

May 25, 1979

Memo to Coal File:

RE: U.S. Steel Corporation
Wellington Preparation Plant
Carbon County, Utah
ACT/007/012

An inspection of this facility was performed on May 22, 1979, by Ron Daniels and Jim Smith of the Division and Mr. Glenn Sides of U.S. Steel.

The purpose of the visit was to look at the area with respect to drainage patterns and potential problems of additional contributions of sediment, particularly from the coarse refuse dump.

It is Mr. Sides contention that a sediment pond is not needed as the area is naturally a retention basin and there is no problem with runoff or sediment leaving the disturbed site.

Upon investigation it was observed that the area west of the refuse dump does indeed form a natural retention basin collecting runoff from both the undisturbed area and the dump. The basin has a good stand of vegetation comprised of greasewood, grasses, sedges, and forbs and shows no sign of coal waste from the dump being deposited in it. Apparently, the material in the dump is coarse enough to allow any fine material to filter down into the dump where it remains. The water collected in the basin either infiltrates or evaporates, and does not leave the area through overland flow. The southern end of the basin holds the most water as indicated by the presence of sedges, accumulation of salts, and still wet soil. An added safety measure to ensure that no runoff leaves the basin might be to construct a small dike or berm between the railroad grade and the hill. Any major construction would result in unnecessary environmental degradation. An elevated railroad grade on the east side of the dump contains any runoff that may occur from the dump.

Mr. Sides stated that he would submit U.S. Steel's proposal for dealing with this area to the Division for review prior to submitting it to the Office of Surface Mining.

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One problem noted during the visit involved an area east of the plant and railroad tracks, immediately under the pipeline crossing the Price River to the slurry ponds. Water containing coal waste was being discharged into a series of two small ponds which drained, in an uncontrolled fashion, into a marshy and heavily vegetated area between the plant and the river. No direct flow into the river was observed, but evidence indicated that this would be possible if discharge from the plant was great enough. Mr. Sides stated that he was not aware of this situation prior to the inspection and would check into it with the plant manager to see about correcting the problem.

JAMES W. SMITH, JR.
RECLAMATION SOILS SPECIALIST

JWS/te

WMS for JWS

Note: For accounting statistics see Consolidation Coal Company,
Emery Deep Mine (ACT/015/015) Memo, dated May 24, 1979.

cc: Office of Surface Mining, Denver