Project Location and Background

The Foothills Project inventory was conducted by URS Corporation during the fall and winter of 2011, resulting in the inventory of 21 open features and 51 closed features in hard rock mines along the Wasatch Front. The open features included 18 horizontal openings (HO), one inclined opening (IO), and two vertical openings (VO).

The 21 open sites affected seven surface landowners and two mineral right owners, for a total of nine owners.

Open features were secured and closed using a number of methods including, 12 hand backfills, 6 triple thick block walls, 2 manganese steel bat gates, and 1 polyurethane foam plug. Due to the high recreational use of the area, triple thick block walls were installed to reduce the chance of re-entry from vandals.

1030118HO001-Block Wall Closure

The AMRP in the Division of Oil, Gas and Mining, Utah Department of Natural Resources, was created in 1983 to address physical safety hazards associated with abandoned mines as authorized by the Surface Mining Reclamation and Control Act (SMCRA) of 1977. The Program is funded by The Utah Coal Producers who pay an abandoned mine reclamation fee to the Office of Surface Mining (OSM) on each ton of coal mined in Utah.
Foothills Project, 2014 -- Construction Summary

A construction contract went through the public bidding process and was awarded to The 5 Seventeen Company, owned and operated by Trent Martinez out of Kamas, UT. Work was split between 2 crews when the Notice to Proceed was issued on August 18, 2014 and the final opening was closed on September 9, 2014.

The project was bid at $48,715.50. One change order, a $680.00 increase, was issued to adjust for one hand backfill that was larger than anticipated. The final contract price was $49,395.50.

Crews faced difficult terrain accessing the mines and came up with innovative ways to transport heavy supplies and tools to the openings. Motorcycles and pack mules were used to haul 350+ lbs of polyurethane foam over 6 miles up steep mountain slopes. Four wheelers were used to haul hundreds of solid concrete blocks, heavy bags of mortar and water, and a welder along long trails. A tram and pulley system was set up to transport supplies up a steep hillside and across the canyon valley.

Photos below show the unusual transportation systems used to get supplies to the mines. Left to right: pulley up hillside, tram across valley, mules packing PUF.

Photos to the right depict the several different closure methods used. Top to bottom: triple thick block wall, bat gate, PUF installation.