

17.24.304 Baseline Information: Environmental Resources

(1) Each application must contain:

(i) Vegetative Surveys

(i) Vegetative Surveys, Including a Map of Pre-Mining Communities

Five major vegetation inventories and associated mapping efforts and one revision occurred at the mine:

- VTM finished the initial vegetation inventory and map in 1978.
- In 1984, NERCO reduced the number of types to good effect and revised the vegetation map. The map revision went beyond combining units and introduced many inaccuracies.
- The South Fork area was inventoried and mapped in 1991.
- The Carbone area was inventoried and mapped in 1993-94.
- The Pearson Creek area was inventoried and mapped in 2006-2007.

In 1997, these efforts were integrated and the NERCO map corrected using the original baseline vegetation map prepared by VTN in 1978. Their 17 vegetation types were brought into alignment with the current list of 10 types and three phases. Some further map corrections were made where the original vegetation remained. Revisions also were made in cases where systematic mapping errors were evident. In 2008, the Pearson Creek area was integrated in the revised vegetation map. The revised vegetation map accurately represents actual baseline vegetation of the permit area. It is included as Plate 23.

(ii) Pre-mining Community Type Descriptions, Reference Area Communities; Range Conditions and Trends

The types and phases of vegetation recognized at the mine are shown on the Baseline Vegetation Map (Plate 23):

Pre-mining community types, reference area communities and range conditions are discussed in Appendix B, Appendix B-2, Appendix B-2a, and Appendix B-3. Reference areas are shown on Plate 23 (Volume 4) and Plate 1A (Appendix B-2)