



State of Utah

DEPARTMENT OF NATURAL RESOURCES
DIVISION OF OIL, GAS AND MINING

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OK

July 22, 2003

TO: Internal File

THRU: Pamela Grubaugh-Littig, Permit Supervisor *pgl*

FROM: Wayne H. Western, Environmental Scientist III, Engineering *WHW*
Priscilla W. Burton, Environmental Scientist III, Soils *PWB*
D Dana Dean, P.E., Environmental Scientist III, Hydrology

RE: Technical Field Visit For Phase I Bond Release, Mountain Coal Company,
Gordon Creek 2, 7, & 8, C/007/016

Attendees:

- Vicky Miller, Mountain Coal Company
- Chris Hansen, Mountain Coal Company
- Dan Guy, Blackhawk Engineering (Consultant)
- Mitch Rollings OSM
- Steve Falk, BLM
- Pam Grubaugh-Littig DOGM
- Dana Dean DOGM
- Jerriann Ernsten DOGM
- Priscilla Burton DOGM
- Wayne Western DOGM

Date & Time: May 22, 2003
Arrived 11:00 AM departed 12:40 PM

PURPOSE:

To conduct a Phase I bond release inspection for all areas of the Gordon Creek 2, 7 & 8 Mine, with the exception of the Sweet's Pond area and the sediment ponds. (The sediment ponds are still needed to control runoff and will be removed after the Division verifies that vegetation is adequate to control erosion. A Phase III bond release inspection of the Sweet's Pond area was conducted before the Phase I bond release inspection.) The site was reclaimed in 1995 and

TECHNICAL FIELD VISIT

reworked in 1997 after a disturbance by the landowner.

OBSERVATIONS:

The field inspection concentrated on five areas: the area near the sediment ponds, the highwall at the No. 7 Mine, the backfilling at the No. 8 Mine, the backfilling at the No. 2 Mine, and the Jacob's pond area.

The visit began at the sediment pond area. Wayne Western explained that the ponds are still needed to control runoff from the site. Runoff from a County road outside the permit area contributes to the sediment load and needs to be captured by the ponds. Ray Hansen, the County Road Supervisor, was invited to the inspection, but did not attend. Dan Guy indicated that the County promised to correct the problem by placing water bars on the road. Pond #1 was reaching its sediment capacity and was full of water but had not overflowed into Pond #2. The extra sediment loading from the County road should not holdup the Phase I bond release, but the Permittee must take care of it before the ponds can be removed.

The group hiked to the No. 7 Mine highwall area. (The landowner was Mr. Jacobsen, who was invited, but did not attend.) At the base of the Number 7 Mine, Dan Guy and the Division's staff gave a history of the site. The area had been difficult to reclaim due to seeps that caused stability problems for the backfill and the location of the stream. The portal was buried about 60 feet below the surface, but approximately 40 feet of highwall remains. The site is stable. Excess soil from the area was used as substitute topsoil at the #2 mine and to fill in the road cut, as described in the reclamation plan. The group concluded that the site met the minimum requirements for Phase I bond release.

The group then turned their attention to the No. 8 Mine area. (The landowner was Mr. Robert Jewkes, who was invited, but did not attend.) The portal area for the No. 8 Mine had been backfilled and graded. The highwall was eliminated. The area matched the designs and appeared to be stable.

The group proceeded to the Jacob's Pond area. The Jacob's Pond was built to provide water for wildlife and livestock. It is a permanent impoundment approved by the State Engineer's Office and is not used for sediment control. The pond and the access route are fenced to protect the reclaimed areas from over grazing. The pond appeared to be stable and in good working order.

Near Jacob's Pond was a cut slope that had been left, mainly because it contained a seep that would cause stability problems if the area had been backfilled. The group was asked to comment on the condition of Jacob's Pond and the cut slope. The consensus was that the Jacob's Pond and the cut slope met the minimum requirements for backfilling and grading.

Dan Guy showed the location of the No. 2 Mine. That mine was constructed pre-law and had been completely reclaimed. The area was backfilled and graded to meet the AOC requirements. The short, steep highwall remnants provide good habitat for marmots and a few were noted during the inspection. The group was given the opportunity to comment. The consensus was that the reclamation work at the No. 2 Mine met the minimum requirements of the regulations. A Western Tanager and Yellow Warbler were seen in a pine tree at the site.

RECOMMENDATIONS/CONCLUSIONS:

The Division should proceed with Phase I bond release for all areas of the Gordon Creek 2, 7 & 8 Mines with the exception of Sweet's Pond and the sediment ponds at the main site. A separate meeting between the Permittee, the Division, and Mr. Ray Hansen County Road Supervisor is recommended.