

March 15, 1977

MEMO TO FILE:

Re: Trail Mountain Coal Company
Trail Mountain Coal Mine
Sec. 25, T.17S., R.6E.
Emery County, Utah
ACT/015/009

A field inspection of this mine was held in cooperation with the U.S. Forest Service, Manti-LaSal National Forest. Brian Buck and myself represented the Division, and the following people represented the Forest:

Bill Boley
Evan Hansen

John Neibergall
Fred Thompson

Bob Wilson

The objective of the inspection was to review the hydrologic report which the Forest had previously prepared for Cottonwood Creek, the stream which passes by the mine surface facilities. The Forest's recommendations for various stream crossings were also discussed.

The Division previously had no hydrologic evidence on which to base an opinion on the type of stream crossing structure needed here or on the type of stream protection needed around the surface facilities.

Even though the mine manager, Mr. Bell, was informed during an October field visit that a protective berm would be asked for by the Division, coal continues to be spilled into Cottonwood Creek. Cottonwood Creek is a perennial stream which is diverted below the mine for irrigation and culinary use at Orangeville.

Supposedly, mine development work here began before the May 1975 deadline, thus the operation has until July, 1977 to file a Mining and Reclamation Plan for the fee-land surface facilities. The mine is surrounded by National Forest land.

As is the case with many coal mines in the Wasatch Plateau, surface space is limited because of the deeply incised canyons with steep walls. Concomitantly, flash flooding is a problem here.

The hydrologic data provided by the Forest has been helpful to the Division in forming an opinion on the type of stream crossing structure needed at the mine. It shows that the present culverts will handle only a 2 year flood flow, that is, the culvert and access ramp will be overtopped and possibly washed out every 2 years. In our opinion, this is not responsible mine development, and present conditions are not hydrologically stable.

On the day of the inspection mine dewatering was taking place from the portals. The discharged water was being allowed to run-off from the portal, down the hillside and through old mine waste piles, as a result, the stream flow in Cottonwood Creek was visibly turbid below the mine and clear above the mine. The mine foreman present, Mr. Ritter Willis,

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explained that a pond was planned, location unknown, to retain mine discharge water.

Mr. John Bell will be contacted shortly to outline for him our recommendations for the mine in regard to stream protection. These will be that the 50 year flood be planned for in Cottonwood Creek and assurance be provided so that the facility, be it a bridge, large metal culvert, or box culvert will not be blockable by debris during periods of high water. In addition, runoff from the surface pad will need to be collected and prevented from reaching the stream. The recommended practice here will be an earth/rock berm placed between the stream and surface workings with a settling pond placed near the lower end of the surface workings. Hopefully, this will contain coal dust, oil, grease, and any other items which are spilled on the surface pad. In addition to the earth/rock berm a retaining wall will be asked for near the coal surge pile.

DIVISION OF OIL, GAS, AND MINING

RONALD W. DANIELS
COORDINATOR OF MINED LAND DEVELOPMENT

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