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CC: PFO

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# State of Utah

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November 28, 1994

TO: Daron Haddock, Permit Supervisor  
Coal Regulatory Program

THRU: Mary Ann Wright, Administrator *MW*  
Abandoned Mine Reclamation Program

FROM: Chris Rohrer, Senior Reclamation Specialist *CR*  
Abandoned Mine Reclamation Program

RE: AMR Program activities at Willow Creek Disposal Site  
Sed Ponds Project AMR/007/921/C  
Blackhawk Exploration Program EXP/007/038

The Utah Abandoned Mine Reclamation (AMR) Program has performed activities at the Willow Creek Disposal Site that have caused some ground disturbance and permanent changes in the surface topography. The Willow Creek Disposal Site is the abandoned highwall site in Willow Creek Canyon that the AMR Program backfilled with coal refuse in its Price River Coal Pile: Phase 2 and Lower Willow Creek projects in 1989-90. The site is now leased from Blackhawk Coal Company by Cyprus Plateau Mining Corporation and is being investigated for a potential mine site by Cyprus Plateau's Blackhawk Exploration Program.

The AMR Program has been working with EMR Inc. of Lawrence, Kansas, to find a market to recover the energy values of the coal refuse landfilled at the site. To do this, EMR required a bulk sample of the coal refuse to ship to a potential client for testing.

Cyprus Plateau's investigation includes a program of exploratory drilling at several locations on the site. For this they require improved access into the site for a drill rig. At one of the planned drill sites, the road and pad preparation necessitated a cut into the slope that would strip the soil cover and expose the underlying coal. The AMR Program arranged with Cyprus Plateau to take advantage of this situation to obtain the bulk coal refuse sample for EMR.



Page 2  
Daron Haddock  
November 28, 1994

On Tuesday, November 1, the AMR Program's contractor for its Sed Ponds Project, Ned B. Mitchell Inc., obtained the bulk sample. The crew used an access road that had been graded that same day by Cyprus Plateau's contractor, Minchey Digging, for drill rig access. At the one drill site requiring a road cut across and into the slope, the Minchey dozer operator overexcavated the road and pad cuts to build a stockpile of coal from depth free of contamination with soil. Two truckloads of the coal (about 25 cubic yards total) were loaded and removed. The trench was later backfilled with the remaining coal and the slope was regraded and dressed to make the road and drill pad.

The AMR Program's activities resulted in a greater disturbance at the drill site than would have occurred from just the drilling alone. The removal of a large quantity of subsurface material left a divot in the surface that does not match the generally uniform neighboring slopes. In addition, the excavation of coal from depth resulted in more mixing of soil and coal than a simple road cut would have done. Consequently the soil cover is blacker and thinner in the sample area than elsewhere on the site.

The AMR Program gratefully acknowledges Cyprus Plateau's role in coordinating the coal sampling work.

cr/jm  
cc: Ben Grimes, CPMC  
Sed Ponds Project file  
Blackhawk Exploration Program file  
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