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STATE OF UTAH  
NATURAL RESOURCES  
Oil, Gas & Mining

007/016-3  
Corrected 1-19

Norman H. Bangerter, Governor  
Dee C. Hansen, Executive Director  
Dianne R. Nielson, Ph.D., Division Director

355 W. North Temple • 3 Triad Center • Suite 350 • Salt Lake City, UT 84180-1203 • 801-538-5340

January 11, 1988

Mr. Dan W. Guy, Manager  
Permitting & Compliance  
Beaver Creek Coal Company  
P. O. Box 1378  
Price, Utah 84501

Dear Mr. Guy:

Re: Conditional Approval of PAP Amendment, Request to Revise  
Coal Fine Percentages for Determining Contaminated Soil,  
Beaver Creek Coal Company, Gordon Creek #2 & 7 Mines,  
ACT/007/016-87F, Folder #3, Carbon County, Utah

The Division has completed its review of plans received November 18, 1987 for the above referenced PAP amendment. Division Soils Specialist, Dan Duce, has reviewed the plans and recommends granting a conditional approval. Please refer to the attached technical memorandum for an explanation of the conditions which will require additional information from the operator.

Please provide requested information by February 12, 1988. Thank you for your cooperation in completing this permitting action. Please call Dan Duce or John Whitehead should you have questions pertaining to this amendment review.

Sincerely,

D. Wayne Hedberg  
Data Management Coordinator

DWH/djh

Attachment

cc: M. Bailey      D. Duce  
     R. Hagen        J. Whitehead  
     G. Morris        P.F.O.  
     P. Rutledge

8992R/24



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December 30, 1987

TO: John Whitehead, Permit Supervisor

FROM: Dan Duce, Reclamation Soils Specialist <sup>DD</sup>

RE: Beaver Creek Coal Company Request to Revise Coal Fine Percentages for Determining Contaminated Soil, Beaver Creek Coal Company, Gordon Creek #2 Mine, ACT/007/016, Folder #2, Carbon County, Utah

Beaver Creek has proposed to amend their Gordon Creek No. 2 MRP wherein contaminated soil with greater than 50 percent coal fines would be removed. Their approved MRP designates contaminated soil as soil with 5 percent coal fines. Beaver Creek believes the 5 percent in their approved plan was a "typo" and states that the 50 percent figure was used on both the Huntington Canyon No. 4 and Gordon Creek No. 3 and 6 Mine.

Recommendations:

The 50 percent coal fine contamination figure can be approved if a commitment is made in the MRP that soils with less than 50 percent coal fines will be moved to highwall areas, and during backfilling buried with four feet of non-contaminated soil. This is what was approved in the Gordon Creek No. 3 and 6 Mine.

Material with high amounts of coal, greater than 35 percent, are combustible according to MSHA. Soil with coal volumes less than 35 percent can also be detrimental to vegetation. Their dark colors can cause high surface temperatures which may damage seedlings or prevent germination. The nutrient levels and holding capacity are normally much lower than non-contaminated soils. Depending on the coal's chemistry, soils contaminated with coal can also be acid-forming or toxic to vegetation if there are high levels of Pyritic sulfur and low neutralization potential, or if there are high levels of boron. Toxicities may also occur to animals feeding on vegetation growing in soils with high levels of selenium. Coal and carboneous materials are known to be elevated in Boron and Selenium.

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ACT/007/016  
December 30, 1987

The Division does not have a limit for organic carbon in their topsoil and overburden guidelines for plant growth materials or substitute topsoil. If the Division did, it would most likely be very similar to the Wyoming DEQ limit of 10 percent. Therefore, the highest percentage of coal fines that would be allowed to contaminate soils would be 10 percent and then other tests would be required to assure their suitability to plant growth.

djh  
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