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State of Utah
DEPARTMENT OF NATURAL RESOURCES
DIVISION OF OIL, GAS AND MINING

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OK

October 1, 2002

TO: Internal File
THRU: Daron R. Haddock, Permit Supervisor *DRH*
FROM: *PWB* Priscilla W. Burton, Sr. Reclamation Specialist/Soils
RE: Technical Field Visit, Phase I Bond Release Application, Mountain Coal Company, Gordon Creek 2, 7, & 8, C/007/016-BR01B-1

DOGM Attendees: Priscilla Burton, Joe Helfrich (Inspector), Dave Darby, Wayne Western
Other Attendees: Dan Guy, Authorized Representative, Mountain Coal Co.

Date & Time: September 10, 2002, 9:30 am – 1:30 pm.

PURPOSE:

To facilitate the review of the Phase I bond release application and become acquainted with the site.

OBSERVATIONS:

At the entrance of the site, Cell #1 was full of sediment-laden water. The area had recently received rain. Drainage SD#6 had recently flowed at bank full. Water from SD#6 had left its banks and deposited sediment at the base of the ravine. Water running in SD#6 carries a lot of sediment from above the permit area due to logging along the County Road. SD # 3 through SD # 5 were not affected by the recent storm. SD #1 and SD #2 show some erosive action by the storm.

TECHNICAL FIELD VISIT

The site is dominated by alfalfa. Alfalfa was encountered with at least 90% frequency. Alfalfa was in the seed mix and was also used as hay mulch. Elk sign is everywhere. The reclaimed roadway was first graded and pocked in 1997 and then redisturbed by the landowner in 1998. Subsequent repocking and reseeded by the Permittee in 1999 has produced a dominant stand of alfalfa. The effect of the landowner's redisturbance of the site brought numerous coal fragments to the surface on this reclaimed road.

The rocky, cut slope along the reclaimed road way to Mine #2 is home to rodents, probably rock-chucks. Great basin Wild rye, Palmer Penstemon, and Blue Flax were noted growing on this very steep slope. However, there is so much erosion in this area that the sediments covers the existing plants and comes down onto the level road at the base of the slope.

Yellow sweet clover is growing in the drainage of the Right Fork of Bryner Canyon. This area is fenced to keep the grazing animals out of the reclaimed area. The fence had been cut.

Jacob's pond was full.

The Left Fork of Bryner Canyon is the main drainage. Yellow Sweet Clover was growing in this drainage as well. A small seep was noted above Jacob's pond.

The No. 7 Mine slopes have been buttressed with rocks and boulders. The south-facing slope is slightly vegetated. No sign of straw or mulch was evident. Erosion has begun to form deep rills on the slope above the boulders. The "waterfall" from the No. 7 Mine was dry.

The No. 8 Mine slope faces north and is well covered with vegetation. There was slight erosion noted at the No. 8 Mine slope, but all sediments are caught in the pocks. The seep at the base of the No. 8 Mine was boggy, but not flowing.

Coal mine waste was buried four feet deep in the vicinity of the topsoil stockpile location at the edge of the disturbed area boundary in the Right Fork of Bryner Canyon. This area had less dense vegetation than elsewhere, but more diversity of plant life. (This area was not redisturbed by the landowner and has had a longer time to become established.) This area was also the site of the worst infestation of thistle. Thistle was noted on the north end of the pile in a ditch.

RECOMMENDATIONS/CONCLUSIONS:

The steep slopes above the No.7 mine and along the reclaimed roadway to the No. 2 Mine should be reseeded, mulched and tacked. The fence needs repair. Drainage from the areas logged along the County Road must be diverted away from the permit area to allow SD #6 to prevent sediment-laden water from scouring SD#6.

The last recorded field visit to this site was on June 26, 2000. At that time, DOGM staff observed:

"#2 Mine: The main channel below Jacob's pond has several pockets of exposed coal and coal waste material that contain greater than 50% coal fines. These include two exposed pockets in the lower channel and one pocket in the upper channel immediately below Jacob's pond. The two lower pockets are principally on the north side of the channel and measure approximately 16 feet by 12 feet each. The upper pocket encompasses both sides of the channel and is more extensive than the lower pockets. If no further exposure of coal material occurs, the three exposed pockets of coal do not significantly impact reclamation of the #2 Mine main channel. However, if exposure continues to expose coal, then remedial action needs to occur to assess the extent of the coal contamination."

"#7 Mine: The reclaimed slopes below the cutslopes were measured to be 23°, which is the angle shown on Plate3-8A. The Division found that the field conditions are consistent with the certified as-built drawing."

The main drainage should be walked below Jacob's pond during the next inspection or field visit.