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United States
Department of
Agriculture

Forest
Service

Manti-La Sal
National Forest

Ferron/Price Ranger District
Ferron Work Center
115 West Canyon Road
P.O. Box 310
Ferron, UT 84523
Phone # (435) 384-2372
Fax # (435) 384-3296

File Code: 2820-4

Date: February 11, 2004

Dear Interested Party:

The Ferron/Price Ranger District, Manti-La Sal National Forest is evaluating the possible environmental effects of a proposal from Energy West/PacifiCorp to conduct exploratory drilling on Utah Coal Lease ML-48258 in Emery County, Utah. The drilling is proposed during the 2004 field season (May 15th – June 30th) and would consist of drilling four holes: one on the south side of Crandall Canyon and three in the Upper Joes Valley area, Sections 11 and 14, T. 16 S., R. 6 E., SLB&M. A helicopter would transport equipment and personnel to each remote drill site from a temporary base located about 1/2 mile south of the Indian Creek Campground along FDR 50017 (See attached map).

The purpose of the drilling is to provide information necessary to evaluate coal seam thickness and further characterize the geology of the area's coal reserves for future mine plan development.

The proposed project lies within the East Mountain Inventoried Roadless Area; however, no new roads are proposed. Surface disturbances would be minimal (<100 sq ft) per site and would be reclaimed per Forest Service specification upon completion. Since the project, as proposed, would have minimal disturbances to land and resources, it is anticipated this may be categorically excluded from further NEPA analysis (EA or EIS) under category 31.2(8), Forest Service Handbook, 1909.15.

Drilling would occur on lands in which the surface are administered by the United States Forest Service, while the subsurface coal estate is owned by the Utah School and Institutional Trust Lands Administration (SITLA). SITLA has an outstanding right to occupy National Forest System lands for the purpose of exploring for and developing their coal estate. Therefore, authorization of surface occupancy is non-discretionary under Federal Regulations 36 CFR 251. However, the District Ranger can require mitigations to minimize the effects to other resources in the area.

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The District Ranger must decide what terms and/or conditions are needed for the protection of non-coal resources. These would be incorporated into a Forest Service Special-Use Permit authorizing the occupancy of National Forest System lands.

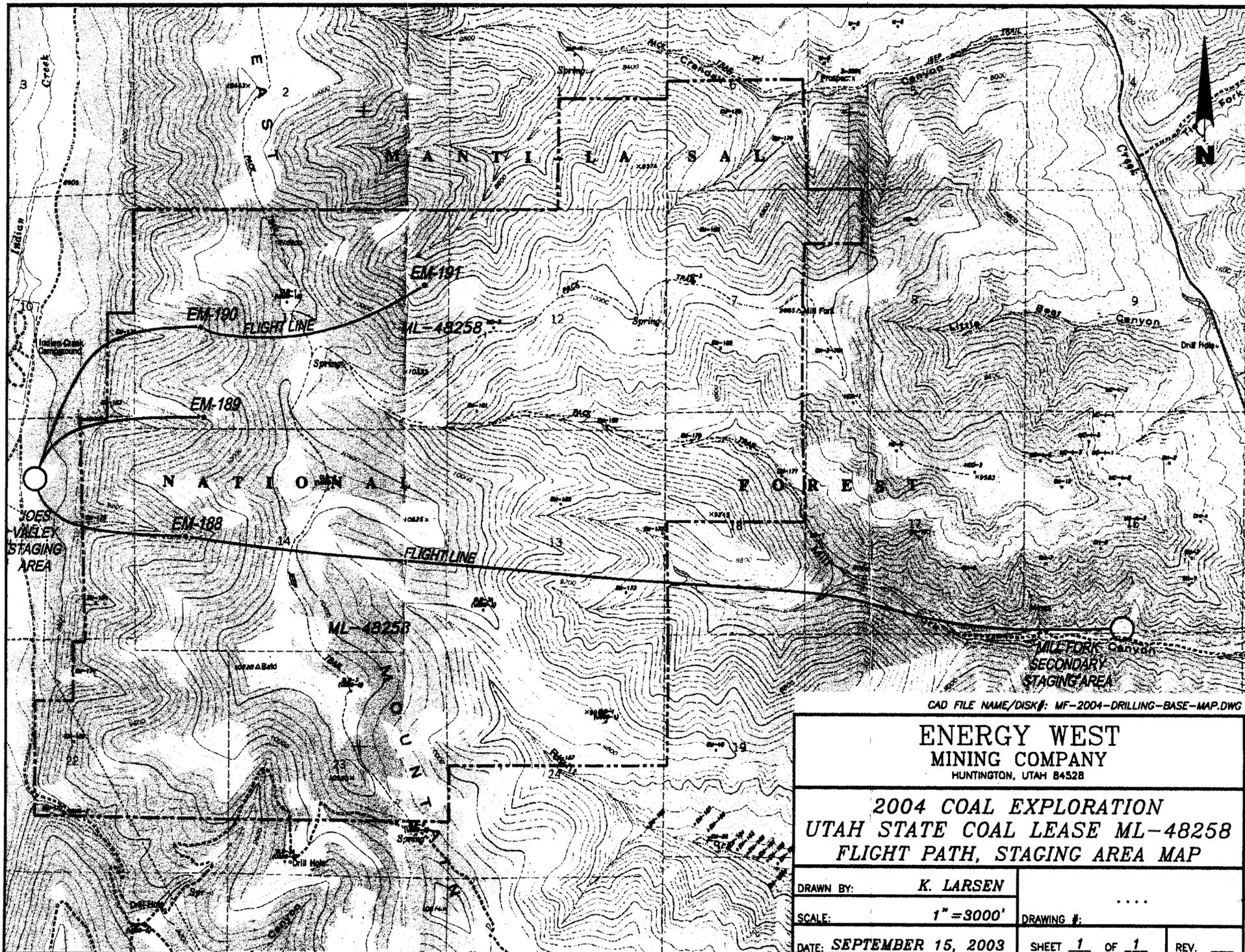
Comments should be sent to Tom Lloyd, Ferron/Price Ranger District, Manti-La Sal National Forest, Box 310, Ferron, Utah 84523, by March 7, 2004. For further information contact Tom Lloyd at (435) 384-2372. Comments received, including names and addresses, will be considered part of the public record.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Mesia Nyman".

MESIA NYMAN
District Ranger

ENCLOSURE



CAD FILE NAME/DISK#: MF-2004-DRILLING-BASE-MAP.DWG

ENERGY WEST MINING COMPANY HUNTINGTON, UTAH 84528	
2004 COAL EXPLORATION UTAH STATE COAL LEASE ML-48258 FLIGHT PATH, STAGING AREA MAP	
DRAWN BY: K. LARSEN
SCALE: 1" = 3000'	DRAWING #:
DATE: SEPTEMBER 15, 2003	SHEET 1 OF 1 REV. ____