0003

State of Utah

DEPARTMENT OF NATURAL RESOURCES
DIVISION OF OIL, GAS AND MINING

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JK for Joe Helfrich

INSPECTION REPORT

Partial: ___ Complete: X Exploration: ___
Inspection Date & Time: October 23, 1997
Date of Last Inspection: September 25, 1997

Mine Name: Gordon Creek Mines 2, 7 & 8 County: Carbon Permit **Number: ACT/007/016**
Permittee and/or Operator's Name: Mountain Coal Company
Business Address: P.O. Box 591 Somerset, Colorado 81434
Type of Mining Activity: Underground X Surface_ Prep. Plant_ Other_
State Officials(s): David Darby
Company Official(s): Dan Guy
Federal Official(s): None
Weather Conditions: Partly cloudy, no rain
Existing Acreage: Permitted- 2289 Disturbed- 17.2 Regraded- 17.2 Seeded- 17.20 Bonded- 17.2
Increased/Decreased: Permitted-_ Disturbed-_ Regraded-_ Seeded-_ Bonded-_
Status: _Exploration/ X Active/_Inactive/_Temporary Cessation/_Bond Forfeiture
Reclamation (_Phase I/_Phase II/_Final Bond Release/_Liability Year)

REVIEW OF PERMIT, PERFORMANCE STANDARDS & PERMIT CONDITION REQUIREMENTS

Instructions
1. Substantiate the elements on this inspection by checking the appropriate performance standard.
   a. For complete inspections provide narrative justification for any elements not fully inspected unless element is not appropriate to the site, in which case check N/A.
   b. For partial inspections check only the elements evaluated.
2. Document any noncompliance situation by referencing the NOV issued at the appropriate performance standard listed below.
3. Reference any narratives written in conjunction with this inspection at the appropriate performance standard listed below.
4. Provide a brief status report for all pending enforcement actions, permit conditions, Division Orders, and amendments.

		EVALUATED	N/A	COMMENTS	NOV/ENF
1.	PERMITS, CHANGE, TRANSFER, RENEWAL, SALE	[X]	[ ]	[X]	[ ]
2.	SIGNS AND MARKERS	[X]	[ ]	[X]	[ ]
3.	TOPSOIL	[X]	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]
4.	HYDROLOGIC BALANCE:				
a.	DIVERSIONS	[X]	[ ]	[X]	[ ]
b.	SEDIMENT PONDS AND IMPOUNDMENTS	[X]	[ ]	[X]	[ ]
c.	OTHER SEDIMENT CONTROL MEASURES	[X]	[ ]	[X]	[ ]
d.	WATER MONITORING	[X]	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]
e.	EFFLUENT LIMITATIONS	[X]	[ ]	[X]	[ ]
5.	EXPLOSIVES	[X]	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]
6.	DISPOSAL OF EXCESS SPOIL/FILLS/BENCHES	[X]	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]
7.	COAL MINE WASTE/REFUSE PILES/IMPOUNDMENTS	[X]	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]
8.	NONCOAL WASTE	[X]	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]
9.	PROTECTION OF FISH, WILDLIFE AND RELATED ENVIRONMENTAL VALUES	[X]	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]
10.	SLIDES AND OTHER DAMAGE	[X]	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]
11.	CONTEMPORANEOUS RECLAMATION	[X]	[X]	[ ]	[ ]
12.	BACKFILLING AND GRADING	[X]	[ ]	[X]	[ ]
13.	REVEGETATION	[X]	[ ]	[X]	[ ]
14.	SUBSIDENCE CONTROL	[X]	[ ]	[X]	[ ]
15.	CESSATION OF OPERATIONS	[X]	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]
16.	ROADS:				
a.	CONSTRUCTION/MAINTENANCE/SURFACING	[X]	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]
b.	DRAINAGE CONTROLS	[X]	[ ]	[X]	[ ]
17.	OTHER TRANSPORTATION FACILITIES	[X]	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]
18.	SUPPORT FACILITIES/UTILITY INSTALLATIONS	[X]	[ ]	[X]	[ ]
19.	AVS CHECK (4th Quarter-April, May, June)_____(date)	[ ]	[X]	[ ]	[ ]
20.	AIR QUALITY PERMIT	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]
21.	BONDING & INSURANCE	[X]	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]

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(Comments are Numbered to Correspond with Topics Listed Above)

General Comments

A group of DOGM employees along with Mel Coonrod and Dan Guy visited the minesite at the request of Paige Beville. Prior to the rainstorms that had caused damage to the site, this visit was intended to be a Phase I Bond Release review. The group toured the site to evaluate the reclamation activities that had been conducted over the past year.

