

TECHNICAL MEMORANDUM

Utah Coal Regulatory Program

September 12, 2006

TO: Internal File

THRU: D. Wayne Hedberg, Permit Supervisor, Task Manager *DWH*

FROM: Peter Hess, Environmental Scientist III, Engineering, Team Lead *PHH by an*

RE: **Coring of Degas Well G-14A**, Canyon Fuel Company, LLC, Dugout Canyon Mine, C/007/0039, Task ID #2635

SUMMARY:

The Permittee submitted a request to the State of Utah, School and Institutional Trust Lands Administration to core the two coal seams associated with State Lease ML-48435 at degasification well site G-14A on August 31, 2006.

Previous approval to drill degasification well G-14A had been granted by the Division on August 11, 2006, with concurrence of SITLA and the USDOJ / BLM / Utah State Office.

The Permittee determined that geologic information from hole G-14A was needed as data in that area was sparse.

SITLA notified the Division on September 5, 2006 that the Permittee was in need of obtaining geologic data from G-14A. The Division requested that the Permittee submit an amendment to the currently approved plan, which states that no geologic data will be recovered from any of the degasification well sites.

The Permittee submitted the revised text change to Chapter 6 on September 8, 2006. This is a request for a minor revision to the already approved plan.

TECHNICAL ANALYSIS

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OPERATION PLAN

COAL RECOVERY

Regulatory Reference: 30 CFR 817.59; R645-301-522.

Analysis:

The Permittee determined following the approval of **Task ID # 2580, Degas Wells G-13 thru G-17** on August 11, 2006 that a need existed to obtain geologic data from the two coal seams associated with SITLA lease ML-48435 in the vicinity of well site G-14A.

The Permittee intends to core both the Rock Canyon and Gilson seams in the vicinity of G-14A. The coal samples will be used for the analysis of gas content and coal quality. Rock core may be tested for mechanical strength quality. The hole will be geophysically logged and the core will be described in detail.

This confidential information will be retained by the Permittee and forwarded to SITLA upon the completion of data collection.

Seam thickness and quality information is critical to the Permittee and is used in development of mine plans, and budgeting proposals. Thus, this information is critical in the determination of coal recovery.

Chapter 6, section **624.300 Test Boring and Drill Hole Data (overburden not removed)**, (page 6-2) of the currently approved plan states that "no test boring or drill cores are planned at the well sites", (degas well stand alone binder, page 6-2). Although Chapter 6 was not submitted as part of the G-13 through G-17 application, that Chapter remains unchanged in the degasification wells stand alone document.

The Permittee has now determined that it is necessary to core degas well G-14A through both the Rock Canyon and Gilson seams to obtain geologic information for mine planning purposes.

The Permittee has submitted revised pages 6-4,6-18 to make the necessary changes in the mining and reclamation plan.

Revised pages 6-ii, 6-1, 6-2 and 6-3 have also been submitted to reflect the changes needed in the stand alone degasification well document to reflect the collection of core (geologic) data from well site G-14A.

Page 6-2, section **624.300 Test Boring and Drill Hole Data (overburden not removed)** has been modified to read “data will be collected from the coring of Degas Hole G-14A, the information collected will include gas content of the coal, mechanical strength of the roof strata and mineable coal thickness. The coal sequence will be cemented upon the completion of the drilling of G-14A. No additional test boring or drill cores are planned at the well sites.

The Permittee intends to cement the core hole to prevent surprises of water or gas inflow at the longwall face when the well location is mined through by the longwall face.

The Permittee has also made a minor modification to section **625 Additional Geologic Information**, page 6-2; “data as described in Section 624.200 will be collected. The geologic data collected will be included in Appendix 6-1 of the confidential binder”.

Findings:

This minor modification to the already approved degasification well plan is to allow the collection of geologic data from one well site, G-14A. The requested changes, in conjunction with all other operational and design criteria for well G-14A meet the minimum regulatory requirements of this section of the R645 Coal Mining Rules.

RECOMMENDATION:

This minor modification to the approved operational plan for well G-14A should be approved.