

0045

United States  
Department of  
Agriculture

Forest  
Service

Manti-LaSal  
National Forest

599 West Price River  
Price, Utah 84501

*File Act/007/006 #2*  
*cc. J. Whittaker*  
*P. Little*  
*R. Smith*  
*K. Muttz*  
*OSM Denver*  
*Dr. Arthur R. H. Holbrook*

Reply to: 2820

Date: May 27, 1987

Mr. Lowell Braxton  
State of Utah Natural Resources  
Division of Oil, Gas and Mining  
355 West North Temple  
3 Triad Center, Suite 350  
Salt Lake City, Utah 84180-1203

**RECEIVED**  
MAY 29 1987

**DIVISION OF  
OIL, GAS & MINING**

Dear Lowell:

The Manti-LaSal National Forest has reviewed Plateau Mining Company's proposal to add new lands to their present permit area for the Star Point Mines; New Lands Application, Plateau Mining Co., Star Point Mines, ACT/007/006-1, Folder #2, Carbon County, Utah.

The lands involved include two areas within the Manti-LaSal National Forest boundary. The first area is the 160 acres which were added to Federal Coal Lease U-13097 on November 2, 1983, under a lease modification. The surface of this area is administered by the Manti-LaSal National Forest. The second area contained in Section 18, lies adjacent to National Forest System lands but involves private surface and coal owned by the U.S. Fuel Company.

The Forest prepared an Environmental Assessment (EA) for the modification of Federal Coal Lease U-13097 on August 4, 1983, which covers the 160 acres discussed above. Enclosed is a copy of this EA. The EA outlines our concerns regarding mining of this area. The New Lands Application adequately addresses the Forest Service concerns identified in the EA and the stipulations contained in Appendix B.

Two seam longwall mining in Section 18, as proposed, will undoubtedly cause significant subsidence under the North Fork of the Right Fork of Miller Creek and the canyon escarpment. As discussed in the New Lands Application, mining and subsidence may cause failure of the escarpment and significant effects to the area hydrology and the eagle nests. Any loss of water or decrease in water quality downstream from the mined area could be a concern.

The Manti-LaSal National Forest is directly concerned with possible adverse effects to resources on adjacent National Forest System lands to the north and east. Figures 38 and 39, which display the predicted subsidence, show that subsidence may extend to the north onto National Forest System lands in Section 7 (Federal Coal Lease SL-031286). Special stipulation No. 13 in Section 31 of lease SL-031286 states:

"Underground mining operations shall be conducted in such a manner as to prevent surface subsidence that would (1) cause the creation of hazardous conditions such as potential escarpment failure and landslides, (2) cause damage to surface structures and improvements, and (3) damage or alter the flow of perennial streams."

Even though the subsidence on adjacent Federal lands is predicted to be minor by PMC, we are concerned that subsidence could impact the stream, damage the fence along the section line, and alter the disposition of the coal resource in this lease area. The Bureau of Land Management needs to be contacted in this regard. The Bureau of Land Management must evaluate the accuracy of the subsidence data presented in the New Land Application and M&RP and issue an opinion as to whether or not subsidence will be consistent with Stipulation No. 13.

Forest Service consent regarding the proposal will be contingent upon the determinations of the Technical Analysis/Environmental Assessment and Bureau of Land Management's opinion regarding potential subsidence in Section 7. Forest Service concerns must be adequately addressed in these documents. Please send a copy of the draft TA/EA for review and comment.

Comments regarding the text of the New Lands Application are as follows:

1. Pg. 784-81

Although mains will be extended beneath Gentry Ridge starting in 1988, longwall mining ... will not begin until 1991 ....

Map 6 shows that construction of the rock tunnel will not begin until October 1991. This discrepancy needs to be corrected.

2. Pg. 784-145a

If monitoring reveals surface cracks which divert stream flow, PMC will seal the cracks in the stream channel with bentonite or other environmentally safe materials to effectively prevent water loss.

Sealing the cracks with bentonite or concrete may be effective for a short term, however, it is very doubtful that this method will be effective in preventing the loss of water in the stream over the long term after the mine is abandoned.

If you have any questions, please contact us at the Forest Supervisor's Office in Price.

Sincerely,



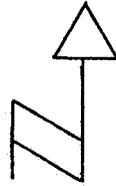
for  
A. J. FRANSEN  
Acting Forest Supervisor

Enclosure

FIGURE 38

Section 18, T 15 S, R 8 E.

SUBSIDENCE PREDICTION - MINING WATTIS SEAM



SCALE: 1"=1000'

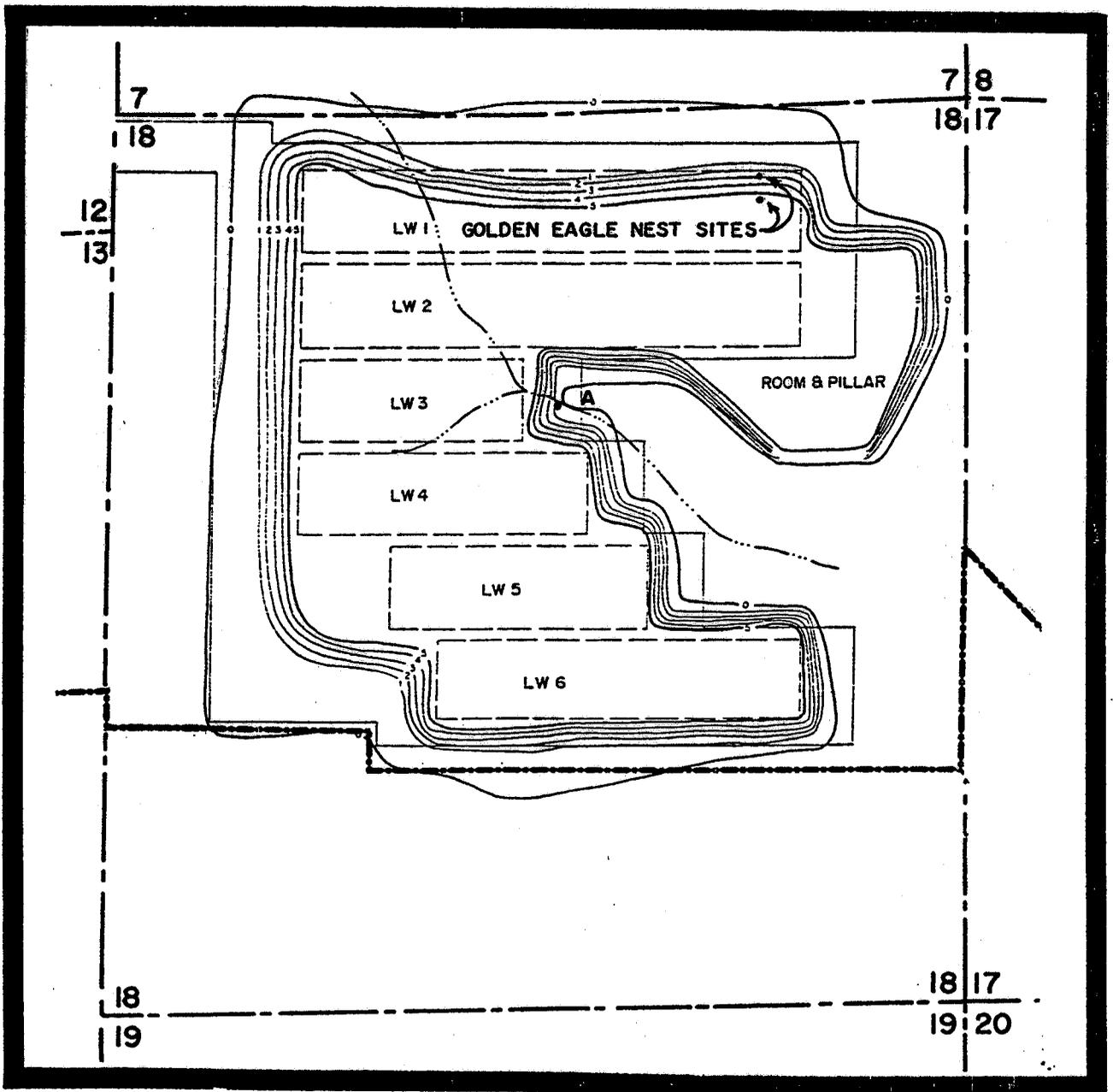
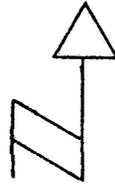


