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State of Utah
DEPARTMENT OF NATURAL RESOURCES
DIVISION OF OIL, GAS AND MINING

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June 5, 2000

CERTIFIED
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Johnny Pappas, Sr. Environmental Engineer
Plateau Mining Corporation
847 Northwest Highway 191
Helper, Utah 84526

Re: DOGM/OSM Evaluation Topic - Reclamation Success on Refuse Piles, Plateau Mining Corporation, Star Point Mine, ACT/007/006, Outgoing File

Dear Mr. Pappas:

The two primary goals of SMCRA as defined in the redesigned "oversight" or evaluation process are Reclamation Success and Off-Site Impacts. Each year, the Division of Oil, Gas and Mining and the Office of Surface Mining select evaluation topics with these two goals in mind.

This year, one of the evaluation topics is "Reclamation Success on Refuse Piles." The evaluation team selected this topic because successful revegetation of refuse piles is significant to the success of the Utah Program. The evaluation team (Paul Baker, DOGM, Pamela Grubaugh-Littig, DOGM, Becci Siegle, OSM and Robert Postle, OSM) will be:

- reviewing information on the physical and chemical characteristics of the refuse and growth media,
- reviewing information on the depth of soil cover over the refuse,
- visually evaluating erosion, and
- evaluating vegetative cover and shrub density.

During the week of August 14, we plan to visit the refuse piles at four mines: Star Point, Hiawatha, SUFCO, and Castle Gate, and take measurements of vegetation cover on both the refuse piles and corresponding reference areas. We will then use the data collected to evaluate the success of currently approved reclamation practices for refuse piles.

We welcome participation by the mine operators at any time during the process. The data gathered and analyzed by this team will be available to mine operators and the public. This data,

however, is not intended to be used for bond release. Because of time constraints, we will be limiting the amount of data we gather, so the data may not meet the required minimum sample sizes. Neither will we be taking productivity measurements, and we will not be doing a complete analyses for diversity.

We look forward to visiting your mine site. If you have any questions about this process or the topic, please call me anytime. Thank you.

Sincerely,

Pamela Grubaugh-Littig
Permit Supervisor

pgl/sm
cc: Chuck Semborski, Chairman of the Coal Environmental Subcommittee
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