

Document Information Form

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To: WAYNE WESTERN

From:

Person _____

Company CANYON FUEL COMPANY, LLC

Date Received: 08/13/2003

Explanation: _____

Discovery Of Additional Old Workings In Gilson Seam (Draft)

cc:

WAYNE WESTERN ✓

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AUG 13 2003

DIV. OF OIL, GAS & MINING

DRAFT

DISCOVERY OF ADDITIONAL OLD WORKINGS IN GILSON SEAM

The Dugout Canyon Mine has two mineable seams in its permitted boundaries. The upper seam is the Rock Canyon seam and the lower seam is the Gilson seam. Interburden between the mineable seams ranges from 30 to 90 feet. Approximately 75% of the mineable reserves are in the Gilson seam.

Knight-Ideal Coal Company, owned by the W. W. Clyde Construction Company, mined in both seams in the immediate vicinity of Dugout Canyon's current operations from the late 1950's to mid 1960's.

Dugout Mine's current mining projections have been based upon a map dated November 25, 1965. To the best of management's knowledge, it supposedly reflected all of the workings that Knight Ideal Coal Company had mined. Prior to commencing new development in the area, map searches were conducted to determine if any other map existed reflecting additional mining over and above that shown on the aforementioned map. Searches were conducted at state and federal agencies having previous or current jurisdiction of underground Utah coal operations. No other maps were found during these searches and none of the agencies indicated that they had a map any different from the aforementioned map. In addition, current mine management met with previous employees of Knight Ideal Coal Company (John Pappas & Devon Oldroyd) during which the mine map was discussed. These employees felt that the map was accurate and reflected all previous workings.

In December 2001 rock slope development from the Rock Canyon into the Gilson seam commenced. The location and development direction of these slopes were selected reflecting a projected safe distance from the known old workings.

After completion of the rock slopes between seams, coal extraction began in the Gilson seam April 2002. The South Mains section in the Gilson seam was projected to miss all old workings even though in-seam drilling was planned to take place before the section mined within 200 feet of the old workings as reflected with the map in hand.

While mining north and west in the South Mains section, seepage of water through the coal ribs had been observed. The impounded old workings water was working its way through the coal cleats to a lower elevation in the new

workings. This initially was not a concern. However, as westward mining continued, the water seepage flow continued to increase.

Due to the increase in seepage and in light of the recent coal mine inundation that took place in Somorset, Pennsylvania in late July, David Spillman was directed to talk with Norman Clyde (previous surveyor for the W. W. Clyde family) who did underground surveying for Knight Ideal Coal Company. This conversation took place on July 30, 2002. Due to his age, Mr. Clyde's recollection of the underground workings was minimal, especially those in Dugout Canyon. He thought that the map we had was an accurate map.

Following Spillman's conversation with Mr. Clyde, Spillman proceeded to the BLM office in Salt Lake City to see if they had completed the document search that he had again requested.

Mr. Jeff McKenzie, a relatively new employee of the BLM and former chief engineer of Plateau Mining Corporation, completed another document search prior to Spillman's arrival. During McKenzie's document search, he found another map that indicated more old workings east and south of the map that we had. Upon examining the map, Spillman contacted Rick Olsen and advised him that a new map had surfaced and indicated that current mining in the South Mains section was in the immediate vicinity of old workings that were not reflected on our map.

Upon hearing this information and receiving a faxed copy of a portion of the new map, the mining crew in the South Mains were contacted and told to immediately evacuate the section, leaving the equipment in the mining faces. This call was made to them at approximately 3:45 pm on July 30. Not knowing the exact distance the active workings were from the old workings, there was high probability that a blowout of the coal barrier could occur which would totally flood the new workings and drown personnel in the ensuing barrage of incoming water. It should be noted that water impoundment calculations reflected that enough water was stored in the old workings to completely fill the new workings of the Gilson seam, completely fill the newly completed rock slopes, and still allow water to flow into portions of the Rock Canyon seam. This is a very dangerous situation.

MSHA was notified of the situation shortly after evacuating personnel from the Gilson seam. They were also advised of the initial plan to drill in mine boreholes from the Rock Canyon seam in the East Mains section into the Gilson old workings to drain sufficient water to allow additional drilling to safely take place in the Gilson to fully identify the extent of the any old workings that could impact future development on the current Gilson seam projections.

MSHA was advised that the barrier between the new and old workings was not known at this time. The physical size and strength of the coal barrier was a mutual concern. With the personnel safely evacuated from the Gilson seam, over \$3,000,000 worth of equipment and \$700,000 worth of rock slope development along with the future of the mine were at stake.

UTAH MINERS

Map Search May Have Saved Lives

BY MIKE GORRELL

THE SALT LAKE TRIBUNE

For Utah coal miners, it was a chilling sight: Water was seeping through the walls of a tunnel they had been cutting deep inside the Dugout Canyon Mine.

They were all too aware of what happened recently in Pennsylvania. Nine men had been trapped when a subterranean flood was unleashed by coal-mining machinery that broke into the water-filled tunnel of an old, adjacent mine — a tunnel not on their maps. Their rescue after more than three days in a small air pocket was the summer's feel-good news story.

So, when miners spotted the seeping water in early August, cautious officials at Canyon Fuel Co.'s Carbon County mine called for their maps. Initial results were inconclusive.

The maps outlined an array of tunnels last excavated some 40 years ago, but nothing really close to current operations.

Still, the continuing seepage stirred a gnawing fear of a repeat of the near-tragedy of Pennsylvania's Quecreek Mine.

Mining officials next contacted the Bureau of Land Management, which controls the mining lease, to see if the federal agency had more recent maps. It did, and sure enough, one showed one particular old tunnel much closer to the new workings than previously suspected.

If that old tunnel had been breached, water built up over four decades would have produced "an immediate inundation" of Dugout Canyon's new section, said Jim Kohler, chief of Utah BLM's solid minerals branch.

"A likely scenario would have been loss of life, the mine shut down [federal Mine Safety and Health Administration] folks hitting them with a citation," he added.

"But in this case, the mine did absolutely nothing to compromise the safety of their workers and they averted a problem from happening.

"One thing the Pennsylvania incident pointed out was that sometimes the accuracy of old mine maps is not as good as you'd like it to be," Kohler said.

Speaking Monday to the National Association of Abandoned Mine Land Programs, current MSHA boss and Utah native Dave Lauriski said the Dugout Canyon incident underscored threats posed by old mines and unreliable maps.

Lauriski has ordered all of the nation's mines to assess their risks of coming into contact with old workings.

BLM's Kohler is hoping this happy ending will help free up some money to computerize more mining maps.

"In an ideal world we wouldn't have had to go to an old file cabinet to find a map," he said. "We should be able to pull it up with the click of a key stroke."

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WEDNESDAY

EWING CALLS IT QUILTS
Knicks great will coach with Wizards B-1

THE GREEN MONSTER
Taking on zucchini, one at a time C-1

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