



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

Michael O. Leavitt
Governor

Kathleen Clarke
Executive Director

Lowell P. Braxton
Division Director

1594 West North Temple, Suite 1210

PO Box 145801

Salt Lake City, Utah 84114-5801

801-538-5340

801-359-3940 (Fax)

801-538-7223 (TDD)

May 1, 2001

Rick Olsen, General Manager
Canyon Fuel Company, LLC
P.O. Box 1029
Wellington, Utah 84542

Re Approval of Proposal to Delete Test Plot Monitoring Requirements, Canyon Fuel Company, LLC, Soldier Canyon Mine, C/007/018-AM01A, Outgoing File

Dear Mr. Olsen:

The above-referenced amendment is approved effective May 1, 2001. Enclosed is a stamped incorporated copy for your copy of the Mining and Reclamation Plan and a copy of our Technical Analysis for your information.

If you have any questions, please feel free to call me.

Sincerely,

Daron R. Haddock
Permit Supervisor

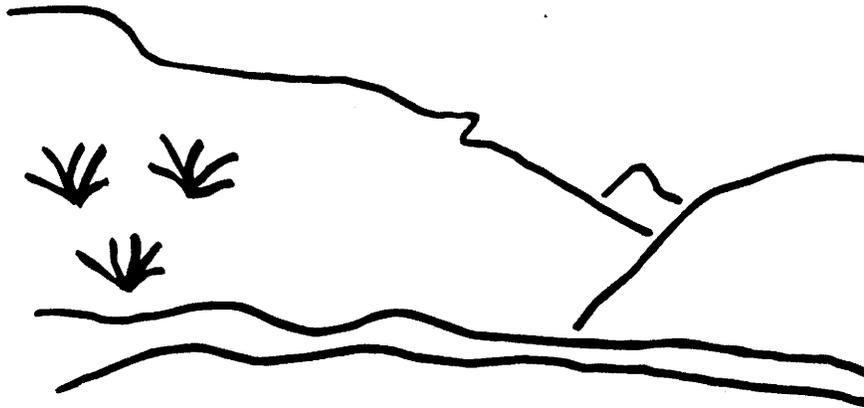
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Enclosure:

cc: Joe Wilcox, OSM
Richard Manus, BLM
Mark Page, Water Rights w/o
Dave Ariotti, DEQ w/o
Derris Jones, DWR w/o
David Terry, SITLA w/o
Price Field Office

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State of Utah



Utah Oil Gas and Mining

Coal Regulatory Program

Soldier Canyon Mine
Deletion of Test Plot Monitoring Requirements
C/007/018-AM01A
Technical Analysis
April 24, 2001

INTRODUCTION

TECHNICAL ANALYSIS

INTRODUCTION

In a proposal received April 2, 2001, Canyon Fuel Company is proposing to delete the monitoring requirements for the test plots at the Soldier Canyon Mine. These test plots were established early in the Coal Regulatory Program and have demonstrated that reclamation is feasible at the Soldier Canyon Mine.

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INTRODUCTION

RECLAMATION PLAN

RECLAMATION PLAN

REVEGETATION

Regulatory Reference: 30 CFR Sec. 785.18, 817.111, 817.113, 817.114, 817.116; R645-301-244, -301-353, -301-354, -301-355, -301-356, -302-280, -302-281, -302-282, -302-283, -302-284.

Analysis:

Field Trials

There are three sets of test plots at the Soldier Canyon Mine. They are on the topsoil stockpile near the sediment pond, adjacent to the county road near the upper fan, and by the sewage lagoons. These test plots were established in 1982 and 1984 at a time when the Division had limited reclamation experience and was unsure how well various reclamation methods and substitute topsoil would work.

Unfortunately, crested wheatgrass was used in the seed mixtures with several other species rather than being tried separately. Crested wheatgrass is an introduced aggressive, though otherwise somewhat desirable, species, and it dominates all three sites. In hindsight, it would have been better to seed crested wheatgrass on separate plots from the other species so it would be easier to tell how well the native species would grow. In spite of this problem, the test plots have shown that reclamation is feasible on the substitute soils available for reclamation at the Soldier Canyon Mine.

Results of monitoring the test plots are included in previous years' annual reports. The Division agrees with the applicant that the test plots are not likely to yield additional useful information and that monitoring should be discontinued.

Findings:

Information provided in the application is adequate to meet the requirements of this section of the regulations.