

0038



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

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July 21, 1997

TO: File

THROUGH: Daron Haddock, Permit Supervisor

FROM: Paul Baker, Reclamation Biologist

Handwritten initials in black ink, appearing to be 'DARON' and 'PAUL'.

Re: Willow Creek Exploration Plan, Cyprus Plateau Mining Company, Willow Creek Mine, ACT/007/038, Folder #2, Carbon County, Utah

SUMMARY:

Cyprus Plateau Mining Company is proposing to drill eight exploration holes in federal coal. They propose to drill these over a period of two years and desire to begin as soon as possible. The Bureau of Land Management is the lead permitting agency, and the Division provides comments.

ANALYSIS:

The Division makes the following comments and recommendations about the exploration plan proposed by Cyprus Plateau Mining Company for the area of the Willow Creek Mine:

1. The application indicates an archaeological survey was conducted for the area near proposed drill site P97-30-4, but the legal descriptions shown in the archaeological study do not match the legal description for this site. It appears that none of the other sites has been surveyed, and it is impossible to make a recommendation to the State Historic Preservation Officer with no information.
2. The seed mix is adequate and meets Division performance standards, but some of the species are difficult to establish from seed and could be replaced by other native species. It is suggested that northern sweetvetch be substituted for arrowleaf balsamroot. While snowberry is adapted to the area, another native species, such as fourwing saltbush, might be used in its place.

By some classification systems, *Poa ampla* and *Poa secunda* are synonyms,

but the Division has found "big bluegrass," *Poa ampla*, to be very successful on reclamation sites in this area.

3. Proposed drill hole P97-26-1 is within lease UTU-73975, but it appears it may be necessary to locate the hole in lease SL-07137. Lease SL-07137 is controlled by Blackhawk Coal Company, and the application contains a copy of a right of entry agreement between Blackhawk and Cyprus. While it is possible to deduce this information from the application, it would be better to have it clarified that the exact location may vary from what is shown on the map.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

The three items listed above are recommendations to the Bureau of Land Management concerning Cyprus' proposal to drill eight exploration holes. Cyprus should not be allowed to drill until clearance is given by the State Historic Preservation Officer.