

0038



# United States Department of the Interior

BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT

Moab District  
P.O. Box 970  
Moab, Utah 84532

3482  
U-50722  
(UT-065c)

FEB 2 1993

CERTIFIED MAIL - Return Receipt Requested  
Certification No. P 696 298 120

Mr. Tom Paluso  
Chief Engineer  
Soldier Creek Coal Co.  
P.O. Box 1  
Price, Utah 84501

RECEIVED

FEB 04 1993

DIVISION OF  
OIL GAS & MINING

Re: Minor Modification to Soldier Canyon Mine - Rock Partings in the 2nd West Section

Dear Mr. Paluso:

On December 17, 1992, the Bureau of Land Management (BLM) received a telephone request from Soldier Creek Coal Company (SCCC) to modify the approved resource recovery and protection plan (R2P2) for the Soldier Canyon Mine. Price Coal Office personnel evaluated the situation based on data from previous inspections, and then granted a verbal approval to SCCC for a minor modification to the approved mine plan on December 17, 1992. A formal written request for the minor modification was received on December 18, 1992. The reserves in question are located in the Rock Canyon Seam on Federal coal lease U-50722.

The approved mining plan was to develop 12 entries in the 2nd West section and connect the developed entries to the 1st North section. SCCC developed 7 entries as planned and is now proposing to stop developing the remaining 5 entries at #22 crosscut, retreat mine the developed pillars and abandon the block of coal located to the north of #7 entry and to the west of #21 crosscut (see enclosure).

Soldier Creek's justification for the mine plan change are two rock partings in the upper and lower portions of the seam which dilute the coal and increase the ash content to unacceptable limits. The partings are very hard to mine and vary in thickness between 1 foot and in excess of 3.5 feet at some locations.

The 2nd West section was inspected on November 17, 1992 and December 7, 1992. During these inspections, 0.2 feet of silty parting was measured in the #12 entry at #21 crosscut. The coal was about 3 feet thick above the parting and 6 to 6.5 feet thick below this parting. The silt thickened to 1.7 feet of hard siltstone at #22 crosscut and is extending through the northern five entries of the 2nd West section. The same parting was encountered in the Main West section and development was ceased at #21 and #22 crosscuts. Measurements in the

#1 entry revealed that the parting is 1.4 feet at #20 crosscut and in excess of 3.5 feet at #21 crosscut. SCCC has successfully mined beneath the upper parting in the 2nd West section; however, a second parting was encountered in the lower portion of the seam. This parting was measured in the #6 entry and is 0.2 feet thick at #24 crosscut and 0.7 feet at #29 crosscut. The second parting was also encountered in the 1st North section and development was terminated at #33 crosscut. Measurements in the 1st North section were not possible because of accumulated water in all the section entries.

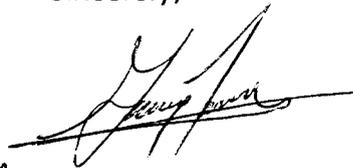
SCCC's contractual limits for ash content are 11% on a 5 train average or 12% on a single train basis. Independent calculations show that mining two inches of rock parting within a ten foot coal seam, in addition to the in-seam ash content, can dilute the production to an unacceptable level of more than 12% ash. The company has no wash facility and coal is produced from one section only; therefore, mining the rock partings will dilute the coal and increase the ash content to the unacceptable contractual limits.

Under the present circumstances, the BLM has authorized SCCC to discontinue developing the remaining five entries at #22 crosscut and start retreat mining the developed pillars. In addition, SCCC may abandon the block of coal located to the north of #7 entry and to the west of #21 crosscut. This confirms the verbal approval given to Soldier Creek Mine personnel on December 17, 1992. An estimated 40,000 tons of coal reserves are now deemed unrecoverable.

The BLM has determined that the mine plan change is in compliance with the Mineral Leasing Act of 1920, as amended, the regulations at 43 CFR 3480, the lease terms and stipulations, and will achieve maximum economic recovery of the Federal coal. A copy of the approved mine map is enclosed.

If you have any questions, please contact Abe Elias in the Price Coal Office at 801/637-4584.