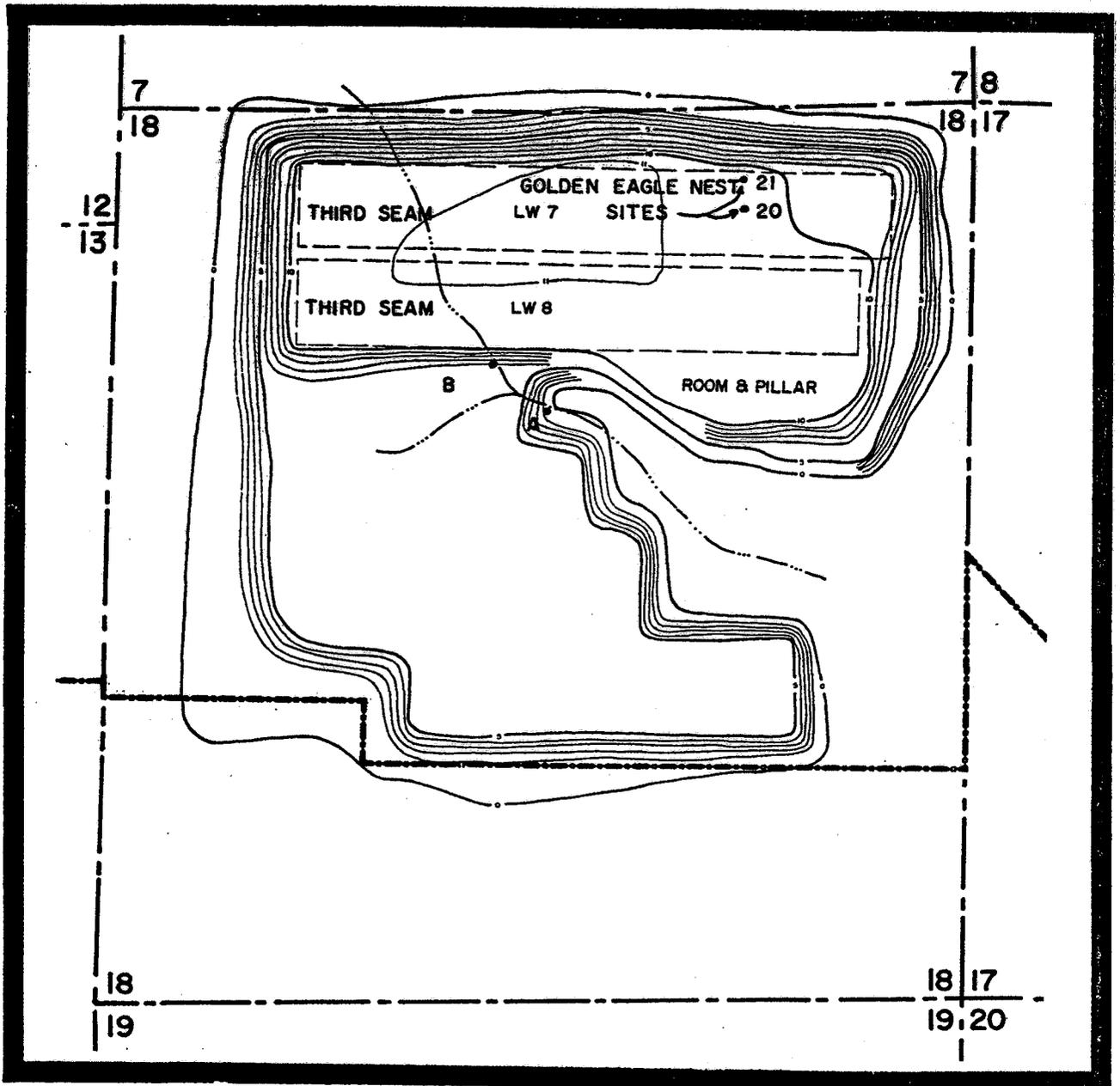
FIGURE 39

Section 18, T 15 S, R 8 E.

SUBSIDENCE PREDICTION - MINING WATTIS AND THIRD SEAMS



SCALE: 1"=1000'



DECISION NOTICE  
AND  
FINDING OF NO SIGNIFICANT IMPACT

MODIFICATION OF FEDERAL COAL LEASE U-13097  
PLATEAU MINING CO.

MANTI-LASAL NATIONAL FOREST  
EMERY COUNTY, UTAH

Plateau Mining Co. (a subsidiary of Getty Mineral Resources Co.) has submitted an application to modify their Federal Coal Lease No. U-13097, under the provisions of 43 CFR 3432. Plateau has proposed the modification in order to gain access to Lease U-13097 from existing workings in Lease SL-031286. Both leases are included in the Star Point Mining Unit which is currently under development, by Plateau, under the authority of a U.S.D.I., Office of Surface Mining permit approved January 21, 1982. The two leases are in contact only at a common corner; therefore, some means of obtaining underground access to the subject lease, from outside the current lease area, will be required. The proposed modification will provide a means of access. The area under application is located within the Manti-LaSal National Forest and wholly underlies National Forest System lands. Federal coal leasing regulations (43 CFR 3425.3(6) and 43 CFR 3400.3-1) require consent from the responsible U.S.D.A official prior to modification of any coal leases involving lands in the National Forest System.

The Manti-LaSal National Forest has conducted an environmental review of the proposed lease modification and an environmental assessment has been prepared. Two alternatives were considered: The "No Action" alternative, disapproval of the modification application; and the "Proposed Action", modification of Lease U-13097 subject to Forest Service management requirements. As discussed in the environmental assessment, the No Action alternative was not considered to be viable. Based on the results of the environmental assessment, the Forest Service will consent to the modification of Lease U-13097 subject to the management requirements (stipulations) for Alternative Two as specified in the environmental assessment.

Pursuant to the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969, a determination has been made, through the environmental assessment process, that the proposed lease modification will not create any significant impacts to the human environment. An environmental statement, therefore, will not be required. This determination was based on consideration of a number of factors that are discussed in greater detail in the environmental assessment. The primary considerations are as follows:

1. Modification of Federal Coal Lease U-13097 would not be a major Federal action.
2. Modification of the subject lease would be consistent with the applicable management guidelines and directives specified in the Manti-LaSal National Forest, Ferron-Price Land Management Plan.
3. The proposed lease modification will provide Plateau Mining Co. with underground access to their existing Lease No. U-13097 which is currently undeveloped and not accessible from their existing mine workings.
4. Coal leasing, exploration and development is and historically has been an integral part of the local economy and lifestyle. There has not

been any identified public opposition to the proposed action.

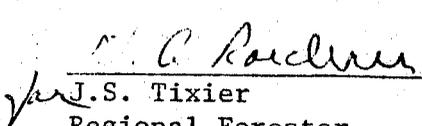
5. The lease modification area has been determined to be suitable for mining according to the provisions of the Federal Lands Unsuitability Criteria (43 CFR 3461).
6. Modification of Lease U-13097 will not adversely affect any identified prime range, farm or timber lands; wetlands or flood plains; alluvial valley floors; cultural or historical resources; threatened or endangered plant and animal species; or, wilderness or RARE II proposed wilderness or further planning areas.

