

November 7, 2003

TO: Internal File
THRU: Pamela Grubaugh-Littig, Permit Supervisor
FROM: Wayne H. Western, Environmental Scientist III/Engineering
RE: Technical Field Visit, Subsidence Feature, PacifiCorp, Deer Creek Mine, C/015/018

Other Attendees: Susan White, DOGM
Wayne Western, DOGM
Tom Lloyd, FS
Carter Reed, FS
Ken Fleck, PacifiCorp

Date & Time: Arrived on site at 9:30 AM left at 2:30 PM, October 10, 2003.

PURPOSE:

The purpose of the visit was to observe subsidence cracks that occurred at the Deer Creek Mine and to make recommendation about what should be done at the site.

OBSERVATIONS:

The participants observed a subsidence crack that at the top of a ridge overlooking Rilda Canyon. The crack was 100-150 feet long; the width was between 2-3 feet and the depth at the deepest part was at least 50 feet.

The crack is mostly in bedrock. The soil depth is 1-3 feet. Therefore, the crack is not self-healing as soil is washed into the crack.

TECHNICAL FIELD VISIT

The crack most likely occurred because of a rotation of the bedrock as a result of subsidence. The Permittee plans to mine another seam in the area so additional subsidence will occur. The type and size of additional surface features is unknown.

The crack does pose a hazard to humans, and livestock. The area is remote and there is no sign that people or livestock visit the area on a regular basis. Human encounters are most likely to occur during hunting seasons. However, the Forest Service was going to check with the Forest Recreationist and discuss the use. The crack is visible during daylight. However, the crack might not be seen at night or when covered by snow.

During the visit, the participants discuss possible remedial actions. They include: explosives to blast the crack closed such as what was done at Bear Canyon, filling the crack with dirt to foam, fencing the crack, placing signs and markers, and leaving the crack as is. Because of the remoteness of the sight and the limited access, the participants agreed that the Permittee should place warning signs around the crack until a long-term solution is agreed upon.

RECOMMENDATIONS/CONCLUSIONS:

The public must be protected from the crack. Because of the remoteness of the site and limited reasons for visiting the area, the participants agreed that the best solutions would be to place warning signs and possibly a fence around the crack until mining is finished. The area should be monitored next year after longwall mining is completed. The Division should discuss with the Forest Service any additional mitigation requirements.

cc: All Attendees
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