



# United States Department of the Interior

BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT

3482  
U-02664  
(U-067)

Moab District  
P. O. Box 970  
Moab, Utah 84501

**CONFIDENTIAL**

APR 27 1988

Lowell P. Braxton  
State of Utah  
Division of Oil, Gas and Mining  
355 West North Temple  
3 Triad Center, Suite 350  
Salt Lake City, Utah 84180-1203

**RECEIVED**  
APR 29 1988

DIVISION OF  
OIL, GAS & MINING

Dear Mr. Braxton:

The Des-Bee-Dove Mine complex was idled by Utah Power and Light Company (UP&L) in February 1987. UP&L indicated to us that the high cost of room and pillar mining, compared to longwall mining, has made Des-Bee-Dove uneconomical for continued operation. Also, demand for coal was being met by Wilberg/-Cottonwood complex. The mine was placed in an idle status. Major mining machinery was removed, the portals sealed, and the ventilation system turned off. With the portals sealed and the mine fans turned off, the Federal coal resource will be protected from outcrop fires and in-mine gob fires. Twenty-four-hour site security is also provided. For temporary abandonment, these precautions satisfy the protection of the Federal coal resource required by the Mineral Leasing Act of 1920.

In your letter of February 24, 1988, you requested three items BLM should address which relate to the question of when final reclamation should occur. The first item asked for was the estimated recoverable reserve left in the mine complex. The Beehive Mine, operating in the Blind Canyon seam, contains an estimated \_\_\_\_\_ of recoverable Federal coal and \_\_\_\_\_ of recoverable fee coal. Most of this reserve lies along the 2nd North entries that parallel the Bear Creek Canyon fault north up to Federal lease SL-066116, Sections 11 and 14, T. 17 S., R. 7 E., SLB&M. This area had been isolated from 1983 to 1985 due to the mine fire in 9th West. Entries were driven around the fire area and access was reestablished, but much of the conveyor system needs to be restored. This coal is probably the least economically recoverable coal on the property due to the long three-mile access to the 2nd North entries.

The Little Dove Mine operates in the same Blind Canyon seam with main-entry portals adjacent to the Beehive portals. Little Dove accesses coal to the west and the Bear Creek/Deer Creek fault graben, while the Beehive Mine accesses coal to the north. The Little Dove Mine has an estimated recoverable tons of Federal lease U-02664 and \_\_\_\_\_ of fee coal. This is prime quality, pre-developed coal that is close to the portal.

The Deseret Mine operates directly below Little Dove and Beehive Mines in the Hiawatha seam. There are \_\_\_\_\_ of Federal coal and \_\_\_\_\_ of fee coal that are recoverable. The coal is high quality and has a developed access near the mouth of the mine.

Should the mine be reclaimed at this time, these recoverable reserves would be lost from development. The canyon where the current surface facilities are located is the only logical access to the outcrop. The outcrop to the west is too high up on the cliff edge to support portals and surface structures. The outcrop to the east on Stump Flat Point places development on the east side of a major fault system, with displacement of over 100 feet, which makes economic access to the reserves impossible. We believe the only access to the mine's reserves is through existing portals and entries. Once the portal area is totally reclaimed, the cost to construct another surface facility area could not be justified for the amount of coal left in the property. The Federal Government would stand to potentially lose royalty on \_\_\_\_\_ of coal. Under current prices of coal, \_\_\_\_\_ would not be collected for coal royalty.

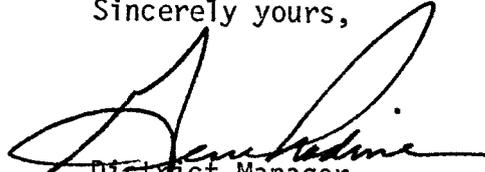
The consequences to the operator would also mean the loss of reserves. UP&L has idled the property to reduce costs and to balance demand. However, this property is maintained for emergency supply. This mine was mined extensively during the Wilberg fire and recovery to make up for lost production. Should another emergency or loss of production occur at the other UP&L mines, Des-Bee-Dove could be ready for production in a few weeks. This will ensure that UP&L has emergency coal reserves for increased demand or lost production.

UP&L's long-term plans for Des-Bee-Dove are to still mine it should demand increase. One uncertainty is the pending merger of UP&L and Pacificorp. Long-term coal usage will be affected by the result of the proposed merger. The consummation and results of the merger are expected within this year.

The BLM would be hesitant to allow coal reserves to be lost due to reclamation of the Des-Bee-Dove Mine if there is a possibility of future mining. Though we agree that an idle status cannot be perpetuated for years on end, we recommend the mine remain in this status until a more definite future plan for this property is formulated by UP&L. Much will depend on the mentioned utility merger. Before a lessee can abandon Federally-leased coal in a mining area, the laws governing the Mineral Leasing Act require the approval of the authorized officer of the BLM, who must make a decision based on the maximum economic recovery of the resource. All these factors will have to be weighed before final reclamation of this mine is started. Please hold the coal reserve estimations as confidential and proprietary information. Though they are estimates, they do qualify for this designation.

Brent Northrup of my staff (phone 259-6111) or Stephen Falk in the San Rafael Resource Area Office in Price (phone 637-4584) are able to assist you should you have any questions.

Sincerely yours,



District Manager

cc: SD, Utah (U-921)  
UP&L