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CC: Mike Sufista
M.D.W.

UTAH DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY
DIVISION OF WATER QUALITY

NOTICE OF PUBLIC HEARING

→ Pam → Skyline Mine

An opportunity to comment on proposed amendments to the State Water Quality Standards

The Utah Water Quality Board is considering a modification to R317-2, "Standards of Quality for Waters of the State", to **change the designation of Electric Lake from High Quality Water - Category 1 (no new point source discharges allowed) to Category 2 (new discharge allowed if there is no degradation of water quality).**

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A public hearing is scheduled to receive public input prior to adoption by the Water Quality Board. **The public hearing will be held on November 13, 2001 at 10:30 a.m. in the Conference Room at the Southeastern Utah District Health Department, 28 South 100 East, Price, Utah.**

Representatives of political subdivisions, governmental agencies, planning or civic groups, and all other persons having an interest in the proposed rule change are invited to attend and provide oral or written comment relative to the proposed changes. Opportunity will be afforded to all having a desire to participate. Oral statements will be accepted at the time of hearing, but for accuracy of the record, written statements are encouraged. **Written comments will be accepted at the time of the hearing or by mail until 5:00 p.m. on November 16, 2001.** If mailed, statements should be addressed to: William O. Moellmer, Utah Division of Water Quality, P.O. Box 144870, Salt Lake City, Utah 84114-4870. Comments may also be faxed to Mr. Moellmer at (801)538-6016. Additional information is available by contacting Mr. Moellmer at the Utah Division of Water Quality, PO Box 144870, Salt Lake City, Utah, 84114-8460, telephone 801-538-6146.

Background

Canyon Fuel Company, owners of the Skyline Mine in Emery County, have requested the change in designation of Electric Lake. The Skyline Mine currently discharges, under an existing UPDES discharge permit, to Eccles Creek, tributary to the Price River. They have recently encountered a major source of ground water and the mine is slowly flooding. It would be extremely costly to transport all of the water to Eccles Creek because of the long distances involved, and erosion to the Eccles Creek channel would likely occur due to the increased flow. Canyon Fuel Company is therefore proposing to intercept the new ground water source and discharge it into Electric Lake, tributary to Huntington Creek. The discharge volume is expected to average about 7 MGD, but could go higher. It is expected that this volume would decrease over time, but it is impossible to predict how quickly this will occur, or what the final rate might be. This ground water has a very high quality (approximately 200 ppm total dissolved solids) and in the opinion of the staff would not degrade the water quality in Electric Lake.

Electric Lake is within the outer boundaries of a national forest, and by default is therefore classified as a High Quality Water-Category 1, into which new point source discharges are not allowed. It is proposed that the designation of Electric Lake be changed to High Quality Water-Category 2, which would allow a discharge if the quality of the receiving water is not degraded. This must be effectuated by a change in rule (R317-2, Standards of Quality of Waters of the State).