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United States
Department of
Agriculture

Forest
Service

Manti-LaSal
National Forest

599 West Price River Dr.
Price, Utah 84501

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Reply to: 2820

Date: August 27, 1990

Lowell Braxton
State of Utah Natural Resources
Division of Oil, Gas and Mining
355 West North Temple
3 Triad Center, Suite 350
Salt Lake City, Utah 84180-1203

DIVISION OF
OIL, GAS & MINING

RE: Five-Year Permit Renewal, Belina Mine, Valley Camp of Utah, ACT/007/001,
Carbon County, Utah

Dear Lowell:

As a follow-up to our comments on the 5-year renewal (June 8, 1990, letter), we conducted a field review of the permit area and reviewed the mine plan.

Subsidence Base Map R614-301-728.100a shows that recovery mining has been conducted in the Upper O'Connor Seam (Belina No. 1) directly under Boardinghouse Canyon and the associated perennial stream. As depicted on the map, there is evidence that this area has experienced subsidence and disruptive surface disturbance. Surface disturbance is in the form of surface cracks, small slope failures, and a sink hole which is approximately 20 feet in diameter and 25 feet deep. The sink hole indicates complete collapse of a room which lies between partially recovered pillars. There are similar sink holes and cracks in other mined areas. The mine plan maps indicate that the most extensive surface disturbance occurs in areas where there is less than 400 - 500 feet of overburden.

The maps show that second seam mining is proposed in shallow overburden areas, including the area below the perennial drainage, in the Lower O'Connor Seam (Belina No. 2). It is not evident from the maps if recovery mining is proposed.

Considering the shallow overburden, extensive faulting, and the sink holes which have already developed from single seam mining, we are concerned about additional surface disturbance and impacts which could occur. There appears to be potential for the perennial drainage to be disrupted, and a waffle iron surface expression of the mine workings to develop, including additional sink holes. Lease stipulations prohibit mining and subsidence which could cause unstable or hazardous conditions and disrupt the flow of perennial drainages.

The cracks which have occurred in the past appear to have healed over time and there is no visual indication of cracking in the stream bed or subsidence related stream flow disruption. We, however, have not received the hydrologic monitoring reports for the area and can not evaluate the monitoring data to determine if any decrease in flow has been measured.

We hereby request that the Division conduct a review of the hydrologic monitoring data and advise us as to the level of impact which has been detected in regard to surface and ground water in the permit area.

We have also requested a review of the mine plan by the Bureau of Land Management and a determination as to the likely surface disturbance which could occur in the permit area, considering the planned mining configuration and geologic conditions.

If you have any questions, please contact the Forest Supervisor's Office in Price, Utah.

Sincerely,


for
GEORGE A. MORRIS
Forest Supervisor