

0030

UNITED STATES FUEL COMPANY

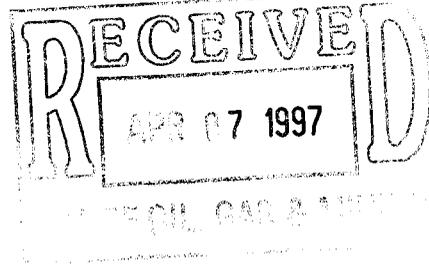
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April 4, 1997

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Permit Supervisor
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*ACT/007/011
FILE FOLDER # 2*

Dear Joe,

I am in receipt of your letters of March 24 and April 2. As you may recall, the March letter addressed the technical analysis ("TA") by Steven Johnson regarding the U. S. Fuel Co. operational hydrology submittal. The April 2 letter referenced concerns relating to the configuration of slurry pond #5. Both letters included a request for response and a proposed response date.

Mr. Johnson's TA included three areas of comment. First, U. S. Fuel should standardize its method for ditch design. This revision should be completed early next week. Second, the SAE's need to be reconsidered as ASCA's. Third, a map(s) needs to be submitted to illustrate the drainage control throughout the reclamation process. These last two concerns must be addressed as part of Division Order 97A. To comply with Division Order 97A, U. S. Fuel has contracted an aerial survey of the coal preparation and slurry pond areas to establish the current topography. I believe that the second and third points referenced in the TA should be addressed after completion of the aerial survey, so that the information requested can be placed on current maps. We expect the mapping information from the survey to be available in about four to six weeks, weather permitting.

After yesterday's site visit and our discussion of slurry pond #5 contours and topsoiling, it is my recommendation that these concerns can also be best addressed after completion of the aerial mapping.

I will also take this opportunity to update the Division relative to our progress on the Division Order. First, a contractor has been engaged to properly target the Hiawatha area prior to the aerial survey. The targeting has been delayed due to the high winds and snow, however we hope to fly the property next week, weather permitting. Although the aerial mapping will be prerequisite to responding to a number of the deficiencies noted in the Division Order, other areas are being pursued. For instance, soil sampling of the disturbed area to locate areas of potential substitute topsoil was completed yesterday. We appreciate the assistance of Mr. Davidson in that project. The collected samples will now be shipped for analysis. Also, Mr. George Cook at the NRCS was contacted in March and requested to evaluate our reference areas. Additionally, U. S. Fuel has contacted the State Historical Society and were informed that Hiawatha is not on the National Register of Historical Places. U. S. Fuel is currently researching the cemetery prior to engaging a qualified historian to review the property. Finally, as you are aware, some of the hydrology concerns have already been addressed through recent submittals.

If I can answer any questions, please call me.

Sincerely,

Michael P. Watson
President

cc: Steven Johnson
Susan White

*Soil samples
in disturbed
area. April 97*