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August 21, 1980

Mr. Donald A. Crane  
Regional Director  
Office of Surface Mining  
Brooks Towers  
1020 15th Street  
Denver, Colorado 80202

RE: Office of Surface Mining  
Petition by Plateau Mining  
Company to Extend Mine Workings

Dear Mr. Crane,

Pursuant to your letter received August 13, 1980 by the Division of Oil, Gas, and Mining soliciting comments from your office concerning Plateau Mining Company's petition, the Division agrees with O.S.M.'s suggestion of expediting Plateau's extension separately from Plateau's mining permit application submitted March 26, 1980.

The Division enforcement staff does find that Plateau Mining Company has a poor performance record with regard to compliance with the regulations, as recently exemplified by the August 13th inspection resulting in nine (9) violations from O.S.M. and eleven (11) violations from the Division.

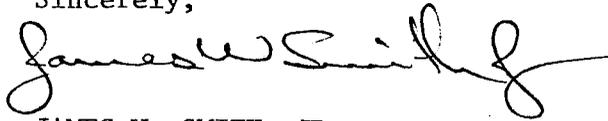
Plateau Mining Company has been issued a series of approvals and modifications to date. In many cases once the approvals have been issued the stipulations and conditions of the approvals have not been followed. Plateau has also failed to acknowledge that operations at the Plateau Mine site are often in disregard of these conditions.

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The Division recommends that approval in this case should be tied to Plateau conforming to all previous agreements and conditions and that future activities be conducted to comply with all of these provisions. For example, it is unclear that Plateau has complied with the stipulations as set forth in their previous extension.

The Division does feel some justification to pursue a complete mine plan approval prior to issuance of this extension, however, to cause Plateau Mining Company to suffer extensive economic hardship by delay of this extension is unwarranted when other remedies are still available to bring Plateau into compliance.

Sincerely,



JAMES W. SMITH, JR.  
COORDINATOR OF MINED  
LAND DEVELOPMENT

JWS/1ml