



State of Utah

DEPARTMENT OF NATURAL RESOURCES
DIVISION OF OIL, GAS AND MINING

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TO: File

THRU: Daron Haddock, Permit Supervisor *DQH*

FROM: Paul Baker, Reclamation Biologist *PAB*

RE: Coal Storage Expansion Area, Cyprus Plateau Mining Corporation, Willow Creek Mine, ACT/007/038-97I-1, Folder #2, Carbon County, Utah

SUMMARY:

Cyprus Plateau Mining Corporation has submitted an application to alter its mining and reclamation plan for the Willow Creek Mine. The proposal is to expand the coal stockpile area at the Castle Gate Preparation Plant, and it mainly affects drainage designs and soils. The application now includes a cultural resources survey and a commitment to move the revegetation reference area. No cultural resources were found in the expansion area.

TECHNICAL ANALYSIS:

ENVIRONMENTAL RESOURCE INFORMATION

CULTURAL AND HISTORIC RESOURCES INFORMATION

Regulatory Reference: R645-301-411.140

Analysis:

The applicant is proposing to expand its coal storage area into an undisturbed area. The application includes a new cultural resources survey, but no cultural resources were found.

Normally, it would be necessary to keep this information confidential, but, since nothing was found, this is not necessary.

Based on the information provided by the applicant, the Division should recommend the State Historic Preservation Officer make a finding of "no effect".

Findings:

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

RECLAMATION PLAN

REVEGETATION PLAN

Regulatory Reference: R645-301-340

Analysis:

Although the area contains undisturbed land, this area has been previously surveyed for threatened, endangered, and sensitive species and for vegetation cover. Therefore, further baseline data is not needed.

The proposed expansion area overlaps with the Barn Canyon sage-grass reference area. This area would be used for judging revegetation success in parts of Crandall Canyon. The application says the reference area will be moved northward a distance sufficient to place it outside the area to be disturbed for coal storage.

The area to the north of the reference area has the same vegetation community as the reference area and is acceptable. However, the reference area needs to be shown on a map, and the exact location should be marked with stakes or located with GPS technology.

According to Table 3.3 on page 29 of Appendix 9-1, the grass-sage reference area would be used to compare to the leach field in Crandall Canyon. Appendix 3.7T indicates the grass sage reference area would be used for comparison to the area near the shaft in Crandall Canyon. This conflict needs to be resolved although it is not a deficiency related to the application.

Although the existing reference area is approved, there are important differences between it and the disturbed areas in Crandall Canyon. The disturbed areas are near the bottom of the canyon and are relatively flat with fairly deep soil, but the reference area is steep and rocky with shallow soil.

Findings:

Information provided in the proposed amendment is not considered adequate to meet the requirements of this section. The applicant must provide the following in accordance with:

R645-301-323.100, The applicant has proposed moving the Barn Canyon reference area. While this proposal is acceptable, the exact location needs to be marked in the field or located with GPS technology, and its new location needs to be shown on a map.

In addition, the plan contains a conflict regarding which reference areas will be used to judge revegetation success in Crandall Canyon. This does not relate directly to the current proposal but will need to be corrected.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

The Barn Canyon Grass Sage reference area needs to be located in the field and marked on a map. It is recommended this deficiency be included as a stipulation on the approval for this amendment.