The group hiked up Right Fork Creek to observe a culvert discovered October 3, 1997 during a tour set up by the Stamatakis Brothers to discuss subsidence and water depletion issues to their property. A group of people were following Steve Stamatakis down a slope that led to the #2 mine pad to look at subsidence. We first observed a fracture approximately 2 feet wide and about 50 feet long. We then hiked down to the Right Fork of Gordon Creek where we encountered a four feet culvert in the stream channel. The culvert was a surprise to the staff including this inspector. The culvert lies outside the disturbed area and is not identified in the MRP.

The culvert was installed in 1979 to mitigate some subsidence that occurred when part of the channel collapsed into the mine. The depth from surface to coal seam was about 35 feet. According to Dan Guy, everyone had forgot about the culvert. The culvert has become an issue because the operator is trying to finalize reclamation work and wants to apply for Phase I Bond Release. There are advantages and disadvantages in removing the culvert. The DOGM is currently studying the issue. We agreed to wait to see what the operator proposes before making a final decision and taking action.

In a letter submitted to the DOGM on October 20, 1997, t he operator request an extension to the abatement time so information and equipment could be secured. The abatement deadline for the NOV was extended from October 23, 1997 to November 7, 1997.

4. HYDROLOGIC BALANCE:
a. DIVERSIONS

The contractor had equipment and personnel on site rebuilding the channels that incurred damage from flows. The four channels crossing the #2 mine pad incurred some damage. All had transmitted the flows , however each had sustained a loss of riprap lining. The flows had washed the riprap down stream to the main channel. The NOV addressed each of these channels. The operator is required to mitigate the degraded channel by replacing the riprap of a D-50 diameter of 6 inches.

Construction activities were being conducted to rebuild the eroded channels. Some of the #2 mine pad had been gouged to roughen the surface where rills had developed as a result of the storms.

Susan White pointed out several large boulders in the main stream channel adjacent to the #7 mine access road. The boulders were apparently pushed down during road development and some during reclamation. She thought that this could be an issue in the future.

Copy of this Report:
Mailed to: James Fulton (OSM/Denver), Paige Beville (MCC), Dan Guy (Blackhawk Engineering)
Given to: Joe Helfrich (DOGM)

Inspector's Signature: David W. Darby #47 Date: 10/20/97

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b. SEDIMENT PONDS AND IMPOUNDMENTS

The upper cell of the sedimentation pond contained water. No water was flowing out of the spillway or contained in the middle pond. There was no flow into the pond. The upper pond exhibited substantial accumulations of sediment in its upper end as a result of recent storms.

c. OTHER SEDIMENT CONTROL MEASURES

I visited the minesite on October 6, 1997. The contractor had a man working on the gabion structures. As I watched him work, I noticed he had no concept of how gabion structures functioned. He was just tossing large rocks in a pile against the wire. Since no one else was around I told him what I expected from the gabion structures and how they should be built to meet that objective. I explained that the rock weir consisted of rock of various size built into a barriers so that the smaller rock filled the voids between larger rock. The gabion structure should be sorted to have a finer grade of sorted rock upstream and backed by a layer of sand. With that configuration the gabion structure would act as a barrier, but allow water to filter through.

The operator had a consultant repairing the gabion structures on October 6, 1997 when I visited the minesite. However, on October 23, one gabion structure still revealed a substantial gap in the structure. At that time, I explained to the consulting engineer, Dan Guy, how I expected the structure to appear and function. It was evident that he didn't get the message or just didn't complete the work when we arrived at the site on October 23, 1997.

12. BACKFILLING AND GRADING

The contractor had gouged some areas identified in Part 3 of the NOV with a trackhoe. I pointed out some of the areas that I thought needed to be gouged more to break up the ripped areas the ran parallel to the dip of the slope. The area opposite the main cannel where coal was exposed on the side slope was gouged. This exposed a lot of old coal waste dumped during the pre SMCRA area. Several of the staff indicated that this looked like a problem area. The soft coal is easily eroded. Exposed coal should be covered with topsoil.

I observed the third channel crossing the #2 mine pad. The contractor had reworked the channel and pushed a large pile of soil down into the main channel. I talked to Dan Guy about moving the channel and suggested that the material be used to cover the exposed coal areas.

In the letter dated October 20, 1997, operator requested that they not be required to install channels horizontally across the #7 and #2 minepads, but instead, gouge the area as per the reclamation plan. Dan stated to me earlier that they thought the storms that caused the damage were excessive and beyond the design standards of the structures. They don't think this problem would occur again.

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Inspector's Signature: David W. Darby #47 Date: 10/29/97

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13. REVEGETATION

All the reworked areas will have to be revegetated.

14. Subsidence Control

The DOGM is evaluating the areas and information pointed out by the Stamatakis Brothers. I am currently summarizing all the concerns and facts brought out during the tour of October 3,

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Inspector's Signature: David W. Darby #47 Date: 10/29/95