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State of Utah
DEPARTMENT OF NATURAL RESOURCES
DIVISION OF WILDLIFE RESOURCES

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DIVISION OF
OIL GAS & MINING

Copy Pam

Ms. Pamela Grubaugh-Littig
Permit Supervisor
Division of Oil, Gas and Mining
355 West North Temple
3 Triad Center, Suite 350
Salt Lake City, Utah 84180

Dear Pam:

The Division of Wildlife Resources has reviewed the proposed Incidental Boundary Change (IBC) for PacifiCorp's Deer Creek Mine in Emery County (Federal Leases U-47977 and SL-050862). We have the following comments regarding this proposed change.

The area contained within the IBC provides habitat for a wide variety of wildlife. The species most likely to be impacted by the proposed action are big game and raptors. The site is classified as critical summer range for elk and deer and is likely used during the calving and fawning seasons. There is a golden eagle nest located on the escarpment within the northern half of the proposed boundary change. As no surface facilities are proposed in conjunction with the IBC, our primary concern is for the potential impacts to important wildlife habitats as a result of subsidence.

The two major impacts to wildlife associated with subsidence are the loss of cliff habitat due to escarpment failure and the alteration of water sources. The presence of a golden eagle nest and the importance of water in big game parturition habitats increases the significance of impacts due to subsidence within the IBC area. The application documents indicated that the IBC falls within the area that PacifiCorp is currently monitoring for subsidence, escarpment failures, and hydrologic impacts. If this monitoring program detects any impacts to the eagle nest, water sources or other areas of important wildlife habitat within the IBC, we recommend that the appropriate measures be taken to mitigate or replace any lost habitat values. We fully support the outlined monitoring program and we feel that impacts to wildlife will be minimized through continued use of the program.

We appreciate the opportunity to review this action and provide our input. If you have any questions regarding our comments, please contact Ken Phippen, Regional Habitat Manager (637-3310).

Sincerely,

Timothy H. Provan
Director

