



State of Utah

DEPARTMENT OF NATURAL RESOURCES
DIVISION OF OIL, GAS AND MINING

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August 22, 1989

TO: Richard V. Smith, Permit Supervisor

FROM: Brent A. Stettler, Reclamation Biologist *Brent*

Re: Analysis of Macroinvertebrate Fauna of Grassy Trail Creek, Sunnyside Reclamation and Salvage, Inc., Sunnyside Mines, ACT/007/007, Folder #2, Carbon County, Utah

Synopsis

On March 24, 1989, Sunnyside Reclamation and Salvage, Inc. (SRS) spilled soluble oil into Grassy Trail Creek. Further degradation of the creek occurred on April 15, 1989 when oily sludge was released from the sedimentation pond. Dr. Richard W. Baumann of Brigham Young University was contracted to assess impacts.

Dr. Baumann's June 26, 1989 report entitled "Analysis of Macroinvertebrate Fauna of Grassy Trail Creek" provided a description of the macroinvertebrate community in Grassy Trail Creek and comparison with Dr. Robert N. Winget's 1980 study entitled "Aquatic Resource Analysis of Grassy Trail Creek, Carbon County, Utah."

Analysis

Dr. Baumann's report provides a good record of the macroinvertebrate community and chemical analysis of water and silt. Data indicate re-establishment of the benthic fauna two months after the spill and improvement in the macroinvertebrate community since 1980. However, the report is not entirely adequate in its discussion of cleanup or mitigation options. The report only superficially addressed the drawbacks to the Division of Wildlife Resources (DWR) recommendation to hydro-vacuum the stream bottom. Other DWR mitigation proposals

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(i.e., fencing the creek, opening angler access to Whitmore Reservoir, studying fish response to soluble oil) were not discussed. Additional effort was needed in the review of professional literature and communication with those having specialized knowledge of soluble oil and its effect on aquatic environments.

Recommendations

I recommend that SRS address the benefits and limitations of DWR mitigation proposals, and outline a plan for enhancement of Grassy Trail Creek.

djh
cc: L. Dalton, DWR, Price
J. Helfrich, DOGM
AT9/41-42