Implementation of this action may take place immediately upon approval. This decision is subject to administrative review (appeal) under the provisions of 36 CFR 211.18. Copies of the environmental assessment and other pertinent documents are on file and available for review at the following locations:

Manti-LaSal National Forest  
Supervisor's Office  
599 W. Price River Dr.  
Price, Utah 84501

Manti-LaSal National Forest  
Price Ranger District  
10 No. Carbon Ave.  
Price, Utah 84501

Responsible Official:

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
J.S. Tixier  
Regional Forester

8/17/83  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT

MODIFICATION OF FEDERAL COAL LEASE U-13097  
PLATEAU MINING CO.

MANTI-LASAL NATIONAL FOREST  
EMERY COUNTY, UTAH

Responsible Official: J.S. Tixier  
Regional Forester  
USDA Forest Service  
Intermountain Region  
Ogden, Utah

For Further Information Contact: Ira W. Hatch  
District Ranger  
Price Ranger District  
Manti-LaSal National Forest  
10 North Carbon Avenue #2  
Price, Utah 84501

Prepared by: Dwain E. McGarry, Geologist

Approval Recommended by:

Ira W. Hatch  
District Ranger

Date:

7/28/83

Approved by:

Leslie Chamberlain  
Forest Supervisor

Date:

8/4/83

## I. INTRODUCTION

### A. Purpose and Need for Action

On July 26, 1982, Plateau Mining Company filed an application with the Bureau of Land Management (BLM) to modify their Federal coal lease No. U-13097. The proposed lease modification would permit Plateau Mining Company to develop underground access to lease U-13097 from existing workings in their Federal coal lease No. SL-031286. These leases share a common corner but are not in contact at any other part. Underground access to lease U-13097 from the remainder of Plateau's Star Point property will require an additional parcel of coal that is adjacent to both leases. The proposed modification will provide a suitable parcel for this purpose. In addition, the modification tract is situated within a narrow graben and is isolated by faulting from reserves in lease SL-031286 and unleased coal reserves to the west. The proposed modification would provide access to the graben area and may permit recovery of an unknown quantity of mineable reserves present in the tract.

Current Federal coal management regulations set forth in 43 CFR 3400 specify that modification of an existing coal lease must serve the interests of the United States Government. The Minerals Management Service, District Mining Supervisor, has determined for a variety of reasons that the proposed lease modification will be in the best interest of the U.S. Government. An official memorandum documenting this recommendation has been forwarded to the BLM Utah State Office.

The Federal regulations also require consent from the USDA Forest Service, along with any specific recommendations for surface management requirements, for approval of new leases or lease modifications underlying National Forest System lands. The lands under consideration in Plateau's application are National Forest System lands within the Manti-LaSal National Forest. The Forest Service is, therefore, required to prepare an environmental assessment to evaluate the proposed lease modification and develop appropriate management requirements for incorporation into the terms of the modified lease, should it be approved. A Forest Service Decision Notice will also be prepared, on the basis of this environmental assessment, to document the decision regarding Forest Service consent to approval of the proposed modification. Copies of the District Mining Supervisor's Office memorandum, the April 6, 1983 memorandum from the BLM State Director requesting Forest Service consent, and other pertinent correspondence are attached as Appendix A.

#### 1. Authorizing Actions

Leasing and development will be under the authority of the following authorizing actions: The Mineral Leasing Act of February 25, 1920, as amended; the Federal Land Policy and Management Act (FLPMA) of 1976; the Surface Mining Control and Reclamation Act (SMCRA) of 1977; the Multiple Minerals Development Act of August 13, 1954; the Department of Energy Organization Act of August 4, 1977; the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) of 1969; the Federal Coal

Leasing Amendments Act of 1976, as amended; the Act of October 30, 1978 that further amended the Mineral Leasing Act of 1920; and regulations: Title 43 CFR Subpart 3041, Part 3400, Part 2800 and Title 30 Part 211, Part 700; and the Manti-LaSal National Forest, Ferron-Price Land Management Plan and Environmental Statement, 1979.

2. Relationship to Land-Use Planning and Unsuitability Criteria

Federal Coal Lease U-13097 and the proposed modification tract are located within Management Unit A-2, the Gentry Mountain Unit, of the Ferron-Price Planning Unit. The 1979 "Land Management Plan: Ferron-Price Planning Unit, Manti-LaSal National Forest" establishes general management guidelines for the entire planning unit and specific guidelines and directives pertaining to the the individual management units. The land management plan identifies the existing coal resources within this unit and acknowledges the need to accommodate coal development activities in this area that are compatible with other resource values. Additional planning efforts are underway with the Manti-LaSal National Forest, Forest Plan. This document is scheduled for completion in the latter part of 1983. Little change from the current direction for this area is anticipated due to the substantial mineral values present and prior commitments to coal development.

As required by the Surface Mining Control and Reclamation Act of 1977, and subsequent Federal regulations, the Federal Lands Unsuitability Criteria (43 CFR 3461.1) were applied to Area "A" (the "Coal Lands") of the Ferron-Price Planning Unit during the Environmental Statement and Land Management Planning process. A review of the Unsuitability Criteria and their application to the Ferron-Price Planning Unit indicates that none of the criteria are applicable to the proposed lease modification tract; therefore, the tract can be considered suitable for mining.

B. Issues, Concerns and Opportunities

1. U.S. Fuel Co.'s Federal Lease No. U-026583-058261 is adjacent to lease U-13097 and shares a common corner with the proposed Castle Valley Ridge tract. The proposed lease modification is located in a position that would block potential access to the Castle Valley Ridge tract from U.S. Fuel's lease; therefore, a possible public issue could arise concerning the effects of the lease modification on competitive bidding for the Castle Valley Ridge tract.
2. The Forest Service ID Team(s) have identified a concern for possible subsidence-caused impacts to groundwater and surface water resources.

C. Negative Declaration

Approval of the proposed lease modification and subsequent development of the tract will not adversely affect any identified prime range, farm or timber lands; wet lands; alluvial valley floors; cultural or historical resources; or, threatened or endangered plant and animal species. Lands on the Manti-LaSal National Forest were considered for wilderness classification during preparation of the Ferron-Price Land Management Plan. A portion of the subject lease and proposed modification area was considered at that time and found to be lacking in suitable characteristics for inclusion in the National Wilderness Preservation System. Although there are no designated floodplains on the Manti-LaSal National Forest, by definition (FSM 2527 ID No. 10) all ephemeral, intermittent and perennial stream channels include floodplains. Proper management requirements and design features incorporated into future activities can mitigate potential impacts to floodplains or downstream resource values to acceptable levels within the guidelines specified by FSM 2527 and Executive Order 11988.

D. History, Background and Other Information

Plateau Mining Co. has proposed the modification to lease U-13097 for the primary purpose of obtaining access to this lease from existing workings in lease SL-031286. In addition, the proposed modification may permit development of coal reserves contained in a narrow north-south trending graben located west of lease SL-031286. Development activities in the modification area will also facilitate a more thorough examination of the graben structure for future development planning and possible access to the proposed Castle Valley Ridge lease tract.

In the event that Plateau (or its parent company, Getty Mineral Resources Co.) obtains the Castle Valley Ridge lease tract, the proposed modification would provide a convenient avenue for access to the coal reserves within this tract. Even though the modification area is inside the perimeter of the proposed Castle Valley Ridge lease, the area is physically isolated from the remainder of the tract by the graben structure. Access to the modification area from the main body of the Castle Valley Ridge tract would require construction of rock slopes across the faulted zone at considerable expense. The costs incurred, for access by this means, could not be justified by the small quantity of potential mineable reserves, particularly considering the uncertainty of mining conditions within the graben. The expense of rock tunnelling from the existing workings would be justifiable to Plateau, however, in order to accommodate development of lease U-13097 and possible future development of the Castle Valley Ridge tract.

