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State of Utah
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TO: File

THRU: Daron Haddock, Permit Supervisor

FROM: James D. Smith, Reclamation Specialist

RE: Technical Analysis - Addition of Two Methane Degassification Wells and Mine Layout Revision, Cyprus Plateau Mining Company, Willow Creek Mine, ACT/007/038-97K, File #2, Carbon County, Utah

SUMMARY

Two longwall gob degassification wells are needed to reduce the risk of methane gas ignition and possible mine fires. The boring of several holes has already been done under an exploration permit from BLM, and all but two have been plugged. The two bore holes remain open to strata just above the D-seam, the plan being that after longwall panels pass beneath these two wells the roof will crack or collapse and the wells will then serve as vents or stacks to carry methane from the gob to the outside atmosphere.

The wells will be reclaimed after mining of the block of longwall panels has been completed and the area sealed. It is anticipated that the wells will be needed for approximately five years.

ADMINISTRATIVE FINDINGS

COMPLETENESS

When the proposed amendment is compared to the currently approved MRP, four paragraphs concerning soil reclamation have been deleted from pages 4.2-3 and 4.2-3a, and three lines concerning erosional gullies are missing at the top of page 5.4-14. The amendment cannot be inserted into the MRP with these omissions.

Findings:

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

R645-301-121.200, -121.300, missing information on pages 4.2-3, 4.2-3a, and 5.4-14 needs to be restored.

TECHNICAL ANALYSIS

ENVIRONMENTAL RESOURCE INFORMATION

GEOLOGIC RESOURCE INFORMATION

Regulatory Reference: 30 CFR Sec. 784.22; R645-301-623, -301-724.

Analysis:

Two holes drilled as part of an exploration program within the existing permit area are proposed for conversion to gob degassification wells. The recovered methane may be marketed if future testing indicates that quality and quantity are sufficient.

The current MRP includes geologic information in sufficient detail to assist in determining the probable hydrologic consequences of the operation upon the quality and quantity of surface and ground water in the permit and adjacent areas. There is no additional geologic resource information in the proposed amendment except for the locations of the two degassification wells on Map 19-A.

Sealing of exploration drillholes and reclamation of roads and drill sites are discussed in Section 4.1.2.6 of the current MRP.

Findings:

Information provided in the proposed Degassification Well Amendment is considered adequate to meet the requirements of the Geologic Resources section.

HYDROLOGIC RESOURCE INFORMATION

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

Analysis:

Baseline cumulative impact area information.

The degassification wells are within the current CHIA. The proposed amendment to the Willow Creek Mine MRP will require no modification of the findings of the current CHIA.

Probable hydrologic consequences determination.

The proposed amendment has been reviewed by the Division and a new or updated PHC is not required.

Findings:

Information provided in the proposed amendment is considered adequate to meet the requirements of the Hydrologic Resources section.

MAPS, PLANS, AND CROSS SECTIONS OF RESOURCE INFORMATION

Regulatory Reference: 30 CFR Sec. 783.24, 783.25; R645-301-323, -301-411, -301-521, -301-622, -301-722, -301-731.

Analysis:

Mine Workings Maps

Plate 19-A has been submitted in the proposed degassification wells amendment to show location of the degassification wells in relation to projected workings in the D-seam.

Certification

Map 19-A is not certified.

Findings:

Information provided in the proposed amendment is not considered adequate to meet the requirements of the Maps, Plans, and Cross-Sections Resource Information section. Prior to approval the applicant must provide the following in accordance with:

R645-301-612, -622.100, locations of the degassification wells are not shown on a certified map.

RECOMMENDATION

Several minor deficiencies have been identified that need to be corrected before the Degassification Well Amendment can be approved for inclusion in the MRP.