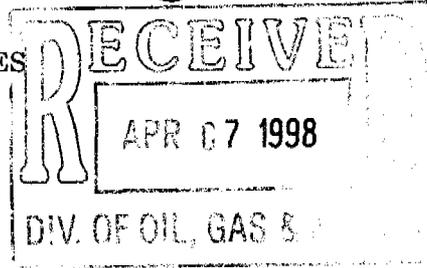




**State of Utah**  
DEPARTMENT OF NATURAL RESOURCES  
DIVISION OF WILDLIFE RESOURCES

Michael O. Leavitt  
Governor  
Ted Stewart  
Executive Director  
John Kimball  
Division Director

Southeastern Region  
475 West Price River Drive, Suite C  
Price, Utah 84501-2860  
801-636-0260  
801-637-7361 (Fax)



March 31, 1998

Mike Milovich, Chairman  
Carbon County Commission  
120 East Main Street  
Price, Utah 84501

*ACT/007/038 #2*  
*Copy Mary Ann, Aaron,*  
*Joe, Pete (PRO), Paul*

Dear Commissioner Milovich:

Carbon County owns a parcel of land within the Gordon Creek Wildlife Management Area, an area managed by the Division of Wildlife Resources as critical big game winter habitat. The parcel consists of 40 acres, and its legal description is T 13 So., R 8 E., Sec. 34, NE 1/4 of the SE 1/4 (see the parcel outlined in yellow on the attached map). This parcel is bordered on three sides by land owned by the Division, and has no vehicle access. The 40 acres is bisected by a small drainage, and is covered by sagebrush, oak, serviceberry, pinyon, juniper, and other vegetation beneficial to wildlife in the area. Elk use the drainage to access the Division's agricultural fields on the north side of the North Fork of Gordon Creek.

As you are aware, Cyprus Plateau Mining Corporation has recently re-opened the Willow Creek Coal Mine. During the permitting process, the Division of Oil, Gas and Mining identified the need for Cyprus to mitigate the loss of 49 acres of critical deer winter range. The mine permit specified that this mitigation would be worked out cooperatively with our agency.

We would like to propose that Cyprus fulfill this mitigation requirement by purchasing this 40 acres from the county and donating the property to the Division of Wildlife Resources. This will help us block up another inholding within our Wildlife Management Area, and protect the area from incompatible uses. It may also be less expensive than other types of mitigation that could be required. In 1996, the Division had a nearby 40 acre parcel appraised. This parcel also had no vehicle access. The appraiser ruled that the highest and greatest use of that parcel was rangeland grazing. The county's parcel would most likely fall into the same category. The property appraised for \$75 per acre. We had the appraisal reviewed, and the review stated the value was probably in the \$75 to \$100 range, and maybe closer to \$100 per acre. In 1994, we had 1440 acres to the south appraised, which was also classified as rangeland grazing. It appraised at \$65 per acre. Mechanical treatment of rangeland to benefit wildlife or livestock is quite expensive. In the recently completed Price Coal-Bed Methane EIS,

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Mike Milovich

March 31, 1998

the Bureau of Land Management estimated the average cost of wildlife habitat improvement projects, such as chaining, reseeding, and burning, to be over \$250 per acre.

We believe this is a win:win proposal. The Division benefits by being able to protect an additional 40 acres of critical habitat within a wildlife management area; Cyprus Plateau benefits by fulfilling its mitigation requirement; the County benefits by assisting a local coal operator, thereby helping to secure employment in the county, and by helping to protect open space for the recreational enjoyment of its citizens.

Thank you for your consideration of this matter. Please contact Bill Bates, Habitat Manager if you have any questions.

Sincerely,



Miles Moretti  
Regional Supervisor

copy: John Kimball, Director  
Bill James, Habitat  
John Pappas, CPM  
Mary Ann Wright, DOGM

