



State of Utah

DEPARTMENT OF NATURAL RESOURCES
DIVISION OF OIL, GAS AND MINING

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June 5, 1997

TO: File

FROM: Mary Ann Wright, Associate Director of Mining

RE: Seeding Time Change, Mountain Coal Company, Gordon Creek #2, #7, and #8 Mines, ACT/007/016-97A, Folder#2, Carbon County, Utah

Proposed Amendment

Mountain Coal Company has submitted a proposed amendment for the seeding times at this mine.

Mountain Coal Company has requested the seeding time change to allow for seeding to occur as soon as possible after final soil preparation.

Mountain Coal Company has committed in their permit to monitor the success of revegetation, and to hand plant any areas requiring additional seeding using the appropriate seed mix or containerized stock.

Findings

R645-301-354, requires planting during the first normal period for favorable planting conditions after replacement of the plant-growth medium. The normal period is that generally accepted locally for the type of plant materials selected.

1. Given the high elevation of the site, 8,300 m.f.a.s.l., and the summer thunder shower pattern for the area, a seeding immediately after soil preparation could be successful and could advance the establishment of reclamation species for the site.
2. By waiting until the normally accepted fall seeding time, the area would again have to be regraded to break the crust and to disc in the weeds which had established in the interim. Additional soil loss could occur along with sediment loading to drainage ways from additional discing.

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3. Established weeds from not seeding right away would likely result in maturing seed heads which would add to the weed presence at the site.

4. While fall seeding is generally recommended for most of Utah rangelands, seeding at other times of the year can be successful, generally depending on a number of unpredictable factors. The operator would like to make an early seeding success for the site and can be allowed with careful and proper attention to make this attempt. Early success will benefit the land which is being reclaimed.

Conclusion: A late spring seeding at this elevation could benefit the site by advancing the plant establishment of wanted species by as much as one year. With the assurances for raking, monitoring for success, and replanting unsuccessful areas, the risks of retarding plant establishment are minimized.

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