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

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DIVISION OF OIL GAS & MINING
FIELD VISIT FORM
TECHNICAL

Date: March 12, 1997 **Time:** 10:30 AM to about 2:00 PM

Mine: Soldier Canyon **File Number:** ACT/007/018, Folder #2

DOGM Staff: Paul Baker and Robert Davidson

Other Attendees: Barry Barnum (Canyon Fuel), Leland Sasser (NRCS), and Ben Morris (DWR)

Purpose: To check the possibilities of there being prime farmlands, wetlands, and critical wildlife habitat in the area proposed to be disturbed for a waste rock disposal site.

Observations and Conclusions: There is a small area to the southeast of the proposed waste rock disposal site that appears to have the characteristics of a wetland. The area would not be disturbed, but Mr. Barnum agreed to show it on one of the maps.

The soils immediately west of the Soldier Canyon road are of prime farmland quality, and it appears irrigation water is available, but the area has not been farmed for about seven years. Mr. Sasser was inconclusive about whether he would say the area is prime farmland.

The entire area contains critical big game winter range. Deer use the agricultural fields extensively during the winter, and they probably use the pinyon-juniper areas as cover. The valley where most of the waste rock disposal site would be has important habitat, but there is a lot of greasewood toward the south end of the site. Greasewood is mildly poisonous and provides poor forage.

Mr. Morris and I discussed what mitigation requirements would be needed. He felt they should not be required to do 3:1 mitigation for the entire site (3 acres of enhanced habitat for every acre of disturbance) as commonly required for a project such as this because some of the vegetation is of poor quality. We agreed to require 3:1 mitigation for all areas except where the vegetation community was greasewood.

We also discussed the woody plant density success standard. Baseline information shows both the reference area that will probably be used and the area proposed to be disturbed have about 3000 shrubs per acre. We decided these areas have reasonably good mixes of shrubs, grasses, and forbs and that the success standard should be 3000 woody plants per acre.

Signature: _____ on April 2, 1997
Paul B. Baker, Reclamation Biologist

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