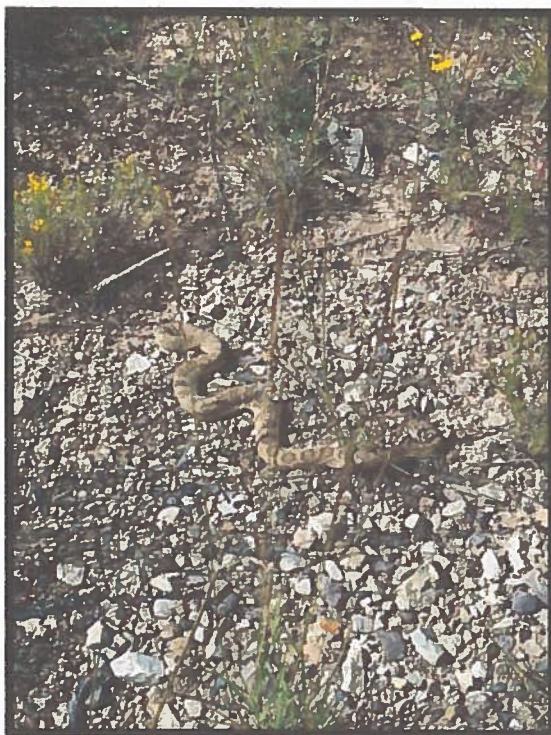


Figure 4. Western diamondback rattlesnake

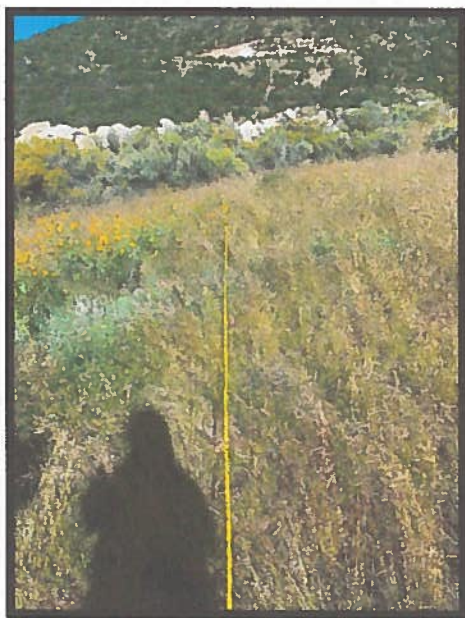


Figure 5. Transect 1

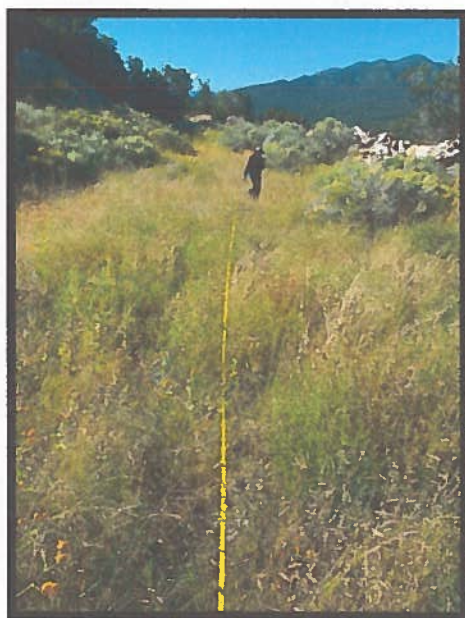


Figure 6. Transect 2

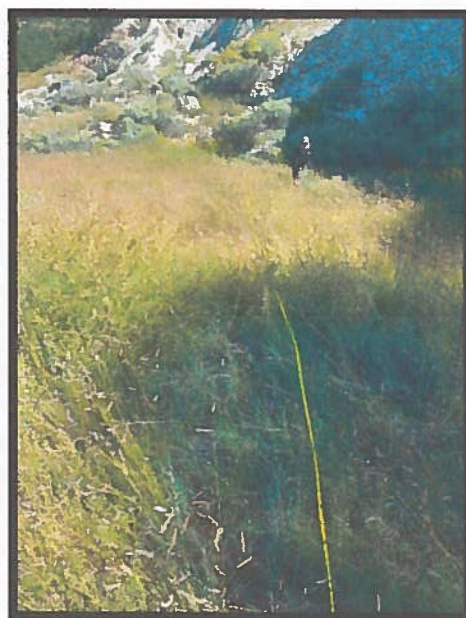


Figure 7. Transect 3

Silver Silica Mine



Figure 8. Looking south at the reclamation

ACTION ITEMS:

None.

MAINTENANCE ITEMS

None.

ENFORCEMENT ACTIONS TAKEN OR TO BE CONSIDERED

None.

INSPECTOR'S SIGNATURE:

DATE: 11/10/2022



Part Compton/Mapa contributors, New Mexico State University, Texas Parks & Wildlife, © OpenStreetMap, Microsoft, ESRI, HERE, Garmin, Swisstopo, GeoTechnologies, Inc. METI/NASA, IGN, Bureau of Land Management, EPA, USGS, US Census Bureau, Esri, METI, NASA, IGN, Bahamm, Hulton, Maxar, Microsoft



Silver Silica Mine (SF003ME)
 September 15, 2022
 Vegetation Survey Transects



Prepared by Carmen Rose
 Energy, Minerals and Natural Resources Department
 NM Mining and Minerals Division
 Mining Act Reclamation Program