U.S. Fuel Co. holds a Federal Lease No. U-026583-058261, that is adjacent to the eastern edge of lease U-13097 and joins the southeast corner of the proposed Castle Valley Ridge tract. The proposed modification would include the southeast corner of this tract and, if obtained by Plateau, the lease modification would appear to block

future access from U.S. Fuel's lease.

According to information supplied by the MMS (former U.S.G.S. Conservation Division), however, it is not possible for U.S. Fuel Co. to reach the Castle Valley Ridge tract because of retreat mining in the northwest corner of lease U-026583-058261. Consequently, approval of Plateau's lease modification would have no bearing on U.S. Fuel's competitive interest in the Castle Valley Ridge tract.

All development in lease U-13097 and the proposed modification, as well as any future development in the Castle Valley Ridge tract by Plateau, will be continuing phases in development of the Star Point Mines. Mining has occurred within and adjacent to the Star Point Mining Unit for many years, with the earliest development occurring in 1916-17. At the present time, the Star Point Mining Unit consists of several Federal coal leases, including lease U-13097, and a large parcel of fee coal.

Plateau Mining Company (an independent company at the time) purchased the Star Point properties in 1968 with the primary intention of salvaging equipment, materials and a small amount of coal. Additional mineable reserves were subsequently identified and Plateau began re-conditioning the earlier mine workings for further development. Re-development and expansion of the property and operations have continued since that time. In 1980 Getty Mineral Resources Co. purchased Plateau (then a United Nuclear Corp. subsidiary) and submitted a comprehensive Mining and Reclamation Plan for the Star Point Mines in compliance with the contemporary (pre-1982) Federal coal management regulations. The USDI Office of Surface Mining (OSM) approved the Star Point Mine Plan on January 21, 1982.

Three coal seams, the Hiawatha, Third and Wattis seams, occur in mineable thicknesses across the Star Point Mining Unit. Information submitted by Plateau in conjunction with their application indicates that the Wattis seam, and possibly the Hiawatha, may occur in mineable thicknesses within the proposed modification to lease U-13097. The Third seam apparently does not attain a mineable thickness in this area. Only the Wattis seam is proposed for possible development within the modification tract. Plateau has conducted several drilling programs in the vicinity of the proposed modification; however, due to faulting and related structural problems in the graben area, the information obtained is not sufficient for an accurate determination of the quantity of mineable reserves. In addition, because of these structural problems, the feasibility of any mining at all within the graben is uncertain at best. As a result, it is possible that the coal reserves within the graben are not recoverable, even though coal is present in mineable thicknesses.

Coal quality data obtained from throughout the Star Point Mining Unit classifies the Wattis seam coal as a low-sulfur, b-rank bituminous coal with an average approximate energy content of 13,477 BTU/lb. These qualities are typical of Wasatch Plateau coals and are suitable for electricity production, space heating, synthetics and a variety of other purposes. Coal produced from the Star Point Mines is currently used for steam-generation of electricity.

## II. ALTERNATIVES

### A. Alternative One - No Action

Consideration of the "No Action" alternative is required by Section 1502.14(d) of the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969 (NEPA) and by CEQ Guidelines as specified in the Federal Register Nov. 28, 1978. The "No Action" alternative, in this case, is disapproval of Plateau's application for modification of lease U-13097. Adoption of the "No Action" alternative would require Plateau Mining Co. to either pursue other access to Lease U-13097 or to forego development of the lease. There are alternative means of providing access to lease U-13097, including issuance of a right-of-way to Plateau to cross unleased coal adjacent to the lease, or offering the adjacent portion of the proposed Castle Valley Ridge tract as a separate lease. These are discussed by the District Mining Supervisor's memorandum included in Appendix A. Any alternative action that would provide Plateau with underground access to the subject lease would also provide Plateau with the rights to develop this access from other existing workings in approximately the same location as the proposed modification. The environmental implications of development of underground access to the subject lease are essentially identical, regardless of the particular instrument chosen to convey the necessary development rights to Plateau Mining Co. There are not sufficient identified environmental effects to justify the complete denial of access to lease U-13097 and, since the potential impacts of underground access are the same, there is no environmental advantage to any particular method of approving this access.

### B. Alternative Two - Proposed Action

#### 1. Description and Location

The proposed action is approval of the modification to lease U-13097, as proposed by Plateau, with special stipulations attached to the modified lease to insure effective mitigation of any impacts to National Forest resources. Under this alternative the lease modification would be approved, adding a 160 acre tract to Plateau's Federal coal lease U-13097. The modification tract

and, eventually, the remainder of lease U-13097 would be developed as a continuation of the current Star Point Mine development. Plateau proposes to enter and cross the lease modification and graben area with two rock tunnels driven to the west from the existing operations in lease SL-031286. Once the rock tunnels encounter mineable coal (after an estimated 2750 foot distance) normal mine development will resume with five entries driven westward, then southward, for access to lease U-13097. On the west side of the graben another system of entries would also be driven to the north and west to develop whatever mineable reserves may be present in the remainder of the modification tract. Mining would be by continuous miner room and pillar methods. The modified lease would be developed by the present work force and, presumably, at the normal rates of production for the entire Star Point Mining Unit. Although the modification tract itself would be mined out within a relatively short time, mining would continue for many years in lease U-13097 and in the Castle Valley Ridge tract, if obtained by Plateau (Getty). No breakouts or surface facilities are proposed for the modification tract. Plateau's application and the Star Point Mining and Reclamation Plan describe the mining operations in greater detail.

The proposed modification to lease U-13097 is located on Gentry Ridge near the northern end of Gentry Mountain, in Emery County, Utah. A legal description of the proposed 160 acre lease modification is as follows:

~~SE $\frac{1}{4}$ SE $\frac{1}{4}$~~  Sec. 11; NE $\frac{1}{4}$ NE $\frac{1}{4}$ , S $\frac{1}{2}$ NE $\frac{1}{4}$  Sec. 14; T15S, R7E, SLM.

