



Technical Analysis and Findings
Utah Coal Regulatory Program

September 28, 2015

PID: C0070005
TaskID: 4976
Mine Name: SKYLINE MINE
Title: REDUCE MACROINVERTEBRATE & FISH MONITORING

Summary

On March 19, 2015, the Division received an application from Skyline Mine requesting the reduction of the macroinvertebrate and fish monitoring on Woods, Winter Quarters, and Eccles Creeks. The Division solicited comments from USFS and DWR and considered those comments in the findings (task 4817). The Division also consulted with the Department of Environmental Quality since they have expertise in the subject matter and are involved with the UPDES from the discharge into Eccles Creek.

On May 5, 2015, the Division denied said application with deficiencies. In essence, the Division would approved the removal of fish and macroinvertebrate monitoring on Winter Quarters and Woods Canyon Creek if Canyon Fuel Company would commit to resuming the monitoring should mine water discharge be added or surface disturbance causes impacts to the creeks. However, the Division would not approve the reduction of fish and macroinvertebrate monitoring on Eccles Creek because it was not consistent with R645-301-333. The Division requested CFC propose a new and improved macroinvertebrate monitoring plan for Eccles Creek.

On August 26, 2015, Canyon Fuel Company responded to the Divisions deficiencies with a modified application. This new application was assigned task 4970. That application was denied with minor deficiencies on September 3, 2015. On September 11, 2015 a corrected amendment was submitted and assigned task 4976. Minor corrections in regards to text and maps were again requested and on the same day updated copies were provided. This TA is for task 4976.

Deficiencies Details:

[Empty box for deficiencies details]

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Operation Plan

Fish and Wildlife Protection and Enhancement Plan

Analysis:

Adequate data has been collected to determine the benthic and fish communities of Woods Canyon Creek and Winter Quarters Creek are not significantly impacted from mining operations. Since no mine water is discharged, the existing water quality and quantity monitoring activities are sufficient at this time. If in the future, should any conditions related to mining change impacts to these creeks, the macroinvertebrate and fish monitoring shall resume. In that case, Canyon Fuel Company (CFC) will work in conjunction with DOGM, USFS, UDWR to identify, research and implement measures

sufficient to correct the problems.

The text in 2.8.1, page 2-71a, of the MRP is updated to indicate macroinvertebrate surveys were terminated in 2015. Text on page 2-71b is added to indicate fish surveys were terminated after 2013.

Eccles Creek:

CFC proposes to modify the macroinvertebrate sampling program. The current program consists of spring/fall surveys every 3 years. The proposed changes as follows; 1) conducting the study only in the fall while both the species and stream flows are most stable and less susceptible to high spring snowmelt; 2) modify the frequency from every third year to 2-years of collecting samples followed by 2- years of no sampling; 3) hire a new contractor who's committed to a timeframe of having a report available prior to the next season; and 4) the report by the contractor will include quantitative measurements as indicators for the health of the biotic system.

Table 2.9-1a has been updated to reflect proposed changes in macroinvertebrate and fish monitoring in Woods Canyon and Winter Quarters Creeks.

Plate 2.8.1-1 has been updated to reflect discontinued monitoring in Winter Quarters and Woods Canyon but still reflects monitoring in Eccles Creek. This plate has also been updated to indicate James and Burnout Creeks have been discontinued.

Finding: The application meetings the requirements in R645-301-333

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