



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

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August 10, 1999

TO: File

THRU.: Daron Haddock, Permit Supervisor *DH*

THRU.: Pam Grubaugh-Littig, Permit Supervisor *pgl*

FROM: Wayne H. Western, Senior Reclamation Specialist *WHW*

RE: Hard Scrabble Site Visit, Castle Gate Holding Company, LLC, Castle Gate Mine, ACT/007/004, File #2, Carbon County, Utah

## BACKFILLING AND GRADING

Regulatory Reference: 30 CFR Sec. 785.15, 817.102, 817.107; R645-301-234, -301-537, -301-552, -301-553, -302-230, -302-231, -302-232, -302-233.

### Analysis:

On July 13, 1999, Johnny Papas and Wayne Western visited Hardscrabble Canyon to inspect the backfilling and grading. The main inspection point was the upper ledge near the gate. The backfill has tension cracks that are more than 50 feet long, more than 12 inches deep and up to 3 inches wide. In addition to the cracks, there was evidence of minor slides. Johnny was concerned that if the slides continue, coal mine waste would be exposed.

The purpose of the visit was to determine if the area will meet the backfilling and grading requirements or if the area must be regraded. If the earthwork needs to be redone then the Permittee wants to have the work completed by this fall. The reasons for the fall due date are so that seeding can take place in the fall and that bond release can proceed. The Permittee is holding \$34,000 from the contractor (Bill Minchey) until Phase I bond standards have been met.

R645-301-553.130 and R645-301-553.140 require the Permittee to have all reclaimed slopes have a minimum static safety factor of 1.3, prevent slides and minimize erosion. The Division does not do the geotechnical work to determine the slope's safety factor. The Division relies upon the Permittee to submit the data for verification.

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The Division is concerned about the cracks and minor slides, those features suggest that the slope is unstable. The Division will not approve Phase I bond release unless the slopes are stable.

**Findings:**

The Permittee may not be able to receive Phase I bond release because the slope near the gate show signs of instability.

**RECOMMENDATIONS:**

The Division should inform the Permittee that since the slope near the gate shows signs of instability that Phase I bond release may not be granted until the Division is convinced that the slope meets the requirements of R645-301-553.130 and R645-301-553.140.