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January 2, 1996

State of Utah  
Division of Oil, Gas and Mining  
451 East 400 North  
Price, Utah 84501

Attn: Dave Darby

RE: Beaver Creek Coal Company - Steve and Pete Stamatakis

Mr. Darby:

This letter is submitted at the request of my clients, Steve and Pete Stamatakis. Enclosed please find a copy of a letter that they just received from Gary Roeder, District Conservationist for the local office of the Natural Resources Conservation Service.

As you can see from Mr. Roeder's memo, dated December 13, 1995, many of my clients' concerns regarding water loss on their ranch property may have been substantiated by Mr. Roeder.

My clients would appreciate an opportunity to meet with you at your earliest convenience for the purpose of discussing the content of Mr. Roeder's letter. For purposes of discussion, it would be most helpful if you can provide information regarding the mining abandonment plan of the Beaver Creek Coal Company as it relates to that area beneath the surface of my clients' property.

Assuming that the "pillars" under the Beaver Creek Valley were removed at such time that the mine was abandoned by Beaver Creek Coal Company, it would appear that the subsidance and water loss may be attributable to such mining practices. My clients are most interested in addressing that issue as soon as possible.

Additionally, my clients want to address the impact of anticipated future mining operations of the latest coal company that is anticipating coal extraction from beneath my clients' surface.

Please advise me at your earliest convenience of dates when my clients could meet with you. I will then advise my clients accordingly and ask them to meet with you.

Sincerely,

*Nick Sampinos*

Nick Sampinos

NS/nn

Enclosure

xc: Steve Stamatakis  
Pete Stamatakis

ACT/007/016 #2  
Citizen's Concern  
Copy Dave, Lowell,  
Joe



United States  
Department of  
Agriculture

Natural Resources  
Conservation  
Service

P.O. Box 11350  
Salt Lake City, UT 84147  
Telephone (801) 524-5050

Subject: ENG - Geology - Beaver Creek Valley  
Water Loss, S. Stamatakis Ranch

Date: December 13, 1995

To: Gary Roeder  
District Conservationist  
NRCS, Price, Utah

File Code: 210-16

PARTICIPANTS: George Cook, Range Conservationist, NRCS, Price, UT  
Bob Rasely, Geologist, NRCS, Salt Lake City, UT  
Steve Stamatakis, Rancher

LOCATION: Nephi, UT, 1:100,000 metric topographic map  
Jump Creek 7.5" USGS Topographic Quad, #Q2126  
T13S, R7E, Sec. 12; T13S, R8E, Sec. 7-18.  
Area of concern is along the Beaver Creek Valley.  
(See attached map)

BACKGROUND: Over the last few years Steve Stamatakis, rancher, had been noticing decreasing water flow in his 2 cfs Beaver Creek water right. This year the flow decreased dramatically and was observed, during the field reconnaissance by NRCS personnel, to be approximately 30-40 gallons per minute on November 6, 1995

SETTING: The area is located in the Wasatch Plateau along Beaver Creek - a tributary to White River of the Price River Basin in the Colorado Plateau physiographic province. The area is at 8400 to 8800 feet in elevation. The creek has a gradient of approximately 2%.

The area is dominantly pine forest in rolling hills with willows, reeds, and grasses along the stream corridor. The creek and flood plain form a healthy riparian habitat. The creek valley has a flood plain that averages 100 feet wide and is relatively flat in cross section. The creek is flowing in a well developed, shallow channel (1-2 feet in depth) with occasional short reaches that are moderately entrenched (5-10 feet in depth). The valley floor terrain is characterized by a stair-step-like channel profile with occasional drops of one or two feet and long reaches of low gradient. The greater channel depths occur below the knickpoints of the steps.

OBSERVATIONS: Evidence of beaver activity was observed throughout the valley area. Beaver dams occur at the knickpoints and backup water into the flatter areas. There is no recent beaver activity in the valley for this year. It appears that the beaver have abandoned the area.

MINING: The area around the creek valley has been subject to underground coal mining activity over the last one hundred years or so. Standard mining practice is to leave pillars of coal within the mined-out area to hold up the roof. According to the rancher, the area under the valley has had the pillars removed. This process can lead to mine roof collapse and result in mine related surface subsidence.

In section 21 at the junction of the access road and the road leading to an old mine portal, there is significant water issuing from the portal area. This water flows across the road and has resulted in destabilizing the North Fork Gordon Creek bank adjacent to the access road. The access road is actively involved in the landslide created by the wetting of the steep creek bank. This process is relatively recent according to the rancher and appears geologically new with little degrading erosion occurring on the fresh landslide area. It also appears that the landslide area is widening and will impact more of the length of the road in the near future. It is possible that this new water flow from the mine portal and the recent loss of the Beaver Creek water are related. However, it should be noted that this is not a proven fact.

CONCLUSIONS: The water right of the rancher is being impacted by collapse of the Beaver Creek valley surface in the form of sinkholes. The sinkholes may be related to collapse of a coal mine that has had the pillars removed. This conclusion is tentative because no substantiation of pillar removal or mine location has been obtained.

It should be noted that there is no natural geologic condition that would create sinkholes in this area. This type of collapse could continue for a long time into the future (possibly longer than one hundred years). The land character will be altered permanently.

The mine related sinkhole occurrence is an active process and is increasing in intensity. Unaddressed, this process will dewater the valley and turn a thriving riparian wet meadow into a dry sagebrush upland. Erosion in the stream bottom will become severe and sediment yield could become an impact to the upper Price River watershed.

RECOMMENDATIONS: It is recommended that the water be piped throughout the collapsing zone. The pipe would need outlets to water tanks for livestock. Ponds in the natural terrain are not recommended because of the collapse problem. The stock watering system could be enhanced to account for wildlife watering too. The pipe system must have flexibility to account for some stretch related to continued collapse of the mine roof. There would have to be a collection system to put the water in the pipeline.