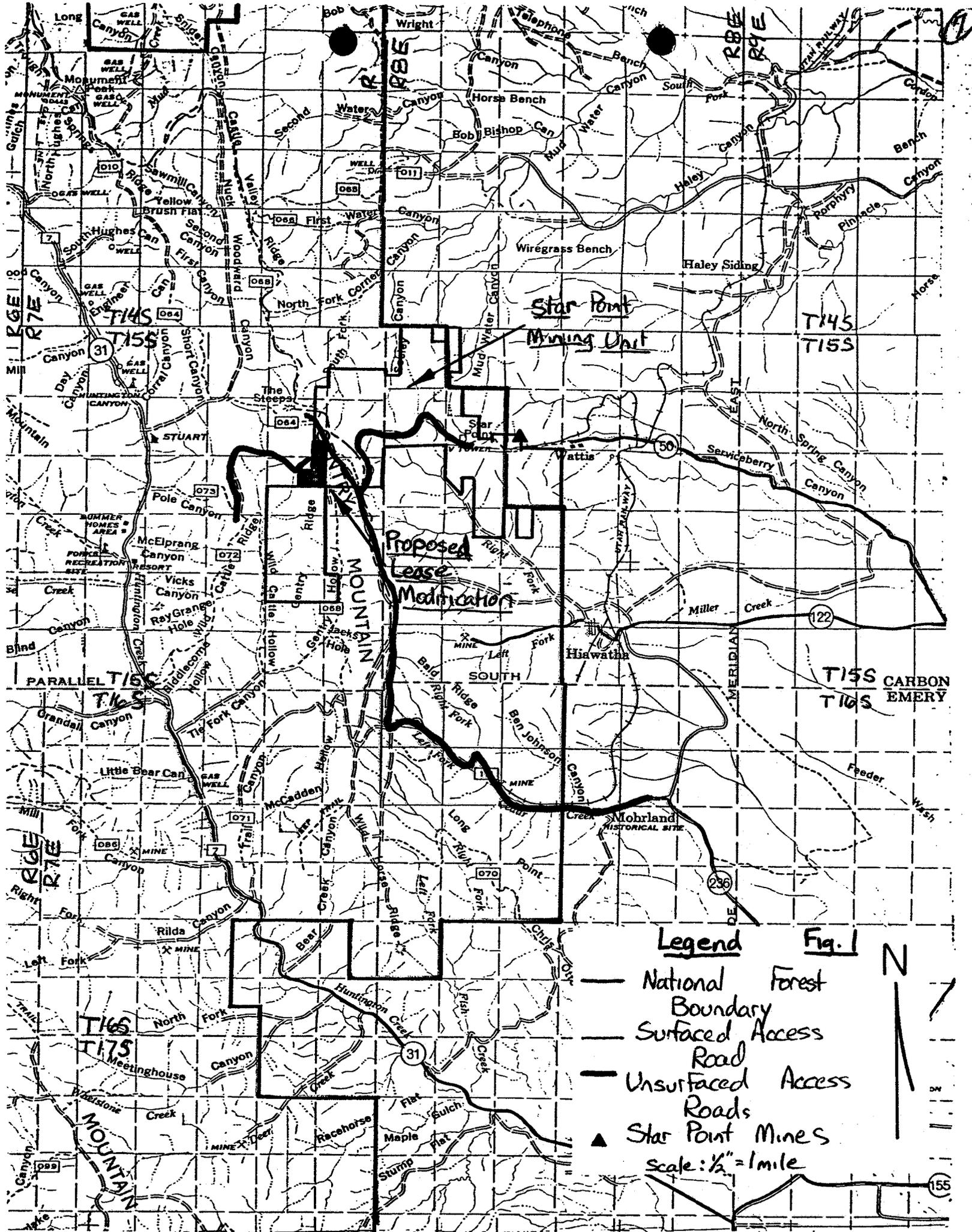
Figure One (p. 7) shows the lease modification area and general surrounding geographic and cultural features. Figure Two (p. 8) shows the lease modification, topography, adjacent parts of the Star Point Mining Unit and other more detailed features of the area.

## 2. Management Requirements

Federal Coal Lease U-13097, as modified, will contain the special coal lease surface protection stipulations to insure compliance with Forest Service management requirements. A copy of the special lease stipulations is attached as Appendix B.

### III. DESCRIPTION OF EXISTING ENVIRONMENT-AFFECTED ENVIRONMENT

The existing and affected environment of Lease U-13097 and the proposed lease modification, Star Point Mining Unit, and surrounding areas is described in general in the following documents: "Final Environmental Statement: Development of Coal Resources in Central Utah"; "Land Management Plan: Ferron-Price Planning Unit, Manti-LaSal National Forest"; "Mining and Reclamation Plan: Star Point Mines"; and other environmental documents pertaining to coal leasing and development in this area. More specific information is presented in the "Environmental Assessment: Castle Valley Ridge Exploration License, Getty Mining Co." and numerous other environ-



Star Point  
Mining Unit

Proposed  
Lease  
Modification

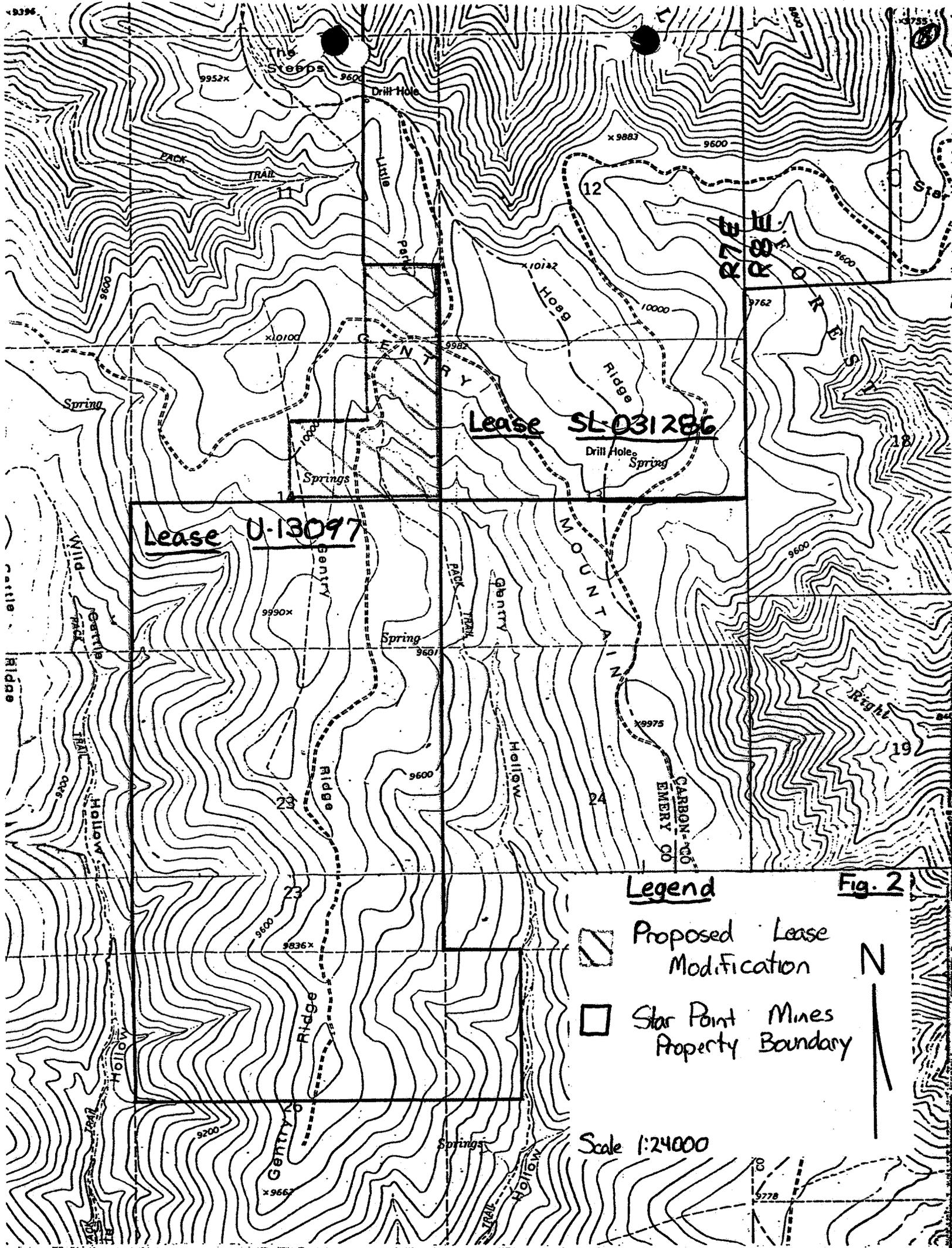
CARBONATE  
MOUNTAIN

T145  
T155

T155  
T165 CARBON  
EMERY

N

155



Lease U-13097

Lease SL-031286

Legend

Fig. 2

-  Proposed Lease Modification
-  Star Point Mines Property Boundary

Scale 1:24000



mental assessments prepared for Plateau/Getty coal exploration, leasing and mining-related activities.

