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Mine files #2 & #3
J. Whitehead

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April 23, 1986

DIVISION OF
OIL, GAS & MINING

FILE COPY

Mr. Lowell Braxton
Administrator
Utah Division of Oil, Gas & Mining
355 West North Temple
3 Triad Center, Suite 350
Salt Lake City, Utah 84180-1203

Re: Wildlife Mitigation
Gordon Creek No. 2 Mine
ACT/007/016
Gordon Creek No.3/6 Mines
INA/007/017
Carbon County, Utah

Dear Mr. Braxton:

In October 1983, Beaver Creek Coal Company committed to the establishment of four acres of riparian habitat at the Gordon Creek No. 3 Mine, as a mitigation measure for the construction at No. 7 Mine and the removal of a raptor nest. In 1985, Beaver Creek Coal Company was asked by the Division of Wildlife Resources, to participate in the construction of a new pond in the Shoemaker Wash Unit of their Desert Lake Waterfowl Management Area. Through our donation of approximately \$8,200, we were allowed a 3½ acre credit toward the four acre mitigation. The Gordon Creek No. 3 and 6 Mine M.R.P. was then revised to show a minimum of one-half acre of riparian habitat.

During the review of the No. 3 and 6 Mine M.R.P., additional concerns have become evident over the long-term success of establishing a riparian area at this site. The major concerns are:

1. Coal Canyon is an ephemeral drainage, and with no consistent water supply in the drainage, the riparian growth will be difficult to establish and maintain;
2. The stream channel reclamation includes the installation of meanders to maximize the riparian area - these meanders are susceptible to wash-outs and will likely be a maintenance problem; (Based on an on-site conversation with Division Hydrologist, Jim Frickie in April, 1986)

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3. The surface is private owned, and the planned post mining land use is for stock grazing and stock holding and loading areas - even if the riparian areas were to become established successfully, the long-term benefit to wildlife would likely be diminished by the stock grazing and loading activities.

I have discussed these problems with Larry Dalton of the D.W.R., and with John Whitehead and Jim Frickie of your staff. Based on these conversations, I would like to propose an alternate plan for mitigation of the remaining one-half acre of riparian habitat. In general, this plan would consist of working with the Division of Wildlife Resources to enhance the beaver population and participate in a fish-planting project in the North Fork of Gordon Creek between Coal Canyon and Sweet's Canyon. This program would consist of the following steps:

1. D.W.R. would arrange to transplant a pre-determined number of beaver in the area;
2. Beaver Creek Coal Company would supply fresh-cut aspen to the beaver at a quantity and schedule determined by D.W.R.;
3. Beaver Creek Coal Company would purchase a pre-determined number of trout for D.W.R. to stock the stream in this area.

This project would offer the following advantages over the proposed No.3/6 Mine riparian project:

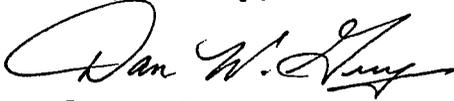
1. The stream is perennial, and the water quality in this area will support a game-fish population;
2. The supply of aspen and beaver will allow for construction of stronger and larger dams, thus reducing the erosion potential of the area and the possibility of dam "blow-out" from high spring flows;
3. Larger long-term dams will promote siltation and expansion of the riparian area along the stream;
4. Most of the area is on land open to the public - this not only allows for public enjoyment of the area, but it allows the project the potential to become a long-term benefit without later being altered or destroyed for private use.

Since the Gordon Creek No. 3/6 Mine Plan is still under review, I would appreciate your consideration of this alternate proposal at your earliest opportunity. If this plan is acceptable, I will modify the No. 3/6 plan to eliminate the meanders in the restored channel.

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Thank you for your consideration. If you have any questions, or need any further information, please let me know.

Respectfully,



Dan W. Guy,
Manager Permitting/Compliance

DWG/rs

cc: Mr. Larry Dalton, D.W.R.
Jay Marshall, BCCC
File, 4-P-5-1-1
File, 4-P-7-1-1 ..