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# United States Department of the Interior



OFFICE OF SURFACE MINING  
Reclamation and Enforcement  
Western Region Office  
1999 Broadway, Suite 3320  
Denver, CO 80202-3050



January 25, 2010

Eddie Lopez, Superintendent  
Bryce Canyon National Park  
Highway 63, #1 Park Road  
P.O. Box 640201  
Bryce Canyon, Utah 84764-0201

Re: Suggestions for the Evaluation of the Utah Coal Regulatory Program

Dear Mr. Lopez:

Thank you for providing comments in response to our October 27, 2009 letter regarding the evaluation process for the Utah Division of Oil, Gas & Mining (DOG M). Your input will help us to evaluate the Utah coal regulatory program.

As stated in your letter, energy development must be conducted in a manner that ensures the protection of adjacent public lands. We fully understand your concerns regarding oil and gas development. However, our evaluation process is limited to the regulation of coal mining in Utah as directed by the Surface Mining Control and Reclamation Act of 1977 (SMCRA). Additionally, the State of Utah entered into a Cooperative Agreement with the Office of Surface Mining and has primacy for the regulation of surface coal mining and reclamation operations on both Federal and State lands. Consequently, so long as the State is implementing its program in accordance with SMCRA, most of your concerns should be addressed.

Some of the concerns that you raised such as air quality, the spread of invasive species, boundary protection, watershed protection and road building encompass issues that are analyzed during the permitting process and regulated throughout the life of the operation. Other concerns such as scenic values, light pollution or soundscape protection are generally beyond the scope of SMCRA and will be evaluated by other State agencies. Nevertheless, we appreciate you bringing them to our attention.

**RECEIVED**

**JAN 28 2010**

**DIV. OF OIL, GAS & MINING**

If you believe the Coal Hollow Mine permit area is on lands which should be designated as unsuitable for coal mining, please follow the petition procedures set forth under 30 CFR PART 762 and PART 769.

Thank you once again for commenting on the DOGM evaluation process, and please don't hesitate to contact us if additional issues arise.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Howard E. Strand". The signature is written in a cursive style with a long horizontal stroke at the beginning.

Howard E. Strand  
Office of Surface Mining

cc: Daron Haddock, Utah Division of Oil, Gas and Mining