#### A. Hydrology and Water Resources

Lease U-13097 and the modification area are situated in the headwaters of Gentry Hollow, Wild Cattle Hollow and an unnamed tributary to Nuck Woodward Canyon. Gentry Hollow and Wild Cattle Hollow are tributaries to Tie Fork Creek which enters Huntington Creek several miles downstream from the lease area. Nuck Woodward Canyon is a direct tributary to Huntington Creek. There are no perennial streams within the lease or modification area. As a part of the watershed, however, these areas will contribute, from storm runoff and snowmelt, to perennial flows at lower elevations. Numerous intermittent and ephemeral drainages are present throughout the lease area. These streams typically have low flow volumes and small drainage areas; their flow characteristics have not been directly measured.

The Huntington Creek watershed provides municipal water to Huntington City, the communities of Cleveland, Lawrence and Elmo, and a number of outlying residents served by the North Emery Water Users Association. The Huntington Cleveland Irrigation Co. also provides irrigation water from Huntington Creek to numerous residents in these areas. There are no figures indicating even approximate proportional contributions to the municipal vs. irrigation water supplies from the lease area. Considering the drainages involved, however, it may be reasonable to project that the watershed within the lease area provides significant contributions for both major water uses. Surface waters in the lease area are also utilized by grazing stock and wildlife.

Precipitation estimates from the Hydrologic Atlas of Utah (Jeppson, et al 1968) for nearby areas of Gentry Mountain and Castle Valley Ridge indicate that the lease area may receive an average 20 to 25 inches of precipitation annually. Approximately 30% of the average annual precipitation occurs during the summer months, generally as brief, high-intensity thunderstorms. Depending upon their severity, these storms are capable of generating substantial erosion in disturbed or unvegetated areas.

Hydrologic investigations conducted in conjunction with the Star Point Mines and other nearby mining operations indicate that, in this part of the Wasatch Plateau, groundwaters tend to occur in two essentially distinct "regimes". There is apparently an extensive "regional" aquifer associated with the Star Point Sandstone, which underlies the lowest mineable coal seam. In addition, in the overlying formations there are numerous "perched" aquifers associated with isolated lenticular sandstone bodies enclosed by impermeable shales. Aquifers of this type are particularly common within the coal-bearing Blackhawk Formation. These groundwater systems are generally limited in extent and provide only limited yields. Faults and fractures in the area can also act as conduits and/or reservoirs for groundwater depending upon the magnitude of the structures and their position

within the stratigraphic column. There is an apparent tendency for fractures within the Blackhawk Formation to become sealed with expanded clays derived from decomposed shales. As a result, fractures restricted to this formation may not transmit large quantities of groundwater flow and storage. There is a group of springs in the northern part of the lease area that demonstrates a preferred spatial relationship to the graben that exists along the eastern margin of the lease and proposed modification tract. These springs are presumably related to faulting within this structure. Seeps and springs occurring in other parts of the lease area may be derived from "perched" aquifers in the Blackhawk and overlying formation.

#### IV. ENVIRONMENTAL CONSEQUENCES-ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACTS

##### A. Alternative One - No Action

##### 1. Short-term and Residual Impacts

Disapproval of the proposed lease modification would not create any short-term impacts to Forest resources. Mining would proceed in the adjacent Star Point Property according to current plans and Plateau would, presumably, initiate alternative actions to secure access to their lease U-13097. Short-term losses of revenues from rentals and production royalties would occur as a result of the delays in development of the lease. Plateau would almost certainly be granted access to their lease by an alternate means and the revenue losses would be restored. As a result of the ultimate development of the subject lease, the Forest resources would eventually incur the same residual impacts, that would result from the proposed action (approval of the lease modification).

##### 2. Short-term and Long-term Productivity

The short-term productivity of Forest resources would be unaffected by disapproval of the proposed lease modification. Short-term production of coal resources from the modified lease area would be delayed until Plateau Mining Company could obtain an alternate authorization for access to the property. Since development of the modified lease would probably occur at some future time, long-term resource productivity would be affected to the same extent that it would be by approval of the modification.

##### 3. Irreversible, and Irretrievable Commitments

Disapproval of the proposed modification would probably only delay the development of lease U-13097 until Plateau could obtain other access to the lease. Since development would still occur, however, Forest and other resources would be subject to the irreversible and irretrievable commitments created by development of the subject lease. These commitments are essentially identical to those that would result from approval of the modification. Without the modification, it is possible that access to the lease itself could be developed from a somewhat different location. In this event the mineable reserves that may exist within the

modification tract could be irreversibly and irretrievably committed to non-use.

B. Alternative Two - Proposed Action

1. Short-term and Residual Impacts

The proposed action would approve the proposed modification with special surface protection stipulations attached to the modified lease. Approval of the modification would permit development of the modification and lease area. Both short-term and residual impacts to Forest resources can be expected to result from development of this property. No surface developments are necessary or proposed for the modification area and none have been proposed to date for the subject lease. The proposed action, therefore, will not create any impacts from surface construction or use. Any future proposals for surface developments on the modified lease would be evaluated as separate actions. There may be some impacts to Forest resources incidental to mining and post-mining subsidence. Any impacts to groundwater occurrence and distribution caused by mining or subsidence could be both short-term and residual. Alterations in the development and use of Forest resources caused by changes in groundwater occurrence would probably be residual effects. Compliance with the special lease stipulations, which reflect Forest Service management requirements (see Sec II B2) will eliminate or mitigate any potential impacts to the maximum extent feasible.

2. Short-term and Long-term Productivity

Approval of the lease modification and subsequent development of the modified lease will have some short-term and long-term effects on resource productivity. The productivity of Forest resources could be affected by changes in groundwater supplies resulting from subsidence or mining. Any such effects on productivity would probably be long-term in nature. Coal resources will be produced from the modified lease over the short and long-term. Development of these reserves will substantially increase the long-term productivity of the entire Star Point Mining Unit.

3. Irreversible and Irretrievable Commitments

Modification and development of coal lease No.U13097 will not irreversible or irretrievably commit any Forest resources. Uses and commitments of these resources will continue along the present trends until future influences cause changes in the uses and commitments. Development of the modified lease will irreversibly and irretrievably commit any coal that is mined to the purpose for which it is eventually used, in this case presumably steam generation of electricity. Any coal that remains in place after the lease is mined will be, for all practical purposes, committed to non-use. This commitment will probably be irreversible and

irretrievable. Any resources, labor and materials that are utilized for development of the modified lease will be irreversibly and irretrievably committed to that use.

V. CONSULTATION AND COORDINATION

A. Forest Service ID Team

The preliminary scoping process for this environmental assessment identified substantial existing environmental and decision-related data that pertains to the emergency lease and surrounding areas. The existing data was determined to be sufficient to eliminate the need for assembly of a formal ID Team.

B. Outside Agency Contacts

Sid Vogelpohl, Geologist, Price Area Office, BLM

C. Public Contacts

Public comments have not been received or expressed in conjunction with the proposed modification. The project scoping process did not identify any existing or anticipated public issues.

D. Tiering Documents and References

1. Getty Mining Co., 1981, "Mining and Reclamation Plan: Star Point Mines."
2. USDA, Forest Service, 1981, "Environmental Assessment: Castle Valley Ridge Exploration License No. U-47194, Getty Mining Co."
3. \_\_\_\_\_, 1979, "Land Management Plan: Ferron-Price Planning Unit, Manti-LaSal National Forest".
4. USDI Geological Survey, 1979, "Final Environmental Statement: Development of Coal Resources in Central Utah."

