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State of Utah

DEPARTMENT OF NATURAL RESOURCES
DIVISION OF OIL, GAS AND MININGNorman H. Bangertter
GovernorDee C. Hansen
Executive DirectorDianne R. Nielson, Ph.D.
Division Director355 West North Temple
3 Triad Center, Suite 350
Salt Lake City, Utah 84180-1203
801-538-5340

July 31, 1989

TO: Susan Linner, Permit Supervisor

FROM: James Leatherwood, Reclamation Soils Specialist *JL*

Re: Mid-Permit Term Review and Sowbelly Reclamation, Castle Gate Coal Company, Price River Complex, ACT/007/004, Carbon County, Utah

SUMMARY

The response to the Divisions Mid-Permit Term and Sowbelly Canyon Reclamation Plan Review, received June 23, 1989, has been reviewed. Two issues remain unresolved. The submittal again fails to meet the sampling requirements of condition one of the approved permit. And, the applicant has failed to demonstrate reclaimability. Results of analysis, trials, and test of the proposed substitute topsoil have not been submitted.

ANALYSISUMC 771.23 Permit Applications: General Requirements For Format and Contents - JSL

The submittal does not meet the requirements of condition one of the approved five year permit. The Division has not approved a refuse sampling plan of one sample for every five acres of potentially acid- or toxic-forming refuse waste. As outlined in the Divisions February 19, 1988 Initial Completeness Review, Price River Coal Company had committed to collect four to five grab samples of the refuse waste in School House canyon, to establish the acid or toxic forming nature of the waste materials, prior to the Divisions December 19, 1985 letter of clarification. The Division considers one sample per acre to be acceptable. Sampling more sites than one per acre is acceptable, but less than one sample per acre is not. This refuse sampling commitment must be incorporated into the approved permit.

Mid-Term Review
Castle Gate Coal Company
Price River Complex
ACT/007/004

UMC 817.22 Topsoil: Removal - JSL

To date the Division has not received any substitute topsoil sample results or verification that the substitute topsoil material can meet revegetation success standards. Samples were to have been taken by late summer of 1984. In the previous mid-permit term review the Division requested that the results of the samples be submitted immediately. The analysis has not been submitted. The permit submittal now calls for sampling and analysis to take place prior to reclamation. This is not acceptable. Reclamation feasibility must be demonstrated to the Division (UMC 786.19(b)). Analysis, trails and test must be used to demonstrate the feasibility of the proposed topsoil substitute materials (UMC 817.22(e)). Final reclamation of the Sowbelly reclamation project cannot be approved until such time that the substitute topsoil has been approved by the Division.

Analysis of interim revegetation cover, and corresponding vegetation reference areas, in addition to soil analysis could potentially demonstrate reclamation feasibility (i.e. Goose Island reclamation, representing Hardscrabble and Sowbelly Canyons, and the School House Canyon waste pile representing the Castlegate area). Data collection and analysis must be conducted as soon as possible. Soil sampling and analysis should follow the Divisions "Guidelines for Management of Topsoil and Overburden for Surface and Underground Coal Mines", April 1988. Vegetation sampling must follow acceptable sampling techniques as outlined in the Division's Vegetation Information Guidelines. Once the Division has reviewed this information, a determination of the need for test plots will be made.

RECOMMENDATION

The Division of Oil, Gas and Mining must consider revoking (UMC 786.25(c) and UMC 788.11) Castle Gate Coal Company's five year permit if reclamation feasibility is not demonstrated as per the comments given under UMC 817.22(e) of this memorandum.

Any reclamation in Sowbelly Canyon cannot be final (no phase one bond release) until reclamation feasibility is demonstrated.

The MRP be updated to include a commitment to sample the refuse materials disposed of in Schoolhouse canyon at a rate equal to or greater than one sample per acre.

cc: L. Kunzler
R. Harden
D. Darby
H. Sauer
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