

Section 4.2.1 - Narrative

Following suitable plant growth material respread operations, topsoil will be worked and seeded using standard farming techniques and equipment. Reclamation farming activities generally involve chisel plowing or disking, rockpicking, harrowing, seeding, mulching, and crimping. Field work will be completed as soon after respread operations as weather will allow. In areas that are respread with soil suspected of having a seed bank of introduced species, native grassland seeding may be delayed until a year after respread so that any introduced species that have germinated during the first year of growth can be sprayed. Reclaimed native grassland will also be closely monitored for introduced grasses after they are seeded and if after the first year or two introduced species are observed they can be controlled through herbicide application. Following establishment, management may include mowing, haying, burning, spot spraying of introduced species, and grazing grassland tracts, haying precrop vegetation, and small grain cropping on croplands. Prior to implementing grazing, the North Dakota Public Service Commission will be notified to agree upon stocking rates and grazing plans. Grassland management will be used primarily to improve seasonality and diversity. Early summer grazing, haying, or burning will be used, primarily on younger reclaimed grasslands, to inhibit cool season species growth and enhance warm season species growth potential. Grazing will involve high density, short-term early summer use of grassland tracts. Long-term or rotational grazing plans may be used on mature grasslands for cattle production following agency approval of stocking rates. Grasslands will be sampled for cover and production for the purposes of bond release, and to aid in management decisions as necessary. Stockponds will be replaced generally in their original locations, or nearby in a location that will best serve the pasture being grazed. Some changes will be made in selected locations to optimize livestock distribution or water supply to the stockpond. Additional feasible stockponds will be constructed if requested in preference statements. Reasonable landowner requests for fencing on reclaimed lands will be honored. Reclaimed wetlands may be fenced to protect them from livestock damage when located in native grassland.

Herbicides and fertilizers will be used as needed to decrease weeds and increase soil nutrient levels on cropland tracts. Areas to be fertilized will be sampled for soil fertility testing to determine appropriate levels of fertilizer application. Pesticides will be used as needed to control insect infestations. In accordance with NDAC 69-05.2-13-08(6)(g), pesticides will be applied to address specific land use and pest problems, in accordance with label directions. Examples of pesticides that may be used on reclaimed and undisturbed lands include common broadleaf herbicides for use in small grains, such as 2,4-D and similar action herbicides. Non-broadleaf herbicides to control wild oats and other grasses will also be used in small grains. Other listed pesticides may be used on broadleaf crops, such as sunflowers. Labeled pre-emergent herbicides may also be used. Insecticides and fungicides will be used on cropland less commonly, but may also be applied as needed. Glyphosate and similar nonselective herbicides may be used to control weeds in specific herbicide-resistant crops (sometimes called "Roundup-Ready" crops). These may also be used to manage reclaimed grasslands to enhance grass stands by reducing the presence of unwanted species, such as introduced species in selected areas. Broadleaf herbicides may be used in reclaimed grasslands to control pernicious weeds. However, the use of broadleaf herbicides in reclaimed native grasslands will be limited to not

discourage native forb development. Selective herbicides may be used in tree plantings to reduce grass and weed competition. Listed insecticides may be used in tree plantings if insect pests threaten the stand. If unwanted wetland weeds become a problem, aquatic-type herbicides may be used. Selective spot spraying of noxious weeds will be conducted to provide control. Because brand names and formulations are constantly changing, the specific brand of pesticide cannot be provided for all locations. However, chemicals applied will be those in common use for this area. Where necessary, and as required by law and regulation, applicators will have appropriate licenses and certifications for chemical application.

The pre mine idle cropland has a serious Canada thistle infestation that will be managed now that Coyote controls the land. Weeds will be sprayed. Likely, multiple applications will be necessary to control the infestation. Undisturbed portions of the field will be seeded and sprayed to prevent future weed problems.

The mine may perform additional rock picking operations and grassed waterway construction. Repair of differential settling will be conducted as necessary. Access to reclaimed lands will be provided through appropriate means. Refer to [Section 2.7.3](#) for protection, enhancement, and management plans for fish and wildlife.