



Reclamation at Whitewood.

Reclamation complete at Whitewood Mine

Since 2010, TransAlta has spent close to \$20 million completing one of Canada's largest coal-mine reclamation programs. More than 280,000 trees have been planted on reclaimed land since the closure of the mine. These trees include a variety of upland tree species — aspen, balsam poplar, pine and spruce. Amid large tracts of agriculturally productive lands, there are three end-pit lakes and numerous wetland and wooded areas.

TransAlta's Whitewood Mine closed in 2010 after 48 years of supplying coal to the nearby Wabamun power plant. The site is located north of Wabamun Lake, about 70 km west of Edmonton, Alberta. All 1,900 hectares of the former mine site have been reclaimed into varying land forms and end land uses. Today, a mix of agricultural, wildlife and wetland habitat is present within the Whitewood Mine footprint.

TransAlta and the Alberta Fish and Game Association Wildlife Trust Fund have established a long-term partnership to conserve reclaimed wetlands and natural areas for wildlife habitat. TransAlta donated 174 hectares of reclaimed land within the Whitewood Mine to the Wildlife Trust Fund as part of the 365 hectare Wabamun Whitewood Conservation property north of the Village of Wabamun.

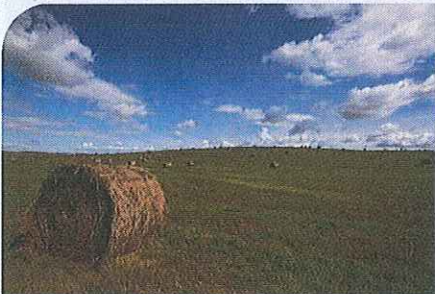


Tree planting at Whitewood



East Pit Lake Conservation Site

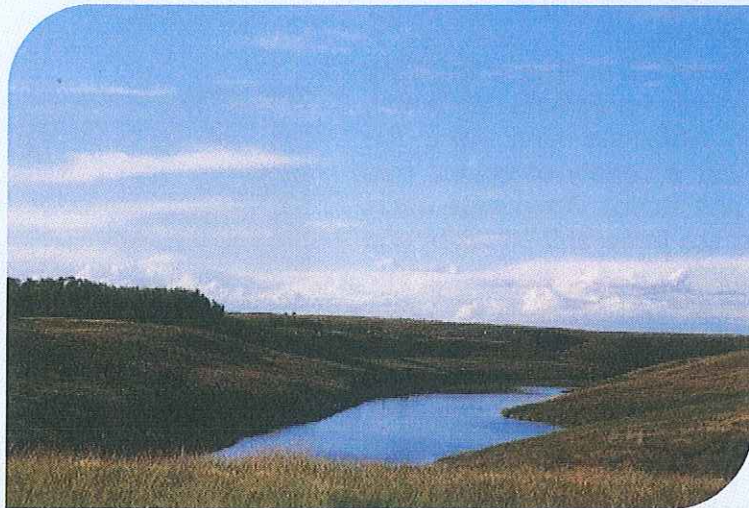
Reclamation planning



Reclaimed farmland

Reclamation plans for the Whitewood mine were conceptualized long before the mining process began. All resource extraction companies have to outline their reclamation plans before construction and during development. The goal is to return the land to the same agricultural capabilities after development as there was prior to any disturbance. These plans continue to evolve over the course of a project to meet specific regulations and development changes.

"Reclamation of all our mines happen before, during and after the mining process is complete," says Dan Kuchmak, reclamation planning specialist. "It is and always will remain an integral component of the operation to comply and fulfill obligations to regulators, stakeholders and shareholders."



West Pit Lake, located on reclaimed land at the Whitewood Mine. This lake was created in 2010 after mining was completed in the last cut.

Certification

Dan Kuchmak is a seasoned veteran when it comes to land reclamation and has played an active role in the transformation underway at the Whitewood Mine.

“Reclamation is a partnership between industry and the regulator to ensure proper reclamation process and certification,” says Kuchmak.

As part of the reclamation process, an application is made to the Alberta Energy Regulator for reclamation certification.

Throughout the reclamation process timeline, TransAlta monitors agricultural production, ground and surface water, erosion, vegetation and weeds to ensure the capability and sustainability of the reclaimed land. Of the 1,900 hectares of mine land reclaimed at Whitewood, 1,130 hectares are certified by the Alberta Energy Regulator.



AER inspectors at Whitewood reclamation site in October 2014 for a certificate inquiry.