



# State of Utah

DEPARTMENT OF NATURAL RESOURCES  
DIVISION OF OIL, GAS AND MINING

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October 16, 1997

TO: File

THRU: Daron Haddock, Permit Supervisor *ORZ*

FROM: Paul Baker, Reclamation Biologist *PAB*

RE: Coal Storage Expansion Area, Cyprus Plateau Mining Corporation, Willow Creek Mine, ACT/007/038-97I, 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. One of the revegetation reference areas is in the area proposed to be disturbed, and Cyprus needs to propose an alternative to this reference area.

## TECHNICAL ANALYSIS:

### **RECLAMATION PLAN**

#### **REVEGETATION PLAN**

Regulatory Reference: R645-301-340

#### **Analysis:**

The applicant has proposed to expand its coal storage area at the Castle Gate Preparation Plant. Expansion would be to the north of the existing stockpile area.

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 grass-sage reference area. This area would be used for judging revegetation success in parts of Crandall Canyon. The applicant needs to find an alternative to either the disturbance or to the success standard.

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.

This time of year, it may be difficult to find a more appropriate reference area, so it may be most expedient for the applicant to simply propose moving the reference area north so it is not in the disturbed area. However, the applicant should plan to work with the Division to find a different, more suitable reference area.

**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:

**R645-301-340,** The proposed expanded disturbed area overlaps with the Barn Canyon grass-sage reference area. The applicant needs to propose an alternative revegetation success standard or to not disturb the existing reference area.

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.

Page 3  
ACT/007/038-97I  
October 16, 1997

**RECOMMENDATIONS:**

Cyprus needs to either not disturb the Barn Canyon grass-sage reference area or to propose an alternative revegetation success standard. It is suggested the current reference area be moved to the north. Cyprus will need to work with the Division to find a better success standard and to resolve a conflict in the mining and reclamation plan.