

United States  
Department of  
Agriculture

Forest  
Service

Manti-La Sal  
National Forest

Ferron-Price Ranger District  
599 West Price River Dr.  
Price, Utah 84501  
Phone # (801) 637-2817  
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0031

File Code: 2820-4

Date: June 10, 1997

*Pam*

Mr. Lowell Braxton  
Utah Department of Natural Resources  
Division of Oil, Gas, and Mining  
1594 W. North Temple, Suite 1210  
Box 145801  
Salt Lake City, Utah 84114-5801

*ACT/015/018 #2  
Craig Aaron; PAM*

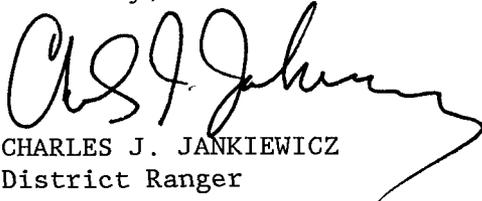
Dear Lowell:

PacifiCorp (Energy West) has proposed to add their remaining Federal coal leases in the North Rilda Canyon Area (U-024317, SL-051221, U-2810, and portion of U-06039) and fee lands to the Deer Creek Mine permit area. This would allow them to extend underground workings northward to Mill Fork Canyon. The purpose is to recover remaining minable coal reserves in the area.

As proposed, underground mining in the area could subside the steep south slope of Mill Fork Canyon and cause minor rock falls along the limited Castlegate Sandstone outcrop. The Manti-La Sal National Forest and Office of Surface Mining are conducting an environmental analysis to evaluate the proposal for consent/approval, respectively. Existing environmental assessments for the leases have disclosed the potential impacts of underground mining and subsidence, but did not consider the effects of subsidizing the Castlegate Sandstone outcrops because lease stipulations prevented it. Since only negligible surface disturbance (rock falls) is anticipated in isolated areas and measures will be taken to protect wildlife nesting/roosting areas, the agencies are considering a categorical exclusion from preparation of an Environmental Assessment or Environmental Impact Statement. Categorical exclusions are provided for under appropriate agency regulations.

If you have any comments or questions regarding this matter, contact Jeff DeFreest, Ferron-Price District Geologist at the Forest Supervisor's Office, 599 West Price River Drive, Price, Utah 84501, (801-637-2817) by 5:00 p.m. on June 20, 1997.

Sincerely,

  
CHARLES J. JANKIEWICZ  
District Ranger

cc:  
SO Minerals/Geology