

0023

W. Hoobey  
S. Limer  
ACT/007/004-375  
# 2 1/3

3480  
SL-029093  
(U-066)

Moab District  
Price River Resource Area  
P. O. Drawer AB  
Price, Utah 84501

MAY 28 1987

Mr. David B. Miller  
Castle Gate Coal Company  
P. O. Box 449  
Helper, Utah 84526

**RECEIVED**  
MAY 29 1987

**DIVISION OF  
OIL, GAS & MINING**

Dear Mr. Miller:

This office has received and reviewed your plan to abandon the 12th West longwall panel, No. 5 mine, at a point two crosscuts in by the normal stopping point. Although it is very unfortunate to abandon the panel short of its potential, it appears to be the logical action to take, given the high and potentially dangerous levels of methane in the No. 5 mine bleeder.

As was noted in your plan for abandonment, numerous ventilation changes have been attempted and failed to force more ventilating air through the longwall gob and bleeder entries in order to decrease the methane concentrations below the legal limit of two percent. The poor condition of the bleeder entries is the major contributor to this condition, and is an inherited condition from the preceding mine operator, and no fault of your own that the bleeder is in such poor condition.

Also, as was discussed in a meeting on May 14, 1987, between yourself and BLM, the Mine Safety and Health Administration (MSHA) has imposed numerous safety stipulations to be met by Castle Gate Coal. These stipulations will impart great economic burden given the small amount of tonnage involved, rendering the remaining reserves essentially uneconomic to recover.

Given the above noted conditions and the present climate surrounding the issue of two-entry longwall systems, it is evident that the continuation of this panel is dangerous both physically and economically.

This minor modification to the approved mine plan is therefore approved as proposed in your submittal dated May 12, 1987.

If you have any questions regarding this matter, please contact Jeff Clawson of this office at 637-4584.

Sincerely yours,

**MARK E. BAILEY**

Area Manager

Enclosure:  
Castle Gate Request for  
Minor Modification

cc:  
MDO (U-065)  
USO (U-921)  
OSM, Denver  
DOGM

JClawson:ks:5/26/87  
6240 Mag Card



**CASTLE  
GATE**

COAL COMPANY

**RECEIVED**  
MAY 29 1987

SR/PR Doc's MAY 13 1987

DIVISION OF  
OIL, GAS & MINING

MINOR MODIFICATION TO  
MINING PLAN APPROVED BY  
BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT

May 12, 1987

Recommended By:

Jeff K. Clamm 5/28/87  
Mining Engineer (Date)

Mr. Jeff Clawson  
Bureau of Land Management  
900 North 700 East  
Price, Utah 84501

Approved By:

James W. Dryden 5/28/87  
Area Manager (Date)

Dear Mr. Clawson:

Castle Gate Coal Company is concerned with the safety of its employees and we have made this commitment to them and their families. Castle Gate is requesting the Bureau of Land Management to allow the company to abandon a 280 foot section of the 12th West longwall panel for safety reasons.

Castle Gate Coal Company has tried to improve the area surrounding the two panels that remained in the No. 5 Mine. Since Castle Gate took over the Price River Coal property, we have had to do emergency work on the bleeder at the back of the 11th West panel because of pillar failure and the floor heaving. The entire back of the 11th West was cribbed with two (2) rows of double cribs on 6 foot centers. The bleeder evaluation points needed to be timbered in order to make methane checks on the bleeder. This required 2700 timbers be set. This was to insure the bleeder would remain open until the completion of the 11th and 12th West. At the inception of production in the 11th West, MSHA made Castle Gate aware of the methane problems which plagued Price River and the special ventilation requirements to operate the longwall, (see Exhibit A), concerning an increase of air to the longwall (80,000 CFM and a minimum of 40,000 DFM to the 6W bleeder). Castle Gate Coal Company has met those requirements with 90,000 CFM and 70,000 CFM at the 6th West bleeder.

The Code of Federal Regulation (CFR30) Section 75.329 Bleeder Systems requires that the air from a bleeder entering another split of air cannot exceed 2.0% of methane. The condition of the bleeder system from the 6th West to the 11th West is poor due to not being supported by the previous operator. This poor condition does not allow adequate quantities of air to be supplied to this area. Also the lack of bleeder controls all along the inaccessible areas makes controlling the methane impossible. This situation has resulted in the three copies of the

cc5.dbm/003

violations (See Exhibit B, C, & D). Exhibits B and D were 107A orders for eminent dangers.

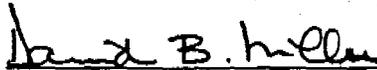
Since Castle Gate started operations in the No. 5 Mine, we have made eight major ventilation changes to provide more air to the longwall and the bleeder area for methane dilution. The result each time was only temporary success. However, we have reached the limit on the quantity of air able to pass through the longwall bleeder system. The methane concentration at the bleeder evaluation points have been between 1.5 - 1.9% methane. This does not allow much additional methane to be added to the ventilating air before we are exceeding the 2.0% limit. The methane concentration in the longwall gob of previously mined panels has become so high that the loss of barometric pressure moves out large quantities of methane. When this occurs the mine cannot produce until the methane concentrations decrease. To date the mine has had to stop production due to methane a total of 6,333 minutes during the mining shift. This makes up 13.2 shifts of production and 5,280 minutes of production time was lost due to having to idle shifts due to methane in the bleeder. This makes up 11 shifts of production lost. A total of 24.2 shifts lost due to the problem of excessive methane. The problem is not constant. It has shown increasing times and severity. January, the best production month in the 11th West panel, had 2,419 minutes on clearing gas during an active shift and 480 minutes or one (1) shift had to be idled due to methane. February was the longwall move to the 12th West. March the ventilation was changed to start this panel and there were 811 minutes lost on clearing gas during the active shift and 1,440 minutes or three (3) shifts had to be idled due to methane. April had 1,629 minutes lost on clearing gas during an active shift and 3,360 minutes on seven (7) shifts had to be idled due to methane. The problem is not stagnant; on the contrary, it is growing in instance and severity. Notice the 107A order (eminent danger) issued May 5th (Exhibit D). The increase in the number of occurrences and their severity has us concerned with the issue of safety. We feel it is with our peoples best interest in mind that the plan to abandon the 12th West panel be put together at the soonest opportunity and we would like to do this with your approval.

The situation was inherited and we feel we have tried to recover these reserves with sound mining practices and principles. However, we have reached a point where a decision needs to be made concerning the remaining coal in the 12th West panel.

Mr. Jeff Clawson  
May 12, 1987  
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If you have any questions or wish to view this area please feel free to contact me.

Sincerely,



David B. Miller

DBM/jcr

cc: D. Bryant  
T. Doane  
File



13th WEST

12th WEST N59°14'05" W  
AVE HT 6.9 AVE WIDTH 19.9  
E 30.8' E 214.28'  
3801 1617.05'

MINOR MODIFICATION TO  
MINING PLAN APPROVED BY  
BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT

Recommended By:

*Jeff K. Clawn* 5/28/87  
Mining Engineer (Date)

Approved By:

Area Manager (Date)

72,128 TONS  
R.O.M.  
833 CLEAN TONS  
NEW ENDING FACE  
ORIGINALLY PROTECTED  
LOCATION

11th WEST N59°14'05" W  
AVE. WIDTH 19.9  
HT. 2.8

SR/PP  
MAY 15 1987

5' TAPER = 6576' HORIZ DIST  
CALC ON 127.6' GRADE  
SLOPE DIST = 631.8' E TO E

