

2007/018 Incoming  
cc: Karl



## United States Department of the Interior

OFFICE OF SURFACE MINING  
Reclamation and Enforcement  
Western Region Office  
1999 Broadway, Suite 3320  
Denver, CO 80202-3050



May 21, 2015

Dana Dean  
Department of Natural Resources  
Division of Oil, Gas and Mining  
1594 West North Temple, Suite 1210  
Salt Lake City, Utah 84116

RECEIVED  
MAY 26 2015  
DIV. OF OIL, GAS & MINING

Dear Ms. Dean,

I have enclosed copies of OSMRE's inspection reports for the Soilder Canyon Mine (Complete) that was conducted the week of May 11, 2015.

If you have any questions regarding these reports, please do not hesitate to contact me at (303) 293-5046.

Sincerely,

Spencer Shumate  
Natural Resources Specialist, Denver Field Branch

Attachment: Copy Solider Canyon Mine Complete Inspection Report





## **Soldier Canyon Mine Complete Oversight Inspection Report**

Utah Division of Oil, Gas and Mining (DOGGM) Permit ID # C/007/0018

### **Date:**

Monday, May 11 9:15 am – 3:30 pm

### **Participants:**

Karl Houskeeper, DOGM

Bill King, Canyon Fuel Company (CFC), LLC

Tom Medlin, Office of Surface Mining Reclamation and Enforcement (OSMRE)

Spencer Shumate, OSMRE (#541)

David Spillman, PE, Canyon Fuel Company, LLC

### **Weather:**

Clear, cool, and sunny.

### **Background:**

The Soldier Canyon Mine is owned and permitted under Canyon Fuel Company, LLC. Until December 1996, the property, and associated reserves were known as Soldier Creek Coal Company.

The Soldier Canyon Mine is located in the Book Cliffs Coal Field approximately 12 miles northeast of Wellington, Utah. Initial prospecting took place there as early 1906, however actual mining via hand loading methods did not commence until 1935. The limited production from the mine was initially sold as home heating coal in Carbon and Emery counties.

Production reached approximately 1,200,000 tons per year via continuous mining methods conducted in the Sunnyside and Rock Canyon seams before the mine was idled in 1999.

Overburden thickness ranges from approximately 100 feet under Soldier Creek Canyon to over 2,000 feet. The permit area encompasses about 6,600 acres and is comprised of state and federal leases and fee properties. Postmining land use is wildlife grazing.

The mine has been in temporary cessation since March 25, 1999.

This was a complete oversight inspection of the Soldier Canyon Mine and permit areas. Administrative review of pertinent records was conducted prior to and upon conclusion of this field inspection. The inspection began with a records check at the neighboring Dugout Canyon Mine, also owned and operated by CFC, where records for both mines are co-located, at approximately 9:15 am. The field inspection began at approximately 1:30 pm and concluded with a closeout discussion at approximately 3:30 pm.

### **Records Check**

- The permit is valid through 2/3/2017.
- The bond is in the amount of \$1.593 million and was most recently calculated in 2014 as part of the midterm review.
- The insurance certificate satisfies all requirements and is valid through 2/1/2016.
- The UPDES permit is valid through 8/31/2016.
- Quarterly pond inspections were most recently conducted in April of this year.
- The SPCC plan is valid through December, 2016.
- Subsidence monitoring reports have not been required by DOGM since 2000, after the mine entered temporary cessation status.
- A letter from Carbon County dated 9/26/1990 provides for coal haulage on Nine Mile Canyon Road.

### **Signs and Markers**

All entrances to the Soldier Canyon permit area, topsoil storage area, and sewage lagoon / greywater evaporative ponds displayed proper mine identification signs. Topsoil piles and disturbed area boundaries were properly marked. **See Figure 1 below.**

### **Surface Facilities**

At the time of inspection, all portals had been temporarily sealed with earthen backfill. No fuel or lubricants were stored onsite. Vandals have stripped the facility of almost all its copper wiring. The mine uses some of the buildings to store equipment from the active, adjacent Dugout Canyon Mine. **See Figure 2 and 3 below.**

### **Hydrologic Balance**

All disturbed area runoff from the surface facilities reports to the surface area sedimentation pond via 18" and 24" corrugated metal pipes (CMP). Undisturbed area runoff reports to Soldier Creek via 30" CMP.

The surface facilities sedimentation pond exhibited stable, well vegetated banks and unobstructed principal and emergency spillways. The pond contained a small amount of water at the time of inspection. The cleanout indicator level was visible. **See Figure 4 below.**

The mine contains three UPDES outfalls: two for mine water discharge and one for the surface facilities sedimentation pond. The most recent water monitoring data on file with the Division indicate no discharge from any of the UPDES points.

During temporary cessation, the operator is not required to monitor any springs or sample any wells at the mine. The operator is required to monitor Soldier Creek at sites G-5 and G-6 during temporary cessation; the most recent data on file with the Division show no flows for the quarter.

The Team also observed sewage lagoons / evaporative ponds used for treatment of mine bathhouse greywater adjacent to the topsoil storage area. The lagoons displayed proper signage, protective fencing, and stable, riprapped banks. The lagoons will be reclaimed as part of the approved Mining and Reclamation Plan (MRP).

### **Topsoil**

Topsoil removed for surface facilities at both Dugout Canyon and Soldier Canyon mines is stored at one location along SR-53. The entrance to the topsoil storage area was properly marked with a mine identification sign. The topsoil piles and disturbed area perimeter boundaries were properly marked. The topsoil piles from both mines' surface facilities were bermed and vegetated and no resource loss was evident. The topsoil pile for the storage area itself was bermed but exhibited less vegetation than the other piles and had recently been hydromulched. Mr. Spillman explained that deer and rabbits had engaged in a "feeding frenzy" here; extensive scat supports this claim. No resource loss was evident at the topsoil storage area pile.

### **Maintenance Items**

No maintenance items were noted as a result of this inspection.

### **Enforcement Actions / Programmatic Compliance**

No enforcement actions were taken as a result of this inspection, nor are any pending.

### **Inspection Photographs:**



Figure 1

Topsoil storage area identification sign



Figure 2

Surface facilities featuring stacktube and conveyor



Figure 3

Surface facilities featuring conveyor, bulk fuel storage shed, and fan portal



Figure 4

Surface facilities sedimentation pond