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State of Utah
DEPARTMENT OF NATURAL RESOURCES
DIVISION OF OIL, GAS AND MINING

Michael O. Leavitt
Governor
Ted Stewart
Executive Director
James W. Carter
Division Director

355 West North Temple
3 Triad Center, Suite 350
Salt Lake City, Utah 84180-1203
801-538-5340
801-359-3940 (Fax)
801-538-5319 (TDD)

April 17, 1995

TO: Daron Haddock, Permit Supervisor
FROM: Wayne H. Western, Reclamation Engineer *WHW*
RE: Sowbelly Canyon As-Built, AMAX Coal Company, Castle Gate Mine,
ACT/007/004, Folder #2, Carbon County, Utah

RECLAMATION PLAN

BACKFILLING AND GRADING

Regulatory Reference: 30 CFR Sec. 785.15, 817.102, 817.107

Minimum Regulatory Requirements:

General.

Analysis:

Portions of the highwalls east of the lower portal still exist contrary to the approved reclamation plan. The highwalls will be reclaimed before bond release.

The area where the highwalls exist was disturbed before the enactment of SMCRA. In such case the elimination of highwalls is not required if the Operator demonstrates that there is not enough reasonably available fill. The Operator has not demonstrated that there is not enough reasonably available fill to eliminate the highwalls.

Once the Operator has demonstrated the lack of readily available fill then he must revise the reclamation plan to show that highwalls will be retained. Since highwall retention constitutes a significant revision the Operator must advertise the revision and have a public comment period before the Division approves the proposal.

Part of the channel west of Pond 016 slopes to the north instead of the south. The slope reversal creates a depression that has not been approved.

Findings:

The Operator has failed to eliminate all highwalls as stated in the reclamation

plan. The Operator has created a depression in the channel west of Pond 016 that has not been approved.

MINE OPENINGS

Regulatory Reference: 30 CFR Sec. 817.13, 817.14, 817.15
513.500 817.15

Analysis:

On March 31, 1995 the Division inspected the two portals listed as reclaimed and shown on Exhibit 3.2-14. The Division noticed that neither portal had been adequately sealed. Both portals are open. Due to safety concerns the Division was not able to determine how far back into the portals the voids extended. According to the approved closure plan a seal will be placed 25 feet from the opening and then backfilled.

Near pond 016 the Division's inspection team members saw a hole that they believe is connected to the mine workings. Members of the inspection team noticed a musky mine smell around the opening. The opening is most likely caused by surface water flowing through natural cracks that connect to the mine workings. As water flows through the cracks soil is transported into the mine workings and a sinkhole is created.

Findings:

The Operator has failed to seal the portals and sinkhole. Both people and wildlife will have access to the portals, although to what extent is unknown. While access to the mine working may not be possible through the sinkhole at this time the size of the opening will increase with time. The Operator must seal the sinkhole to prevent future access to the mine working.

SOWBELLY.WHW