Sincerely,



for Assistant District Manager  
Mineral Resources

Enclosure:  
Approved Mine Map

cc: DM, Moab (UT-065) (w/enclosure)  
SD, Utah (UT-921) (w/enclosure)  
JDOGM, Salt Lake City (w/enclosure)

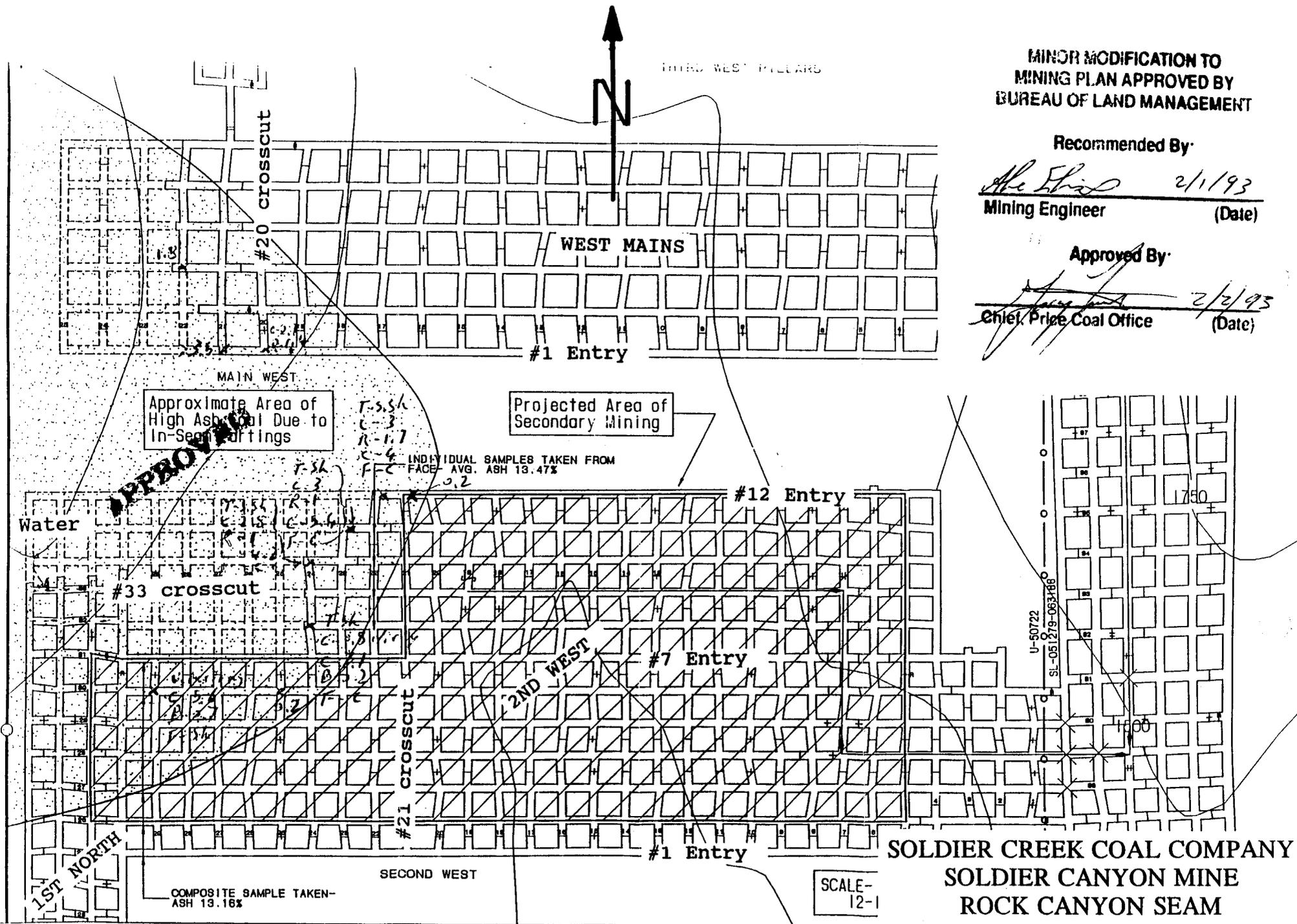
MINOR MODIFICATION TO  
MINING PLAN APPROVED BY  
BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT

Recommended By:

*Alc. Elias* 2/1/93  
Mining Engineer (Date)

Approved By:

*[Signature]* 2/2/93  
Chief, Price Coal Office (Date)



Approximate Area of High Ash Coal Due to In-Segment Drifts

Projected Area of Secondary Mining

INDIVIDUAL SAMPLES TAKEN FROM FACE - AVG. ASH 13.47%

COMPOSITE SAMPLE TAKEN- ASH 13.16%

SCALE- 12-1

SOLDIER CREEK COAL COMPANY  
SOLDIER CANYON MINE  
ROCK CANYON SEAM  
APPROVED MINE MAP