



# State of Utah

DEPARTMENT OF NATURAL RESOURCES  
DIVISION OF OIL, GAS AND MINING

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## INSPECTION REPORT

Partial XXX Complete \_\_\_ Exploration \_\_\_  
Inspection Date: 09/13/2002 / Time: 8:20 AM-12 PM  
Date of Last Inspection: 08/23/2002

Mine Name: Willow Creek Mine County: Carbon Permit Number: C/007/038  
Permittee and/or Operator's Name: Plateau Mining Corporation  
Business Address: P.O. Box 30, Helper, Utah 84526  
Company Official(s): Mr. Johnny Pappas, Senior Environmental Engineer  
State Official(s): Peter Hess Federal Official(s): None  
Weather Conditions: Sunny/clear; cool temperatures  
Type of Mining Activity: Underground XXX Surface \_\_\_ Prep Plant \_\_\_ Other \_\_\_  
Existing Acreage: Permitted 14670 Disturbed 161.55 Regraded \_\_\_ Seeded \_\_\_  
Status: Active

### REVIEW OF PERMIT, PERFORMANCE STANDARDS & PERMIT CONDITION REQUIREMENTS

- Substantiate the elements on this inspection by checking the appropriate performance standard.
  - For complete inspections provide narrative justification for any elements not fully inspected unless element is not appropriate to the site, in which case check N/A.
  - For partial inspections check only the elements evaluated.
- Document any noncompliance situation by referencing the NOV issued at the appropriate performance standard listed below.
- Reference any narratives written in conjunction with this inspection at the appropriate performance standard listed below.
- Provide a brief status report for all pending enforcement actions, permit conditions, Division Orders, and amendments.

	EVALUATED	N/A	COMMENTS	NOV/ENF
1. PERMITS, CHANGE, TRANSFER, RENEWAL, SALE	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
2. SIGNS AND MARKERS	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
3. TOPSOIL	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
4. HYDROLOGIC BALANCE:				
a. DIVERSIONS	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
b. SEDIMENT PONDS AND IMPOUNDMENTS	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
c. OTHER SEDIMENT CONTROL MEASURES	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
d. WATER MONITORING	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
e. EFFLUENT LIMITATIONS	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
5. EXPLOSIVES	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
6. DISPOSAL OF EXCESS SPOIL/FILLS/BENCHES	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
7. COAL MINE WASTE/REFUSE PILES/IMPOUNDMENTS	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
8. NONCOAL WASTE	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
9. PROTECTION OF FISH, WILDLIFE AND RELATED ENVIRONMENTAL ISSUES	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
10. SLIDES AND OTHER DAMAGE	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
11. CONTEMPORANEOUS RECLAMATION	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
12. BACKFILLING AND GRADING	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
13. REVEGETATION	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
14. SUBSIDENCE CONTROL	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
15. CESSATION OF OPERATIONS	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
16. ROADS:				
a. CONSTRUCTION/MAINTENANCE/SURFACING	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
b. DRAINAGE CONTROLS	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
17. OTHER TRANSPORTATION FACILITIES	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
18. SUPPORT FACILITIES/UTILITY INSTALLATIONS	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
19. AVS CHECK (4 <sup>th</sup> Quarter- April, May, June)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
20. AIR QUALITY PERMIT	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
21. BONDING & INSURANCE	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

**INSPECTION REPORT**  
(Continuation Sheet)

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(COMMENTS ARE NUMBERED TO CORRESPOND WITH TOPICS LISTED ABOVE)

Note: The Helper area of Carbon County has received several unusually heavy precipitation events during the first two weeks of September. One event dropped golf ball size hailstones in that area.

**4A. HYDROLOGIC BALANCE: DIVERSIONS**

The diversion ditches which lie just down gradient from the culvert which was blocked that would normally report to pond 013A are in need of being redefined, because of the event which occurred on September 12, 2002. The ditch is full of sediment and washed "red dog" from the pond 013A culvert inlet to pond 011A. Mr. Pappas is fully aware that these ditches must be returned to being capable of functioning as designed.

**4B. HYDROLOGIC BALANCE: SEDIMENT PONDS AND IMPOUNDMENTS**

As observed this day, ponds 012A and 012B both contained water. Pond 013A only contained a small amount of flow.

