

July 8, 2003

TO: Internal File

THRU: Pete Hess, Environmental Scientist III/Engineering-Team Lead

FROM: Dana Dean, P.E., Senior Reclamation Hydrologist

RE: MSHA Approved Backfilling Plan, Plateau Mining Corporation, Willow Creek Mine, C/007/0038, Task ID #1625

**SUMMARY:**

Plateau Mining Corporation (PMC) submitted an amendment to the Mining and Reclamation Plan (MRP), which proposed the backfilling of two shafts located in Crandall Canyon.

Information found in the application is adequate to meet the minimum requirements of the regulations.

The Division should approve the application.

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TECHNICAL MEMO

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**TECHNICAL ANALYSIS:**

**RECLAMATION PLAN**

**HYDROLOGIC INFORMATION**

Regulatory Reference: 30 CFR Sec. 784.14, 784.29, 817.41, 817.42, 817.43, 817.45, 817.49, 817.56, 817.57; R645-301-512, -301-513, -301-514, -301-515, -301-532, -301-533, -301-542, -301-723, -301-724, -301-725, -301-726, -301-728, -301-729, -301-731, -301-733, -301-742, -301-743, -301-750, -301-751, -301-760, -301-761.

**Analysis:**

**Hydrologic Reclamation Plan**

The amendment contains no significant changes to the reclamation plan.

Water, from the flooding of the mine after it was sealed, fills the shafts for about 450 feet to just below the top of the "D Seam." The MSHA approved backfilling plan (new Appendix 3.7N) states that the Permittee will use bentonite to form a water seal 20 feet above the "D Seam" workings.

No problems with acid/toxic drainage should occur, since the Permittee will use the excavated shaft material as backfill. The Permittee has removed all coal from that material.

The Permittee will delay final backfilling, grading, etc. until one year after the shafts have been backfilled, to account for settling. This will allow them to adequately shape final hydrologic features.

The Permittee will continue to maintain surface diversions, as needed, through bond release.

**Findings:**

Information found in the application is adequate to meet the minimum requirements of this section of the regulations.

**RECOMMENDATION:**

The Division should approve the application.