



STATE OF UTAH
NATURAL RESOURCES
Oil, Gas & Mining

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June 17, 1986

Mr. Ben Grimes
Environmental Coordinator
Plateau Mining Company
P. O. Drawer PMC
Price, Utah 84501

Dear Mr. Grimes:

Re: Coal Exploration Application 86-1 (less than 250 tons),
Plateau Mining Company, Star Point Mines, CEP/007/006-86,
Carbon County, Utah

The Division has completed its review of Plateau Mining Company's (PMC) May 14, 1986 proposal to commence coal exploration activities at the Star Point mine site. Revised sections concerning recent eagle nesting surveys were received June 16, 1986. This exploration proposal involves the drilling of three (3) core hole/observation wells. The observation wells will be used for post-exploration ground water monitoring purposes for the ongoing underground mining operation.

The Division is prepared to grant its approval provided the following conditions are met for the exploration project:

1. The operator proposes to strip, stockpile and protect topsoil encountered in the construction of each new road or drill pad. Operations must meet all requirements of SMC 817.22, .23, .24, and .25.
2. Class III roads shall not be used if climatic conditions are such that usage may cause degradation of water quality [UMC 817.175(b)].
3. Sediment control shall comply with SMC 817.42 and 817.45, and SMC 817.173 (a)(2). The operator will utilize a combination of erosion control measures which may include; silt fences, berms, catch basins, vegetative filters, etc. PMC will be required to meet the requirements of these regulations and will be inspected according to the requirements of these regulations.

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4. The operator states that, "natural channels will be restored and the disturbed area will be reshaped to as close to the natural configuration as possible to blend in with the natural surroundings".

The operator must recontour any disturbed drainage channels to a configuration at least equal to the capacity of the unmodified stream channel immediately upstream and downstream of the crossing (UMC 817.44, 817.176).

5. On June 11, 1986 the Division performed an onsite field inspection of the proposed exploration road alignment. The Division concurs with PMC's plans to relocate a small segment of the road to avoid a wet area which could create construction problems.

The realignment around the wet area is considered to be a minor change to the proposal. As such, the Division will only require as-built plans which show the revised alignment by July 15, 1986.

6. The Division has consulted with the Utah Division of Wildlife Resources (Mr. Larry Dalton) concerning the importance of the exploration area to deer and elk and the possible effect of all exploration activities (including road building) on fawning and calving. This Division concurs with their recommendations which are as follows:

(a) Delay road building and drilling activities until July 1, 1986 to assure parturition for deer and elk which may be utilizing the proposed area.

(b) Delay road building and drilling activities until July 15, 1986 in the immediate vicinity of the occupied eagle nest (nest C) to assure successful fledging.

Until July 15, 1986 all exploration activity within 1/2 mile of nest C should be curtailed to avoid unnecessary disturbance of the nesting activities.

7. The exploration proposal did not include information relative to an archeological inventory for the areas to be impacted by the project. The regulations do not specifically require exploration operations which extract less than 250 tons of coal to perform archeological surveys on areas to be impacted.

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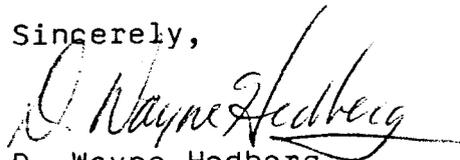
Although the probability of occurrence is low, the operator should instruct the contractor and/or equipment operators to make conscious efforts to avoid impacting any historical or archeological sites which may be encountered during exploration activities. If a site or questionable artifacts are unearthed, construction should be suspended until the proper clearances are given by the appropriate authorities.

8. PMC has verbally informed the Division that the U.S. Forest Service has extended their road use permit for an existing road accessing the exploration area. The Division's approval is conditional upon PMC's receipt of the U.S. Forest Service approval to extend this road use permit. Please provide a copy of the USFS approval to this office upon receipt.
9. Upon completion of the coal exploration operation, the Division requires the operator to file a completion notice with this office. The notice should include a description of the plugging and reclamation activities which have taken place for each drill site.

Plateau is reminded as discussed in our meeting of May 14, 1986 the importance of maximizing the acquisition of additional hydrologic data from the observation wells during the drilling and completion phase of operations. This could include slug or pump tests to derive aquifer characteristics. This information will be valuable during the upcoming permit renewal period for the Star Point mines.

Thank you for your cooperation in completing this permitting activity. Please provide a written response to the conditions of this letter by June 30, 1986. In reply, please refer to CEP/007/006-86.

Sincerely,


D. Wayne Hedberg
Permit Supervisor/
Reclamation Hydrologist

jvb
cc: Allen Klein
Reed Christensen
Larry Dalton
Lowell Braxton
A Team
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