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STATE OF UTAH
NATURAL RESOURCES
Wildlife Resources

File Act/007/004, Folder # 2

CC: Sue, Dave, Lynn

Norman H. Bangerter, Governor
Dee C. Hansen, Executive Director
William H. Geer, Division Director

Southeastern Region • 455 West Railroad Avenue • Price, UT 84501-2829 • 801-637-3310

March 11, 1988

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Mr. Richard Allison
Castle Gate Coal Company
P.O. Box 449
Helper, UT 84526

DIVISION OF
OIL, GAS & MINING

Ref: Planning for degasification wells.

Dear Richard:

As you know, the Division recently reviewed a proposal for two degasification wells in Bear Canyon. As we understand the problem, numerous such wells may need to be drilled over the next several years. Relative to the two wells (88-1 and 88-2) we did not make raptor protection an issue, although the level of knowledge concerning this resource is poor on the mine permit area. Knowing that numerous wells may need to be drilled in the future, it would behoove the mine's interest to inventory raptor nests so that associated conflicts could be reduced through planning.

Richard, raptor nests need protection from man's disturbance within a one-half mile buffer zone during years when the nest is active. There is no question that future drilling will necessitate mine-sponsored raptor inventory. A comprehensive inventory this spring would result in substantial savings to the company. Generally speaking, just ferry costs for a helicopter to make several independent searches over a period of years would soon outweigh the entire cost of an intensive search this year. Also, the cost for a consulting raptor ecologist is substantial. DOGM (AMR) will be conducting by helicopter a raptor search in Spring Canyon this May. If the company and DOGM were to cooperate and use the same helicopter service, your cost for ferry time could be split with DOGM. The Division of Wildlife Resources would provide a raptor ecologist to make the actual survey and prepare an appropriate report. At a minimum, a Hughes 500 or Jet Ranger helicopter with complete on-board communications is needed. I anticipate that the entire mine permit area could be inventoried in less than 15 hours. This estimate could be made more exact for budget purposes if you could meet with our raptor ecologist (Miles Moretti) and myself.

Planning for this project needs to proceed. Coordination with DOGM, DWR and Castle Gate Coal Company could result in substantial savings. The protection

Richard Allison
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to the raptor resource through wise management decisions and coordinated planning for mine development would be facilitated. Please advise at your earliest convenience.

Sincerely,



Larry B. Dalton, Resource Analyst
Southeastern Region

LBD/dd

cc: Darrell Nish, DWR
Randy Radant, DWR
Lynn Knuzler, DOGM ✓
Lucy Malin, DOGM