



Abandoned Mine Reclamation Program PROJECT SUMMARY

LOWER WILLOW CREEK PROJECT

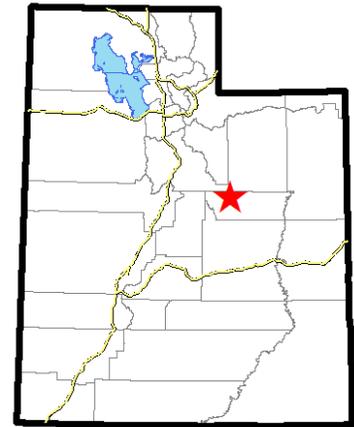
Carbon County, Utah

AMR/007/914

Project Location and Background

The Lower Willow Creek coal pile (originally called the Willow Creek coal pile but later changed to differentiate it from other coal piles further up the Willow Creek drainage) was a large coal refuse pile dumped on the floodplain of Willow Creek inside a meander near its confluence with the Price River. The coal covered about five acres to depths exceeding 40 feet. It contained an estimated 200,000 cubic yards of coal. The toe of the pile was at the edge of the active Willow Creek channel and coal fines would erode into the creek. The coal was subject to spontaneous combustion and was burning at the time of inventory and reclamation. An unknown party had tried to stabilize the pile by capping it with fly ash.

The Lower Willow Creek Project was funded in the 1989 OSM grant. Project construction was administered as part of contracts under other project names (Price River Coal Pile Phases 2 and 3).



Lower Willow Creek Coal Pile



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.

Land Owner: Private

General Contractor: Ned B. Mitchell, Inc.

AMRP Project Manager: Chris Rohrer

AMLIS Key: UT000063

Funding: OSM



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Lower Willow Creek Project, 1989 -- Construction Summary

The Lower Willow Creek coal was hauled by scraper to a disposal site 0.7 miles to the northeast that was well above the Willow Creek channel. This same site was also used as the repository for coal refuse from the Price River Coal Pile, the Peacock mine coal piles, and the Upper Willow Creek coal piles. The coal was compacted, graded, topsoiled, and revegetated.

A few years after reclamation was completed, the Plateau Mining Corp. developed the disposal site into an active portal location. The mine relocated the buried coal to its permitted refuse disposal site in Price Canyon and used some of the Lower Willow Creek site for its office facilities. The mine closed shortly after a fatal July 2000 explosion due to persistent methane problems. The active mine disturbance on the Lower Willow Creek AML footprint was reclaimed by the mine under its SMCRA Title V obligations.

Cost accounting for this project is complicated by the fact that it spanned two separate construction contracts that also included cleanup of several other coal refuse piles. The Lower Willow Creek Project construction work was contracted as part of phases 2 and 3 of the Price River Coal Pile Project. Lower Willow Creek work was initially contracted during PRCP phase 2 as Change Order #2. Change Order #2 provided for the removal and burial of 100,000 cubic yards of coal refuse for \$216,300. The contract amount and coal quantity were increase by subsequent change orders as additional coal was encountered. PRCP phase 3 provided for final grading and revegetation.

PRCP2 Contract 9011180 to Ned B. Mitchell, Inc.
Start date 9/18/1989, end 6/11/1990.
Final Amount: \$1,004,135.00

PRCP3 Contract 911289 to Ned B. Mitchell, Inc.
Start date 9/26/1990, end 6/30/1991.
Final Amount: \$328,355.00

Overviews of Lower Willow Creek before reclamation (top) and in 2012 (below).



Public Involvement and Partnerships

At the time, the access road to the disposal site crossed an active mine permit area. AMRP coordinated with the operator (American Electric Power) and the DOGM Coal Regulatory Program to ensure compliance with permit requirements.

ACCOMPLISHMENTS

Contract Amount:
~\$308,000

Removal of 135,000 cyds coal waste
Improved water quality in Willow Creek

Lower Willow Creek Project (+Price River Coal Pile Phases 2 & 3 + Upper Willow Creek):
Completed: June 30, 1991
Construction Cost: \$1,332,490
Funds: OSM