



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

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Michael O. Leavitt
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Division Director

July 16, 1998

TO: File

THRU: Joe Helfrich, Permit Supervisor *Joh* 3.1

FROM: *PB* Priscilla Burton, Reclamation Soils Specialist

RE: Notice of Intention to Conduct Minor Coal Exploration, Canyon Fuel Company, LLC, Dugout Canyon Mine, ACT/007/039-98A, Folder #2, Carbon County, Utah

SUMMARY:

A revised coal exploration plan was received on June 29, 1998, which includes four drilling sites: A, B, E and F. This submittal eliminates two sites (C & D) which were located in the Fish Creek drainage.

The responsibility of the Division is to coordinate reviews with other government agencies. The submittal does not have the necessary information required for consideration by other government agencies. Prior to approval, a cultural resource survey, raptor survey and threatened and endangered species survey must be provided for government agency review in accordance with R645-202-231..

TECHNICAL ANALYSIS:

OPERATION PLAN

OPERATIONAL STANDARDS

Regulatory Reference: R645-202-231

Analysis:

Operational Standards

A raptor survey was conducted in May, results will be forwarded to the Division as they become available. The plan states that additional raptor surveys will be conducted prior to the commencement of drilling operations and that operations will be located such as to not interfere with raptor nesting sites.

A survey for threatened and endangered species will be conducted and results forwarded to the Division.

Significant cultural resources occur locally. A cultural resource survey will be conducted of the proposed drilling locations and access roads prior to any new surface disturbance. Results will be forwarded to the Division prior to approval.

Findings:

The responsibility of the Division is to coordinate reviews with other government agencies. The submittal does not have the necessary information required for consideration by other government agencies. Prior to approval, the permittee must provide the following in accordance with:

R645-202-231, a cultural resource survey, raptor survey and threatened and endangered species survey must be provided for government agency review.

TOPSOIL

Regulatory Reference: R645-202-233

Analysis:

Topsoil

The SCS soils map indicates that soils in the locations of the drill holes A and B may be in soils #21 or Croyden loam. The soils in the location of drill holes E and F on the mesa tops may fall in the Midfork family-Commodore complex. Croyden family soils are approximately 16 inches deep in the topsoil layer. Midfork family - Commodore complex soils are considerably shallower. More specific information will be gathered on site by a qualified individual prior to drilling. The topsoil layer will be salvaged from drill pads. Where additional cuts are made to level the pads, and for the purposes of developing mudpits, subsoil will also be salvaged from drill pad sites.

Findings:

During a site visit on July 16, 1998, Marc Scanlon, Steve Demzak and I discussed the reclamation of the previously disturbed, but mostly revegetated access roads. The following is a summation of that discussion:

1) Access to drill sites E, A, and B is via remote, mostly reclaimed, rarely traveled two track roads. To reduce the disturbance to this site. The road will be used as is for the most part. Where rocks and uneven ground make travel difficult, the road will be graded to a depth of about two inches (leaving the roots in place). Upon exit from the site, topsoil will be replaced on the surface where it was removed; the two tracks and graded area will be ripped and seeded.

2) Access to site F is via a recently graded logging road. This road will be ripped and seeded upon exit from the drilling site. In locations where clay subsoil is the road surface, topsoil (discarded by loggers) will be replaced on to the surface.

3) Prior to topsoil removal, the topsoil depth will be surveyed at each drilling site and a log of the survey will be kept to justify topsoil removal depth. At a minimum, twelve inches of topsoil will be salvaged at the drilling sites.

These three items of agreement between Canyon Fuels and the Division should be stipulated in the exploration approval.

ACID OR TOXIC FORMING MATERIALS

Regulatory Reference: R645-202-236

Analysis:

Acid or toxic forming materials

As described on pages 12 and 19 of the proposal, mud pits will be dug at each site to contain drill cuttings and fluids. Pits will be sufficiently deep to ensure the burial of potentially acid/toxic waste below four feet.

Findings:

Information provided in the proposed amendment is considered adequate to meet the requirements of this section.

RECLAMATION PLAN

Reclamation Standards

Regulatory Reference: R645-202-242

Analysis:

Revegetation

After the mud pit dries, soil redistribution will occur, followed by grading to the approximate original contour. The drill pad will be roughened and re-seeded using the mix described on page 14 of the proposal.

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Findings:

Information provided in the proposal is considered adequate to meet the requirements of this section.

RECOMMENDATION

This proposal is not recommended for approval until the Division receives the results of raptor, threatened and endangered species and cultural surveys. Stipulations concerning topsoil handling and road development should be included in the exploration approval.

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