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

Michael O. Leavitt
Governor
Ted Stewart
Executive Director
James W. Carter
Division Director

1594 West North Temple, Suite 1210
Box 145801
Salt Lake City, Utah 84114-5801
801-538-5340
801-359-3940 (Fax)
801-538-7223 (TDD)

May 16, 1997

TO: File

THRU: Daron Haddock, Permit Supervisor 

FROM: Jess Kelley, Reclamation Engineer 

RE: Phase III Bond Release, Mountain Coal Company, Huntington #4 Mine, INA/015/004-96A, Folder #2, Emery County, Utah

SUMMARY:

The permittee of this site formally applied for final bond release on February 20, 1997. This memorandum constitutes this writer's review of the bond release application and of the compliance of this site with the regulatory requirements for final bond release.

TECHNICAL ANALYSIS:

This writer reviewed the bond release application to determine whether or not the site has met 3 criteria: 1) the site has been restored to its approximate original contour (AOC); 2) subsidence has ceased and post-operational monitoring adequately confirms that it has ceased; and 3) any surface damage due to subsidence has been adequately mitigated. It is this writer's determination that these 3 criteria have been met.

- The site has been restored to AOC. This was initially confirmed when the site was regraded. It has since been reconfirmed on June 27, 1996 during a joint inspection conducted by representatives of the Division, including this writer, and Mike Rosenthal of the Office of Surface Mining. The highwalls and portal cuts in the upper portal area have been eliminated, the lower facilities area has been backfilled, and both areas have been regraded. More recently, the sediment pond has also been backfilled and regraded.

- Through a cooperative agreement with the permittee, the U.S. Forest Service monitored subsidence at this site by aerial photogrammetric methods from 1979 until 1987. In 1987, this subsidence monitoring program was discontinued because subsidence, which was slight to begin with (less than 1 foot total) was no longer occurring.

●From 1987, when subsidence monitoring was discontinued, until the present, the permittee has conducted a yearly on-the-ground search for subsidence damage. These searches, which have been documented in every annual report, have turned up neither subsidence damage nor even visible surface manifestations of subsidence. In the fall of 1996, this writer also conducted an on-the-ground search for subsidence damage. Like the searches conducted by the permittee, this search turned up no subsidence damage and no surface manifestations of subsidence.

RECOMMENDATION:

It is recommended that the Division approve the permittee's application for final bond release.

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