



State of Utah

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Governor*

Office of the Governor  
PUBLIC LANDS POLICY COORDINATING OFFICE

KATHLEEN CLARKE  
*Director*

August 1, 2016

*Sent via electronic mail: [bking@bowieresources.com](mailto:bking@bowieresources.com)*

Bill King  
Canyon Fuel Company, LLC  
Dugout Canyon Mine  
P.O. Box 1029  
Wellington, UT 84542

**Subject: Dugout Canyon Mine; Permit Boundary Expansion**

Dear Mr. King:

The State of Utah appreciates the opportunity to review this project proposal and to work with the Bowie Resources to reduce and minimize project impacts to wildlife and important habitats associated with this project.

For the last several months, the Utah Division of Wildlife Resources (UDWR) has worked with Bowie Resources appraising the wildlife conditions affected by the proposed boundary expansion under the current Dugout Canyon Mine permit. The State appreciates the collaborative efforts of Bowie Resources to reduce impacts associated with greater sage-grouse and mule deer with this project. UDWR provides technical comments attached for your consideration.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide comments. Please direct any written questions regarding this correspondence to the Public Lands Policy Coordinating Office at the address below, or call the phone number listed.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Kathleen Clarke".

Kathleen Clarke  
Director

Bill King  
Canyon Fuel Company, LLC  
Dugout Canyon Mine  
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## **Technical Comments**

### **Dugout Canyon Mine; Permit Boundary Expansion**

The Dugout Canyon Mine is an underground coal mine currently permitted in Carbon County, Utah, approximately 12 air miles northeast of Price. The permit boundary expansion area includes habitat for greater sage grouse, and the expanded permit area falls within the Carbon Sage grouse Management Area (SGMA). Winter habitat is mapped within Township 13 South, Range 12 East, Section 13, as well as Township 13 South Range 13 East, Section 18. Habitat is defined in the Conservation Plan for Greater Sage-grouse in Utah (Plan) as, “[t]he aggregation of seasonal habitats used by sage-grouse at some point during the yearly life-cycle of the birds. Habitat includes the geographical extent of leks, nesting, brood-rearing, late-brood rearing, transitional and winter areas.”

The Plan should be followed to avoid unnecessary impacts to greater sage-grouse. In Section 5.5 of the Plan, extractive mineral development is addressed to discuss surface disturbing activities required for mining, such as surface vents, which are essential for mining safety. A management protocol for development within an SGMA is then outlined in Section 6.0. Overall, surface disturbance should be avoided to the greatest extent possible. Management protocol for winter habitat (Section 6.5.1.3) describes avoidance, if possible, followed by minimization through locating development in the least important habitats, or by taking advantage of topographic screening. If minimization is insufficient to reduce the effects, then compensatory mitigation is required, calculated at a 4:1 ratio of directly impacted:restored acres. Surface disturbing activities also should be avoided from November 15 to March 15 so that construction actions do not unnecessarily disturb wintering sage-grouse.

The permit expansion area is also mapped as crucial winter habitat for mule deer. Surface disturbing activities should be avoided from December 1- April 15 to avoid impacts to wintering deer. Also, it is important to monitor for negative habitat impacts associated with mining subsidence, specifically loss of surface water, and the impacts from such subsidence on wildlife.