



# United States Department of the Interior

## OFFICE OF SURFACE MINING RECLAMATION AND ENFORCEMENT

Washington, D.C. 20240

MAR 19 2002

### MEMORANDUM

*Incoming*  
*@/007/041*

To: Rebecca W. Watson  
Assistant Secretary - Land and Minerals Management

From: Jeffrey D. Jarrett *Jeffrey D. Jarrett*  
Director, Office of Surface Mining

Subject: Recommendation for Approval of the Mining Plan Modification for Federal Lease UTU-78562 at West Ridge Resources, Inc.'s West Ridge Mine located in Carbon County, Utah

I recommend approval without special conditions of this mining plan modification. This mining plan approval supplements all previous mining plan approvals for the West Ridge Mine. My recommendation is based on:

- (1) West Ridge Resources, Inc.'s complete permit application package (PAP),
- (2) compliance with the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969,
- (3) documentation assuring compliance with applicable requirements of other Federal laws, regulations, and executive orders,
- (4) comments and recommendations or concurrence of other Federal agencies, and the public,
- (5) the findings and recommendations of the Bureau of Land Management regarding the resource recovery and protection plan, the Federal lease requirements, and the Mineral Leasing Act, and
- (6) the findings and recommendations of the Utah Division of Oil, Gas & Mining regarding the PAP and the Utah State program.

The Secretary may approve a Mining Plan for Federal leases under 30 U.S.C. 207(c) and 1273(c). In accordance with 30 CFR Chapter VII, Subchapter D, I find that the proposed mining plan modification will be in compliance with all applicable laws and regulations. The decision document for the proposed mining plan action is attached.

Attachment



IN REPLY REFER TO:

# United States Department of the Interior

## OFFICE OF SURFACE MINING

Reclamation and Enforcement

1999 Broadway, Suite 3320

Denver, Colorado 80202-5733

March 12, 2002

### Memorandum

To: Director  
Office of Surface Mining

From: *Acting* Regional Director *J. Fulton*  
Western Regional Coordinating Center

Subject: Recommendation for Approval Without Special Conditions of the Mining Plan Modification for Federal Lease UTU-78562 at West Ridge Resources, Inc.'s West Ridge Mine located in Carbon County, Utah

#### I. Recommendation

I recommend approval without special conditions of a mining plan modification for Federal lease UTU-78562 at the West Ridge Mine. This is a mining plan modification for a underground coal mine being permitted under the Federal lands program, the approved Utah State program, and the cooperative agreement.

My recommendation to approve the mining plan modification is based on:

- (1) West Ridge Resources, Inc.'s (WRRI) complete permit application package (PAP),
- (2) compliance with the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969,
- (3) documentation assuring compliance with applicable requirements of other Federal laws, regulations, and executive orders,
- (4) comments and recommendations or concurrence of other Federal agencies, and the public,
- (5) the findings and recommendations of the Bureau of Land Management regarding the resource recovery and protection plan, the Federal lease requirements, and the Mineral Leasing Act, and
- (6) the findings and recommendations of the Utah Division of Oil, Gas & Mining (DOGMD/DNR) regarding the PAP and the Utah State program.

If you concur with this recommendation, please sign the attached memorandum to the Assistant Secretary, Land and Minerals Management.

## II. Background

The West Ridge underground coal mine is located in Carbon County, Utah. The mine has been in operation since 1999. The life of the currently approved mining operations within the approved permit area is estimated to be 7 years. The mining operations use longwall mining methods. The average annual production rate is 3 million tons per year from the Lower Sunnyside coal seam, and the maximum production rate is 3 million tons per year. The mine currently employs 120 people.

The mining plan for Federal lease SL-068754 at the West Ridge Mine was initially approved on June 30, 1999. Since that approval no mining plan modifications have been submitted or approved.

The State's permit area covers 2,661 acres.

About 29 surface acres are disturbed within the State's permit area.

A total of 2651 acres of Federal coal exist in the currently approved mining plan area.

A total of 20 million tons of Federal coal exist in the currently approved mining plan area.

A total of 2532 acres of Federal surface land exist in the currently approved mining plan area.

The postmining land use within the currently approved mining plan area is wildlife & grazing

## III. The Proposed Action

This mining plan action consists of a mining plan modification for Federal lease UTU-78562. Specifically, the mining plan action proposed by WRRRI consists of:

Extending main entries and longwall panels into the newly leased area.

The life of the mining operations is expected to continue for 12 years under Utah Permit No. C/007/041 and this proposed mining plan modification.

The average annual production rate and the maximum production rate would not change.

The number of people employed at the mine would not change.

The approved State permit area would increase by 1,646 acres from its present 2,661 acres to a new total of 4,308 acres.

Surface disturbance within the approved State permit area will not increase.

Approval of this mining plan modification will increase the number of acres of Federal coal in the approved mining plan area by 1646 acres to a new total of 4297 as shown on the map included with this decision document.

Approval of the proposed mining plan modification would add 15 million tons of recoverable coal to the approved mining plan area for a new total of 35 million tons.

An additional 552 acres of Federal surface land will be included in the mining plan area as a result of this action. Thus, the total Federal surface acreage will be 3084 acres.

The postmining land use within the permit and mining plan area will not change.

The DOGM/DNR has attached four permit stipulations to this permitting action. These stipulations are described in the State Decision Document section of this decision document.

West Ridge Resources, Inc.'s proposal does not require any special conditions to comply with Federal law.

#### IV. Review Process

The DOGM/DNR reviewed the PAP under the Utah State program, the Federal lands program (30 CFR Chapter VII, Subchapter D), and the Utah cooperative agreement (30 CFR 944.30). Pursuant to the Utah State program and the cooperative agreement, DOGM/DNR approved the permit revision on February 15, 2002.

The Office of Surface Mining Reclamation and Enforcement (OSM) has consulted with other Federal agencies for compliance with the requirements of applicable Federal laws. Their comments and/or concurrences are included in the decision document.

The Bureau of Land Management (BLM) reviewed the resource recovery and protection plan for compliance with the Mineral Leasing Act of 1920, as amended, and 43 CFR Part 3480. The BLM recommended approval of the mining plan modification in a memorandum dated February 1, 2002.

- -DOGMDNR's State Decision Document West Ridge Resources, Inc. Whitmore Canyon Extension West Ridge Mine C/007/041-PM01H provided to OSM under the cooperative agreement,
- -the Environmental Assessment entitled Whitmore Canyon Federal Coal Tract, EA UT-070-2000-73DNA,
- -the FONSI of the proposed action and alternatives prepared by OSM,
- -other documents prepared by DOGMDNR, and
- -correspondence developed during the review of the PAP.

Attachments