



State of Utah

DEPARTMENT OF NATURAL RESOURCES
DIVISION OF OIL, GAS AND MINING

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September 23, 1999

TO: File

THRU: Pamela Grubaugh-Littig, Permit Supervisor *PL*

THRU: Daron Haddock, Permit Supervisor *DH*

FROM: David Darby, Senior Reclamation Specialist *DD*

RE: Phase II Bond Release, UtahAmerican Energy, Inc., Horse Canyon Mine, ACT/007/013-BR97B, File #2, Carbon County, Utah

SUMMARY:

Intermountain Power Agency submitted Phase II Bond Release on December 19, 1997. UtahAmerican Energy, Inc. assumed reclamation responsibility when they subleased the Lila Canyon and Horse Canyon Leases on October 19, 1998. Intermountain Power Agency completed reclamation on 55 acres of 68 acres and responded to the initial Phase II deficiency review on October 7, 1998. The remaining 13 unreclaimed disturbed acreage will potentially be used for future mining activities.

TECHNICAL ANALYSIS:

HYDROLOGIC INFORMATION

Regulatory Reference: 30 CFR Sec. 773.17, 774.13, 784.14, 784.16, 784.29, 817.41, 817.42, 817.43, 817.45, 817.49, 817.56, 817.57; R645-300-140, -300-141, -300-142, -300-143, -300-144, -300-145, -300-146, -300-147, -300-147, -300-148, -301-512, -301-514, -301-521, -301-531, -301-532, -301-533, -301-536, -301-542, -301-720, -301-731, -301-732, -301-733, -301-742, -301-743, -301-750, -301-761, -301-764.

The Utah Coal Rule for reclamation standards, R 645-301-760, requires the operator to ensure that all temporary structures are removed and reclaimed; that all permanent sedimentation ponds, diversions, impoundments and treatment facilities meet the requirements of R645-301 and R645-302; unapproved roads be reclaimed immediately and natural drainages be restored; siltation structures be maintained until removed by permission of DOGM; wells will be permanently sealed.

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A surface evaluation was conducted on July 28, 1999. During the oversight, the areas designated for reclamation, in accordance with the reclamation timetable, were observed and discussed. The applicant plans to remove the culvert on the reclaimed refuse pile. A trackhoe or backhoe will be used to excavate the culvert then recontour and stabilize the channel. The channel will drain into Horse Canyon Creek.

The applicant will also reclaim the #1 Sedimentation Pond. The spillways will be removed and the embankments will be pulled back to fill in the pond. The riprap channel which currently drains into the pond will remain. The pond area will be recontoured with a low area through the center to direct any flow to the west into the undisturbed drainage. Temporary silt fences may be placed on the reclaimed pond area as need dictates. The drop from the sedimentation pond discharge to the undisturbed drainage is riprapped and may not need to be reconstructed.

The applicant proposed to monitor and repair erosional features during the bond period in excess of 9 inches. All Phase II reconstruction will be assessed prior to bond release.

The applicant submitted a summary report of the erosion monitoring program conducted at the Horse Canyon Mine from 1993 to 1998. Thirteen representative sites were selected across the mine site to monitor development of erosion features. The report shows that the sites incurred some erosion in the past, but has been greatly reduced as vegetation has flourished in response to two years of above normal precipitation. Vegetation growth is a major factor in controlling erosion both by stabilizing the soil with root growth and reducing energy impacts from rain and runoff.

The applicant submitted maps depicting 13 acres of excluded area (not included in Phase I or II Bond release). Drainage controls are shown in Drawings III 1A-III through III 1G. The drainage controls that currently exist in the excluded area will continue to be used. They include a system of berms, ditches and silt fences. Berms and ditches will route flows through and around the South Portal and the large pad area encompassing the buildings. At the powder magazine and water tank, berms and direct flows to silt fences which will treat all discharges from the sites.

Site visits were conducted on May 27, 1998 and September 14, 1998 to assess the status and function of the diversion ditches above the reclaimed disturbed areas. A report was drafted on summarizing the technical assessment of the undisturbed diversions. The diversions were found to be functioning to transport runoff away from disturbed areas. The diversion ditches were always intended to be left in place, and that removal of the diversions at this time would cause more disturbance than any damage done by leaving the diversions in place.

The applicant does not plan to remove the diversion ditches for the reasons mentioned above. Findings identified in a memorandum September 29, 1998 considered the structures to be temporary. Several mitigating factors reasoned that the diversions were sufficiently stable to remain to control runoff. The applicant has addressed this issue with information to support their position.

All wells have been permanently sealed according to regulations.

Findings:

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The applicant has submitted sufficient information to address reclamation compliance for Phase II Bond release.

The applicant presently compares the disturbed area drainage to the undisturbed drainage. The more preferred method, and the method that will be required for Phase III Bond release is to measure the direct runoff from the disturbed areas. Phase III requires the applicant to show that receiving streams are not polluted by runoff from disturbed areas.

RECOMMENDATION:

Phase II Bond release is recommended for approval.

It is recommended that the applicant prepare for Phase III bond release by collecting runoff samples from disturbed areas and ephemeral streams, when runoff conditions (spring runoff or storms) are present to do so.

cc: Susan White
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