

Module 19: Land Use / Vegetation [§§77.408/77.409]

9.1 Land Use

- 12.2021 a) **Identify the present uses of land use areas within the permit area (Key land use(s) to Exhibit 18: "Land Use and Reclamation Map").**

The land uses within the permit area, that will be affected by mining activities, are unmanaged natural habitat, pastureland and/or land occasionally cut for hay, cropland, residential, and forestland. See Exhibit 18 for delineations.

- b) **For cropland, pastureland or land occasionally cut for hay, or commercial forest identify the productivity expressed as average yield of food, fiber, forage or wood products. Use yield data or estimates for similar sites based on current data from U.S. Department of Agriculture or Pennsylvania Department of Agriculture.**

- 12.2021 There are no areas of commercial forestland within the permit area, therefore the only yields provided are for the pastureland or land occasionally cut for hay and cropland.

Based on the U.S. Department of Agriculture 2008 survey for Westmoreland County, Hay produced a yield of 2.01 ton/acre.

- 12.2021 Based on the U.S. Department of Agriculture 2019 survey for Westmoreland County, Corn produced a yield of 125-149.9 bushels/acre.

- c) **Identify any lands classified as Primary Agricultural Land under Executive Orders 1994-3 and 2003-2 (The Agricultural Land Preservation Policy). If there are, then indicate the alternatives to this disturbance considered and the reasons they were not deemed feasible.**

- 12.2021 Not applicable. The Primary Agricultural Land that is located within the permit area fits per the definition of §7.303a, however the following rankings listed in §7.303b requiring state agency protection do not apply. The prime farmland soils will be stockpiled during active mining and replaced once mining is completed.

19.2 Vegetation

Identify the percent ground cover of the natural vegetation within the permit area. If the postmining land use is fish and wildlife habitat, also identify the stocking and species composition of woody plants.

- 12.2021 The permit area is 90% ground cover of natural vegetation. The affected forestland area within the 100' stream barrier will be reclaimed to the pre-mining land use. Other forestland areas will be reclaimed to unmanaged natural habitat. A portion of pastureland and/or land occasionally cut for hay, unmanaged natural habitat, and forestland will be reclaimed to industrial/commercial. All other affected land uses will be returned to their pre-mining land use. See Module 23 for vegetative cover mix.