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DIVISION OF
OIL, GAS AND MINING

Mary Ann Wright, Associate Director of Mining
Utah Division of Oil, Gas and Mining
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Re: Determination of Administrative Completeness, New Permit Application, Lila Canyon Extension, UtahAmerican Energy, Inc., Horse Canyon Mine C/007/013-PM02B

Dear Decision Maker,

I am writing to provide public comments on the latest submitted plan for the UtahAmerican application to add the Lila Canyon Extension to the Horse Canyon Mine. I am firmly opposed to this misuse of the public's natural resources. I am also very angry about the apparent abuse of the application process by UtahAmerican regarding this proposal.

Rare to the otherwise arid region, Lila Canyon is an oasis of seeps and springs creating critical year around wildlife habitat, including bighorn sheep. Last summer, the Utah Division of Oil, Gas and Mining (Division) issued a permit to UtahAmerican Energy, Inc. to mine coal in the area. Surface facilities would have been located near the mouth of Lila Canyon within the Desolation Canyon proposed wilderness unit and mining would have occurred beneath nearly 5,000 acres of the Desolation Canyon wilderness unit and the Turtle Canyon Wilderness Study Area, de-watering seeps and springs critical to area wildlife. Moreover, coal haul trucks would have taken 550 round-trips daily from the mine to a facility located north of Wellington, UT on the already dangerous, yet scenic, highway 191.

I do not feel that this is the best use of Utah's resources in this area, and I also believe that this project would unduly degrade our national lands being considered for wilderness designation.

I am also concerned about the history of this application with the Utah Division of Oil, Gas and Mining, and the seeming abuse of the system perpetrated by UtahAmerica. After an inappropriate approval, the Utah Board of Oil, Gas and Mining, the body that oversees the Division's decisions, found that the Division improperly authorized the mining plan since, among other reasons, UtahAmerican Energy's application failed to address key geologic, hydrologic and biological factors. Inexplicably, we now find ourselves with the division approving the permit despite no legitimate or substantive change being made to the original application. This is not an acceptable sequence of events. The environmental impacts of the project must be addressed and scientifically analyzed, prior to acceptance by the Division.

I therefore ask that you find against a Determination of Administrative Completeness, for the new Permit Application, of the Lila Canyon Extension by UtahAmerican Energy, Inc. (Horse Canyon Mine C/007/013-PM02B). I look forward to your written response.

Thank-you,

Bryan Wyberg