VI. LIST OF APPENDICES

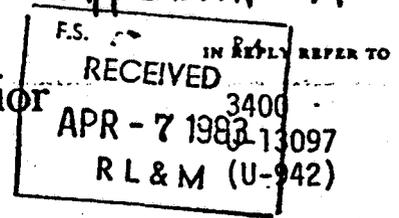
A. Pertinent Correspondence

B. Special Lease Stipulations



# United States Department of the Interior

BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT  
UTAH STATE OFFICE  
136 E. SOUTH TEMPLE  
SALT LAKE CITY, UTAH 84111



APR 6 1983

Mr. William Johnson  
Director, Minerals Management  
Forest Service  
324 - 25th Street  
Ogden, Utah 84401

Dear Bill:

On July 26, 1982, Plateau Mining Company filed an application for lease modification of coal lease U-13097 to include the following-described land in Carbon County, Utah:

T. 15 S., R. 7 E., SLM, Utah  
Sec. 11, SE $\frac{1}{2}$ SE $\frac{1}{2}$ ;  
Sec. 14, NE $\frac{1}{2}$ NE $\frac{1}{2}$ , S $\frac{1}{2}$ NE $\frac{1}{2}$ .

Containing 160.00 acres

All of these lands are within the boundaries of the Manti La-Sal National Forest. Pursuant to 43 CFR 3432.3(c) and 43 CFR 3425.3(b), an environmental assessment must be completed.

A report has been received from the Office of the District Mining Supervisor recommending approval of the application since the most logical access would be through the existing mine. Therefore, we would appreciate a timely response from your office as Plateau Mining Company has reached the boundary of the tract or is approaching it.

Your report should include your consent to lease and recommendations concerning the environmental assessment as well as stipulations which should be included in the proposed modified lease. We will also need a statement pertaining to the status of the current land use plan for the area and its conformance to the requirements contained in 43 CFR 3420.1-5 and 43 CFR 3425.2.

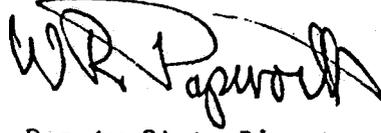
The regulations also require that a public meeting be held concerning the environmental assessment. We would like to coordinate with the Forest Service on a joint public meeting when you feel that the preparation of the environmental assessment

FILE COPY

report is sufficiently advanced to schedule the public meeting. The Moab District Office would be BLM's contact on this matter.

We have enclosed a copy of the application and the report from the District Mining Supervisor for your information.

Sincerely,



Deputy State Director,  
Operations

Enclosures (2)

1- Copy of Application

2- District Mining Supervisor's Report



*Bill*

United States Department of the Interior

BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT  
UTAH STATE OFFICE  
136 E. SOUTH TEMPLE  
SALT LAKE CITY, UTAH 84111

FOREST SERVICE  
MANTI-LASAL NATIONAL FOREST  
PRICE R. D.

MAY - 4 1983 IN REPLY REFER TO 8400

ACTION	TO	INFO	U-13097
	DFR		(U-942)
	<i>Walt</i>		
	<i>Quinn</i>		
	<i>Jim</i>	F.S.	R-4
			RECEIVED
			APR 25 1983
	CLERK		RL & M
PROMISE CARD FOR			

APR 22 1983

Mr. William Johnson  
Director, Minerals Management  
Forest Service  
324-25th Street  
Ogden, UT 84401

Dear Bill:

On April 6, 1983 our office forwarded a request for completion of an environmental assessment report by the Forest Service concerning coal lease modification application U-13097.

In reviewing this correspondence it has been noted that a request for a public meeting on the environmental assessment was made in error. Pursuant to the current regulation there is no requirement that a public meeting be held under a modification application. Therefore please disregard the request for a joint public meeting.

Sincerely,

Deputy State Director,  
Operations

CC D-3

RECEIVED  
MANTI-LASAL N.E.

*W.R. Spaworth*

*MLP*

*Sam H. AH*



# United States Department of the Interior

U-13097

## MINERALS MANAGEMENT SERVICE CENTRAL REGION

Office of the District Mining Supervisor  
2040 Administration Building  
1745 West 1700 South  
Salt Lake City, Utah 84104

IN REPLY  
REFER TO

November 24, 1982

### Memorandum

To: Chief, Minerals Section, Bureau of Land Management  
From: District Mining Supervisor  
Subject: Lease Modification Application U-13097

You have requested our recommendations concerning Federal coal lease modification application U-13097 filed by Plateau Mining Company on July 26, 1982. The lands applied for are described as follows:

T. 15 S., R. 7 E., SLM, Utah

sec. 11, SE $\frac{1}{4}$ SE $\frac{1}{4}$ ;  
sec. 14, NE $\frac{1}{4}$ NE $\frac{1}{4}$ , S $\frac{1}{2}$ NE $\frac{1}{4}$ .

160  
Containing 120 acres.

A geologic report has been prepared for the lands covered by application U-13097. This report is in our files and is available for your review.

The applied for land is located, for the most part, within the projected limits of a north-south trending fault graben. The limits of the graben are not well defined but drill hole information, surface mapping, and geophysical data have shown that it extends north-south for several miles and could be as much as 2,000 feet wide. Mining to the north on lease modification SL-031286 has encountered the large fault, which forms the eastern boundary of the graben, near where it had been projected to exist. The vertical displacement of the graben boundary faults has not been determined but may be as much as 150 feet in the area of the applied for lands.

Most of the SE $\frac{1}{4}$ NE $\frac{1}{4}$ , sec. 14, is west of the projected western boundary of the graben fault and is adjacent to unleased Federal land. All of the applied for lands are within the Castle Valley Ridge proposed lease tract.

We have determined that:

1. At present there is no competitive interest in the applied for lands. When the Castle Valley Ridge tract is sold there could be but the applicant will have a distinct bidding advantage because of the favorable access from its existing mine. Plateau could well be the only bidder.

2. The lands could have a potential for development from another operation if the mining conditions within the potentially complex graben are favorable as to permit economic mining. Based on limited existing information, the mining potential within the graben is uncertain.

U. S. Fuel's Federal lease is contiguous with the south boundary of the applied for lands; however, extensive second mining in its lease has destroyed access and prohibits development of these lands or the Castle Valley Ridge tract from U. S. Fuel's operating mine.

3. As indicated in item "2" above, the potential for development by others is uncertain. In addition, disposition of a small area on the southern boundary of the Castle Valley Ridge tract will not materially effect the value and competitive interest in the tract when it is sold.

Modification of the lease as requested will provide access to Plateau's Federal lease U-13097. Access through coal to this lease by Plateau from its existing leases is not now possible. If the modification is rejected, a right-of-way or other authorization must be granted to permit recovery of the coal on lease U-13097. From this standpoint, it is to the advantage of the United States to modify the lease.

Should the modification be rejected, we recommend that the Castle Valley Ridge tract be divided to allow Plateau to bid on access to lease U-13079. A line of forties on the south boundary of the tract could be offered as a separate unit without materially affecting the minability or value of the larger tract and still give Plateau an opportunity to acquire access to U-13097.

*Jackson W. Moffitt*  
Jackson W. Moffitt

STIPULATION 1

The coal contained within the lease area and authorized for mining under this lease shall be extracted only by underground mining methods.

STIPULATION 2

All support facilities, structures, equipment, and similar developments will be removed from the lease area within two years after the final termination of use of such facilities. All disturbed areas and those areas occupied by such facilities will be rehabilitated in accordance with an approved reclamation plan, 30 CFR 211 and the "Surface Mining Control and Reclamation Act of 1977" or approved Utah program as applicable.

STIPULATION 3

(a) Before undertaking any activities that may disturb the surface of the leased lands, the Lessee may be required to conduct a cultural resource intensive field inventory in a manner specified by the Regional Director and the Authorized Officer of the surface managing agency on portions of the mine plan area and adjacent areas, or exploration plan area, that may be adversely affected by lease-related activities and which were not previously inventoried at such a level of intensity. The inventory shall be conducted by a qualified professional cultural resource specialist (i.e., archaeologist, historian, or historical architect, as appropriate), approved by the Authorized Officer of the surface managing agency and a report of the inventory and recommendations for protecting any cultural resources identified shall be submitted to the Regional Director (or the District Mining Supervisor if activities are associated with coal exploration outside an approved mining permit area) and the Authorized Officer of the surface managing agency. The Lessee shall undertake measures, in accordance with instructions from the Regional Director (or the District Mining Supervisor if activities are associated with coal exploration outside an approved mining permit area), to protect cultural resources on the leased land. The Lessee shall not commence the surface disturbing activities until permission to proceed is given by the Regional Director or the District Mining Supervisor as appropriate.

