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1020 15TH STREET
DENVER, COLORADO 80202

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DIVISION OF
OIL, GAS & MINING

JIM

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MEMORANDUM

TO: Stephen Manger, Task Force Leader

FROM: Louis Hamm, Project Leader

SUBJECT: Trip Report, Gordon Creek No. 2, Southwest Lease Exploration Plan

A meeting was arranged to take place in the offices of the Utah Division of Oil, Gas and Mining (UDOGM), to resolve concerns regarding the Beaver Creek Coal Company request to begin portal construction and mining within the existing state permit area, to prove the feasibility of mining their newly acquired Southwest Lease adjacent to the present Gordon Creek No. 2 mine. Attending the meeting were Scott Raymond, Kenneth Fleck, Jim Voorhees, and Dick Robinson of Beaver Creek Coal Company; Sid Vogelpohl of the Bureau of Land Management (BLM) at Price; Jim Smith, Cy Young, Steve Cox, and Tom Munson of UDOGM; and Walt Swain and myself representing OSM. The meeting began at approximately 10:00 A.M. on August 31, 1983.

Established at the outset was the unacceptability of the current plan submittal as exploration. OSM then suggested that Beaver Creek Coal submit a plan to begin limited mining with reduced surface facilities through the scheduled approval time for the Gordon Creek No. 2 submittal. Full scale plans for the Southwest Lease development should be submitted as part of the Gordon Creek No. 2 permit package before the approval process proceeds any further. If approval were granted on Gordon Creek No. 2, mining could then commence at full scale for the Southwest Lease Exploration Area. UDOGM indicated concurrence with this plan.

BLM indicated that their position was that the company is not currently operating under an approved Federal permit, merely a U.S.G.S. approved mine plan (211 approval) under the interim permit program. Therefore, according to 30 CFR 211.10(a), jurisdiction for approving the exploration plan would remain with the BLM. The BLM representative then stated that BLM's position was that they could not accept any form of "mining" as exploration.

After discussion of the proposed exploration activities and semantics, the BLM representative received telephone permission from Boyd McKean of the BLM State Office to concede a limited start-up of the proposed exploration activities with larger feasibility operations to begin with approval of the Gordon Creek No. 2 permit application. The following limitations were presented to the Beaver Creek representatives:

-- Tunnelling will proceed no further than 100 feet on the portals and two ventilation adits, with the option of applying for a revision allowing more footage of approximately 100 feet per revision, if necessary to resolve mining feasibility questions.

-- Ventilation adits are required for compliance with MSHA regulations.

-- The road and face-up will be constructed as proposed because of environmental benefits in the submitted design, and will include the proposed sediment pond.

-- The conveyor will be allowed because it permits transport of coal and waste rock without the use of haul trucks which would require a larger surface disturbance area. The conveyor must however, be portable to allow for rapid removal with minimum disturbance.

-- All reference to "mining" will be removed from the exploration plan submittal.

-- The discussion of each proposed activity in the revised exploration plan must particularly emphasize the need and relationship of each activity to exploration.

UDOGM will now compose a letter to the BLM which will outline the requirements for the applicant's resubmittal of their exploration plan. Once the revised exploration plan is submitted to BLM and the State it will be reviewed for completeness and technical adequacy before approval and exploration activities begin. OSM will not be directly involved in exploration plan review.

cc: Bob Hagen, OSM-Albuquerque
Cy Young, Jim Smith-UDOGM ✓