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

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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, Banning Siding Loadout, C/007/034-AM01B, 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

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
Price Field Office
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State of Utah

Utah Oil Gas and Mining

Coal Regulatory Program

Banning Siding Loadout
Deletion of Test Plot Monitoring Requirements
C/007/034-AM01B
Technical Analysis
April 24, 2001

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 Banning Loadout. These test plots were installed in 1991 and were last monitored in 1998. They have provided valuable information about reclamation techniques for this site.

INTRODUCTION

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

The applicant is proposing to delete the requirements to monitor the test plots southeast of the loadout. These test plots were installed in an attempt to find revegetation techniques that would be successful at this harsh site, and they replaced others that were largely unsuccessful.

The test plots were started in November 1991 and were monitored through 1998. Because of extremely harsh soil and moisture conditions, the Division had been concerned whether revegetation to the performance standards was possible, and the Division was anxious to show that any desirable species could be successfully established in this area. The test plots have shown that reclamation is feasible, and they have shown treatments and species that can be used at this site. Some of the conclusions from test plot monitoring and from subsequent revegetation near the substation include:

- The most successful species planted were Gardner saltbush (probably *Atriplex gardneri* Var. *tridentata*) and crested wheatgrass (*Agropyron desertorum*).

- The most successful treatment was to rip and gouge the surface then seed and mulch. None of the other treatments, such as applying manure, sawdust, or fertilizer, appeared to increase the amount of vegetation. The control areas that were simply gouged and mulched with no seed applied had little or no vegetation.

- In about 1993, an area near the substation was gouged, seeded with Gardner saltbush and crested wheatgrass, and mulched. This revegetation effort has been successful and confirms the test plot results. This area may have been seeded too heavily which led to some of the plants being stunted.

The Division is pleased with the results of the test plots showing that vegetation can be established, but in final reclamation, it will be necessary for the applicant to try to establish greater diversity than the test plots had.

Findings:

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

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