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

Michael O. Leavitt
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September 26, 2000

David Miller, Resident Agent
Lodestar Energy, Inc.
HC 35 Box 370
Helper, Utah 84526

RE: Proposed Changes to Water Monitoring Plan, Lodestar Energy, Inc., Horizon Mine, ACT/007/020, Outgoing File

Dear Mr. Miller:

This is a response to your letter dated September 7, 2000 in which you updated the Division on your situation to gain access on Stamatakis' property and requested to modify or delete water monitoring sites on their property.

Division hydrologist, Dave Darby, has conducted a review and his evaluation of your request is included in the enclosed Technical Analysis. It is determined that all of the monitoring sites are necessary to evaluate the current and future hydrologic conditions above the minesite and that no sites can be deleted or relocated.

The sites must be monitored in accordance with your current water monitoring program specified in the Mining and Reclamation Plan.

If you have any questions, please call me.

Sincerely,

Pamela Grubaugh-Littig
Acting Associate Director of Mining

dwd/sm
Enclosure:
cc: Price Field Office
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September 22, 2000

TO: Internal File

THRU: Daron R. Haddock, Permit Supervisor

FROM: David W. Darby, Reclamation Specialist III

RE: Notification of Monitoring Hinderance, Lodestar Energy, Inc., Horizon Mine, ACT/007/020

SUMMARY:

This technical review evaluates a letter from Lodestar Energy, Inc. dated September 11. 2000. The operator notified the Division that Mr. Steve Stamatakis, one of the current surface owners adjacent to the Horizon Mine Permit area will not allow the mining company access to his property to collect monitoring information and water samples. Field data and samples are required quarterly under the mining and reclamation permit and regulatory program to identify changes in the hydrologic regime as a result of mining.

TECHNICAL ANALYSIS:

HYDROLOGIC RESOURCE INFORMATION

Regulatory Reference: 30 CFR Sec. 701.5, 784.14; R645-100-200, -301-724.

R645-301-723. Sampling and analysis

A review of the monitoring quickly revealed that the all of the sites were important to evaluate the current and future surface and ground-water impacts from the existing operation and the proposed federal lease. The monitoring sites cannot be deleted or changed. These sites were selected to provide baseline and operational information and to identify any impacts on the hydrologic regime, which includes potential impacts to the landowner's water rights.

It is necessary to continue monitoring these sites since, the monitoring sites are strategically located to assess impacts, specifically above and upstream of the minesite.

Changing monitoring site locations is not practical, since the data will not provide the information necessary to describe the targeted area. A data record has already been established for the current monitoring sites, however continued monitoring is necessary to establish trends in both flow and quality.

The data from the wells identifies water levels in and adjacent to the fault blocks. The advantage to the location of these wells becomes critical should the mining operations intercept the related fracture system. The Division has currently requested more wells be drilled to identify future mining impacts. Deleting the existing wells from the monitoring plan works directly against the desired objective to identify ground-water levels, flow directions and interconnections between fault blocks.

Deleting or relocating the monitoring sites along Beaver Creek would interrupt the data sequence. This could be harmful to the monitoring plan, since logging and grazing activities have been taking place along the creek. The area surrounding Beaver Creek is owned by Stamatakis and some concerns regarding subsidence and water interception have been expressed by the landowner for past mining operations and future mining of the Horizon Mine. Deleting or eliminating any of these monitoring sites would not allow impact determinations.

Findings:

The monitoring plan cannot be changed to delete or relocate existing monitoring sites. The monitoring sites are necessary to identify potential impacts to surface and ground-waters in the area adjacent to mining activities.

RECOMMENDATION:

The situation with the landowner is unfortunate, however it is recommended that the current monitoring plan remain status quo.

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