(b) The Lessee shall protect all cultural resource properties within the lease area from lease-related activities until the cultural resource mitigation measures can be implemented as part of an approved mining and reclamation plan or exploration plan.

(c) The cost of conducting the inventory, preparing reports, and carrying out mitigation measures shall be borne by the Lessee.

(d) If cultural resources are discovered during operations under this lease, the Lessee shall immediately bring them to the attention of the Regional Director (or the District Mining Supervisor as appropriate), and the Authorized Officer, Surface Management Agency. The Lessee shall not disturb such resources except as may be subsequently authorized by the Regional Director (or the District Mining Supervisor).

Within two (2) working days of notification, the Regional Director (or the District Mining Supervisor, as appropriate) will evaluate or have evaluated any cultural resources discovered and will determine if any action may be required to protect or preserve such discoveries.

(e) All cultural resources shall remain under the jurisdiction of the United States until ownership is determined under applicable law.

STIPULATION 4

Before undertaking any activities that may disturb the surface or the leased lands, the Lessee shall contact the Regional Director and Authorized Officer of the Surface Management Agency to determine whether the Lessee will be required to conduct a paleontological appraisal of the mine plan and adjacent areas, or exploration plan areas, that may be adversely affected by lease-related activities. If the Regional Director and Authorized Officer, Surface Management Agency, determines that one is necessary, the paleontological appraisal shall be conducted by a qualified paleontologist approved by the Authorized Officer of the surface management agency, using the published literature and, where appropriate, field appraisals for determining the possible existence of fossils of scientific significance. A report of the appraisal and recommendations for protecting any fossils of significant scientific interest on the leased lands so identified shall be submitted to and approved by the Regional Director and the Authorized Officer, Surface Management Agency. When necessary to protect and/or collect the fossils of significant scientific interest on the leased lands, the Lessee shall undertake the measures provided in the approval of the mining and reclamation plan or exploration plan.

(a) The Lessee shall not knowingly disturb, alter, destroy, or take any fossils of significant scientific interest, and shall protect all such fossils in conformance with the measures included in the approval of the mining and reclamation plan or exploration plan.

(b) The Lessee shall immediately bring any such fossils that might be altered or destroyed by his operation to the attention of the Regional Director or the District Mining Supervisor, as appropriate. Operations may continue as long as the fossil specimen or specimens would not be seriously damaged or destroyed by the activity. The Regional Director or the District Mining Supervisor, as appropriate, shall evaluate or have evaluated such discoveries brought to his attention and, within five (5) working days, shall notify the Lessee what action shall be taken with respect to such discoveries.

(c) All such fossils of significant scientific interest shall remain under the jurisdiction of the United States until ownership is determined under applicable law. Copies of all paleontological resource data generated as a result of the lease term requirements will be provided to the Regional Director or the District Mining Supervisor, as appropriate.

(d) These conditions apply to all such fossils of significant scientific interest discovered within the lease area whether discovered in the overburden, interburden, or coal seam or seams. Fossils of significant scientific interest do not include those fossils commonly encountered during underground mining operations such as ferns and dinosaur tracks. Skeletal remains shall be considered significant.

#### STIPULATION 5

The Lessee shall, prior to entry upon the lease, conduct an intensive field inventory for threatened and endangered plant and/or animal species, bald or golden eagles, or migratory species of high Federal interest on those areas to be disturbed and/or impacted including the access routes to the lease area. The inventory shall be conducted by a qualified specialist(s) approved by the Authorized Officer, Surface Management Agency, and a report of the inventory and recommendation for the protection of these species submitted to and approved by the Authorized Officer, Surface Management Agency, and Regional Director or District Mining Supervisor as appropriate. An acceptable report of any findings shall include the specific location, distribution, and habitat requirements of the species. The Lessee shall protect these species within the lease area from any activities associated with operations conducted under the terms of the lease and shall undertake such protective measures as may be required by the Authorized Officer, Surface Management Agency, and Regional Director or District Mining Supervisor as appropriate.

#### STIPULATION 6

Powerlines used in conjunction with the mining of coal from this lease shall be constructed so as to conform with the publication "Suggested Practices for Raptor Protection on Powerlines" (Edison Electric Institute, 1975). When feasible, powerlines will be located at least 100 yards from public roads.

#### STIPULATION 7

The Lessee shall provide for the suppression and control of fugitive dust on all haul roads, and at coal hauling, transportation, and storage facilities. The migration of road surfacing materials shall be controlled by watering, chemical treatment or hard surfacing. Loss of gravel courses shall be periodically replaced.

#### STIPULATION 8

In order to avoid surface disturbance on steep canyon slopes and the need for surface access, all surface breakouts for ventilation tunnels shall be constructed from inside the mine, except at specific locations approved by the Regional Director with the concurrence of the Authorized Officer, Surface Management Agency and the District Mining Supervisor.

#### STIPULATION 9

Prior to mining, the Lessee shall perform a study to secure adequate baseline data to quantify the existing surface resources on and adjacent to the lease area. The study will be established in consultation with and approved by the Authorized Officer, Surface Management Agency, the Regional Director, and the District Mining Supervisor and shall be adequate to locate, quantify, and demonstrate the inter-relationship of the geology, topography, surface hydrology, vegetation, and wildlife. Baseline data will be established so that future programs of observation can be incorporated at regular intervals for comparison.

#### STIPULATION 10

The Lessee shall establish a monitoring system to locate, measure, and quantify the progressive and final effects of underground mining activities on the topographic surface, underground and surface hydrology, and vegetation. The monitoring system shall utilize techniques which will provide a continuing record of change over time and an analytical method for location and measurement of a sufficient number of points over the lease area. The monitoring shall be an extension of the baseline data and shall be conducted by a method approved by the Regional Director in consultation with and concurrence by the Authorized Officer, Surface Management Agency and District Mining Supervisor.

#### STIPULATION 11

Underground mining operations shall be conducted in such a manner so as to prevent surface subsidence that would: (1) cause the creation of hazardous conditions such as potential escarpment failure and landslides, (2) cause damage to surface structures, and improvements, and (3) damage or alter the flow of perennial streams. The Lessee in his mining plan shall provide specific measures for the protection of escarpments. The Regional Director in consultation with and concurrence of the District Mining Supervisor and Authorized Officer, Surface Management Agency, shall approve such measures and may prescribe any additional measures to be employed such as mining methods, specify the amount of coal recovered, and determine any corrective measures considered necessary to assure that escarpment failure does not occur except at specifically approved locations, or that hazardous conditions are not created.

#### STIPULATION 12

Existing surface improvements required for the surface uses of the lease area will need to be protected or maintained to provide for the post-mining continuance of the current land uses. Existing surface improvements whose utility may be lost or damaged as a result of mining activities are to be replaced or restored.

#### STIPULATION 13

The Lessee shall reclaim all areas disturbed as a result of mining and exploration operations to a land use capable of supporting the premining levels of livestock grazing, big game winter range, and other wildlife habitat.

STIPULATION 14

At the conclusion of the mining operation, or at the request of the Authorized Officer of the Surface Managing Agency, all damaged, disturbed, or displaced land monuments, accessories and appendages shall be replaced or restored in their original location (or at other locations that meet the needs of the land net, and as approved by the Authorized Officer of the Surface Managing Agency) and shall be done at the expense of the Lessee.