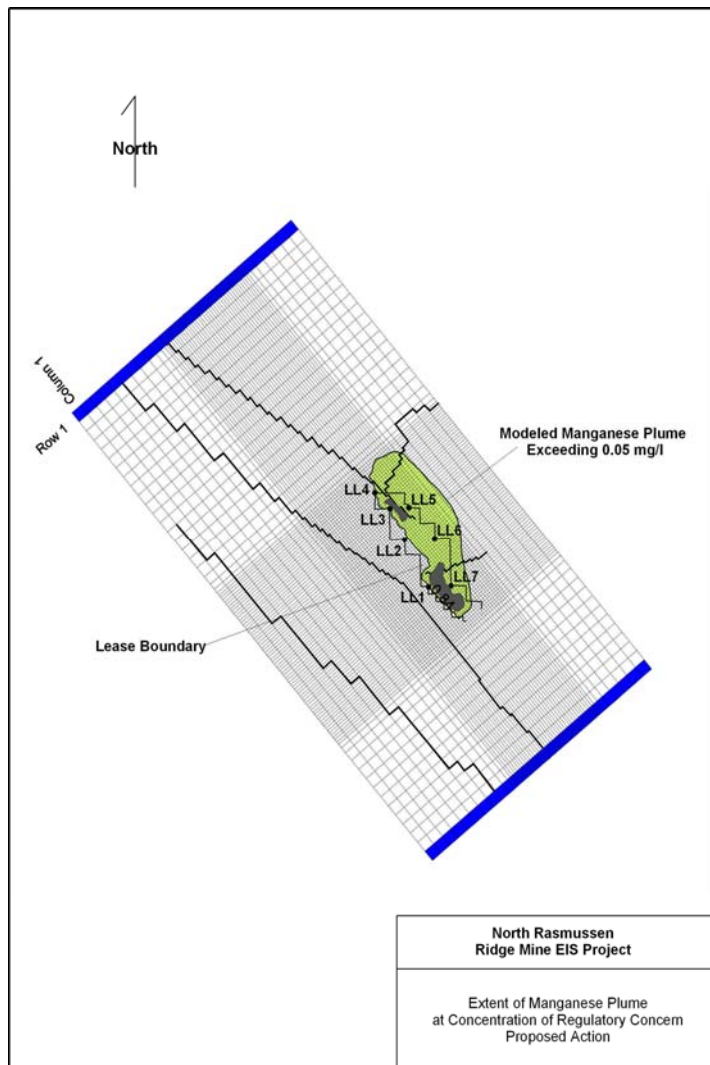


Agrium Conda Phosphate Operations – Rasmussen Ridge Mine EIS

Agrium Conda Phosphate Operations is one of the major producers of phosphate based fertilizers in the United States. Agrium’s facilities include a mill and fertilizer plant near Soda Springs, Idaho and the Rasmussen Ridge Mine.

The Rasmussen Ridge Mine is located on public lands within the Caribou-Targhee National Forest, and produces 1.7 million tons of phosphate ore annually. In 2003, Agrium prepared an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) to support the expansion of mining activities at North Rasmussen Ridge.



As part of the EIS process, Whetstone Associates worked closely with BLM and Forest Service personnel to review and develop recommendations for hydrologic and geochemical baseline characterization studies.

Following completion of the baseline studies, Whetstone Associates prepared the water resources and geochemical impact evaluations for the North Rasmussen Ridge Mine EIS. Potential impacts to the quantity and quality of groundwater and surface water from backfilled mine pits were identified as issues of major concern during the scoping process

The impact analysis for the EIS incorporated numerical modeling of groundwater flow and solute transport (MODFLOW / MT3D), seepage modeling of various cap designs for the backfilled pit (HELP3, UNSAT-H), and equilibrium-based geochemical modeling of selenium and other contaminant behavior in ground water (PHREEQC_i / MINTEQA2). The EIS received the highest EPA rating for a mining project in the region, due largely to strength of the water resources impact analysis. A successful Record of Decision (ROD) was issued for the EIS in September, 2003.