

Seeding experiments improve reclamation efforts by industry

LOVELL, Wyo. — It's another hot, dry day on the state line, and the ground crunches underfoot. The desert plants are sparse, and what little grows does so in rows and bunches.

Two years ago, skidders rumbled over this ground, removing bentonite clay from a pit 20 feet deep. But the skidders have moved on and the desert plants are now closing in, sinking thirsty roots into a careful blend of topsoil and overburden.

While the bentonite industry has mineral rights to the valuable clay within its mining claims, it also has an obligation to reclaim the land once the mining is finished.

Promised by bonds and measured by the watchful eye of state and federal government, reclamation includes backfilling the open pits, contouring the ground and reseeding vegetation to match the surrounding landscape.

"If a seeding doesn't take in two or three years, we'll ask for a second seeding," said Gretchen Hurley with the Bureau of Land Management. "We hold the bond

Please see Reclamation, A6

Reclamation Is Important For Wyoming Lands

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