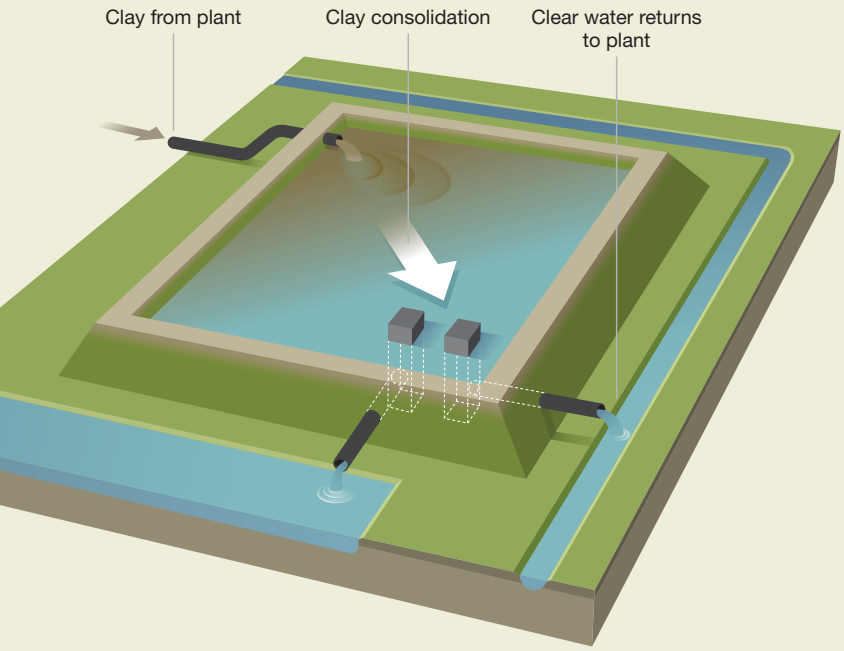
Clay Settling Area (CSA)

What is a Clay Settling Area?

A Clay Settling Area (CSA) is a critical part of the mining process. Clay is deposited into an engineered structure, and the clean water is then recycled into the mine process.

A CSA is used to manage and store rain that falls on the mine site. Our mining operations recycle and reuse up to 95% of the water on site, reducing the amount of ground-water required to operate the mine site.

A CSA is required to have two spillways to manage storm water. In preparation for storm season, the water levels are adjusted for incoming rainfall.

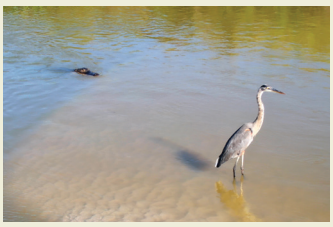


The State of Florida requires a CSA to be used to store clay on mining sites. A CSA is designed, constructed and operated to strict engineering standards. Design plans are reviewed for compliance with state regulations. The Florida DEP then approves construction. Once complete, a third party engineer certifies construction was done in accordance with the approved design. During the mining process, a CSA is inspected twice per day by skilled staff and annually by a third party licensed professional engineer.

Upon completion of the clay filling, the CSA surface is de-watered, allowing the surface to dry. Once dried, the surface is reclaimed into pastureland for cattle and green space for wildlife.

In 1972, the State of Florida instituted regulations on the inspection, maintenance and engineering standards for a clay settling area. These regulations were further strengthened in 1994. Under the current regulations, there have been zero clay settling area failures.

A Clay Settling Area remains active during the mining process, acting as a critical component to recycle water.



A Clay Settling Area is home to a variety of wildlife, including birds, fish and alligators.

Reclamation

- A CSA can be reclaimed for agricultural use. Over the years, produce has been planted on the reclaimed land. Other crops are also planted as trials to test the capacity for carbon sequestration, the process of storing carbon in the soil.
- Reclaimed land of a former CSA will serve as productive and beneficial land once the process is completed.

Illustration: CSA Reclamation - Revegetation