**4E. HYDROLOGIC BALANCE: EFFLUENT LIMITATIONS**

On September 12, 2002, (the day prior to this inspection) between 2 and 3 P.M., the watersheds encompassing the School House Canyon waste rock disposal facility experienced an event which produced a volume of runoff sufficient to sweep rock debris down the disturbed area ditches designated as CGD-6 and CGD-7. Although these ditches are lined with concrete, the volume of water generated by the event was sufficient to wash down rock debris to the extent that it blocked the expanded metal screen located on the inlet to the thirty-six inch culvert which flows to Pond 013A. Water and material backed up in the ditch until it overtopped same. At that point, the flow was uncontrolled and it ran down the School House Canyon refuse pile access road's drainage control ditches, thence reporting to sediment pond 011A. Mr. Pappas discovered the blocked inlet and the uncontrolled flow at approximately 3 P.M. and took action in as expeditious a manner as possible.

Pond 011A is the pond normally used to capture and treat runoff from the watershed which incorporates the clean coal storage pile area.

As the volume of water reporting to pond 011A was the amount that would normally report to pond 013A, plus the amount that normally reports to pond 011A, pond 011A discharged, reporting the discharge flow to the Price River. Mr. Pappas took samples of the discharge effluent. It is assumed that the discharging outfall would have been very high in total suspended solids, based on the fact that at least the design volume flow would have been reporting to it, with little or no retention time allowed. The permittee's UPDES permit has a daily maximum limit of 70 mg/l for suspended solids. As of September 30, 2002, Mr. Pappas had not received the analytical results of those samples. On September 13, 2002, after reviewing the circumstances and discussing the situation with Mr. Pappas, a verbal notification of the incident was made to the Utah Division of Water Quality (Mr. Mike Herkimer). It is felt that the incident should be classed as an "Unanticipated Bypass", i.e., the sediment treatment facility was inadvertently bypassed when its inlet became blocked. Mr. Pappas also met the five day written notification requirement to the Utah DEQ/DWQ, as required within the permittee's UPDES permit.

INSPECTION REPORT  
(Continuation Sheet)

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Several other facts need to be noted:

- 1) Pond 011A was noted as not discharging at 7:30 AM on September 13, 2002 by Mr. Pappas.
- 2) No water samples were collected by Division personnel because the event occurred and was over before the Division was informed. The Division was notified of this incident within the 24-hour reporting period, as required under the DOGM Unexpected Event Notification Procedure. Salt Lake management personnel were notified of the incident on 9/13/2002 following the completion of the field inspection.
- 3) Mr. Pappas had surface personnel place several enlarged openings in the trash rack at the inlet to the pond 013A drop inlet culvert.
- 4) Pond 011A had just been cleaned (as documented in the 8/23/2002 inspection report) by the permittee's contractors and had the full storage volume available at the time of the 9/12/2002 event. Mr. John Borla visually inspected pond 011A prior to the 9/12/2002 event, but did not complete the certification of the "as-built" until September 24, 2002.
- 5) On 9/30/2002 the Utah Division of Water Quality was contacted to ensure that they were of the same opinion as this individual relative to the need for a compliance action. Mr. Mike Herkimer indicated that this one incident did not warrant a violation from their perspective, as it appears to have been a freak event. If this type of incident would occur on a regular basis, DWQ would more than likely issue. Mr. Pappas was not able to determine the intensity or the duration of the storm that caused the unanticipated bypass.
- 6) The permittee took immediate action by pressing surface personnel into action (on 9/12/2002) to attempt to clean the blocked inlet to the pond 013A drop culvert. The storm intensity had slowed by the time the personnel were able to unblock the culvert inlet. As observed the morning of 9/13/2002, the inlet and the ditch approaching the inlet had been returned to being capable of full function. Surface personnel were busy repairing erosion and cleaning up washed material from the School House Canyon access road during today's inspection.

**15. CESSATION OF OPERATIONS**

The permittee notified the Division on September 3, 2002 that the reclamation of the surface facilities at the Willow Creek Mine would be initiated in the very near future. As observed during today's inspection, the belting had been removed from surface conveyor SC-2, and one length of support structure had been dismantled.

Inspector's Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

  
Peter Hess #46

Date: October 2, 2002

Note: This inspection report does not constitute an affidavit of compliance with the regulatory program of the Division of Oil, Gas & Mining.

cc: James Fulton, OSM  
Johnny Pappas, Plateau  
Price Field office

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