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State of Utah  
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DIVISION OF WILDLIFE RESOURCES

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RECEIVED

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DIVISION OF  
OIL, GAS & MINING

January 3, 1994

Ira W. Hatch  
Manti-LaSal National Forest  
Ferron Ranger District  
P.O. Box 310  
Ferron, Utah 84523

*File Act/012/018  
#2 Copy Pam*

Dear Ira:

The Division of Wildlife Resources (DWR) has reviewed the proposed readjustment of Federal Coal Lease SL-064900 held by PacifiCorp. We have the following comments and recommendations regarding this action.

The Grimes Wash area provides important wildlife habitat which is utilized by a variety of species. This area has been classified as critical elk winter range and provides both summer and winter habitat for mule deer. There are also a number of raptor nests located in the vicinity of this lease. Three golden eagle nests and a prairie falcon eyrie are located within one mile of the lease area. Other raptors, including red-tailed hawks, American kestrels and a number of owls species could also potentially nest in this area. Springs and other water sources exist within or near the lease boundaries. These water sources and their associated riparian communities provide critical habitat for a number of other aquatic and terrestrial species. Readjustment of this lease should consider the potential impacts of underground coal mining on important wildlife habitats.

Underground mining can impact wildlife habitat in a number of ways. The most significant impacts result from surface disturbance for mining facilities and subsidence of the surface due to the removal of coal. The application of the Special Coal Lease Stipulations found in Appendix B of the Forest Plan will help to reduce any impacts to wildlife resulting from mining activity within the lease area. We want to emphasize the importance of these stipulations as they provide guidelines for reducing impacts due to surface disturbance and subsidence.

We are particularly concerned with the effect of subsidence on available water sources and raptor cliff nests. We fully support those stipulations calling for the monitoring of subsidence and water sources. PacifiCorp has participated with the DWR in conducting annual raptor surveys of the lease area. We urge that



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this practice continue so that the impacts of mining on raptors can be better understood.

It is important that, if impacts due to subsidence are detected, appropriate mitigation measures be implemented in order to replace lost habitat values. Again, we support those stipulations which outline appropriate mitigation for impacts to wildlife habitat.

We appreciate the opportunity to review this action. We support your efforts to coordinate mining activities with the protection of other natural resources, including wildlife. If you have any questions regarding our comments, please contact Ken Phippen, Regional Habitat Manager.

Sincerely,



Miles Moretti  
Regional Supervisor

Copy: Ralph Miles, DWR  
Pamela Grubaugh-Littig, DOGM

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