

4/015/018 Incoming

#3726



United States
Department of
Agriculture

Forest
Service

Manti-La Sal
National Forest

Supervisor's Office
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File Code: 2840

Date: July 12, 2011

Elizabeth Shaeffer
Environmental Protection Specialist
Office of Surface Mining
1999 Broadway Suite 3320
Denver, CO 80202

RE: Partial Phase II and III Bond Release, Deer Creek Mine, Permit No. UT-015-018 DOGM
Proposed Decision and Findings Compliance, June 2, 2011

Dear Ms. Shaeffer:

This letter acknowledges receipt and review of the Phase II and III Bond Release Proposed Decision document prepared by the State of Utah, Division of Oil, Gas and Mining (OGM) dated June 2, 2011. I concur with OGM's findings and decision.

The Phase II and III bond release request applies to approximately 0.6 acres of the Deer Creek Mine 9th East Portal Breakout Site. The site is located on an east facing slope in the right fork of Grimes Wash, immediately adjacent to the surface facilities of the Cottonwood/Wilberg Mine. There are five (5) reclaimed portals at the 9th East Portal Breakout Site. All portals and access are considered pre-SMCRA sites. Two of these portals were developed in the 1920's for wagon operations and penetrated 50 to 75 feet into the mountain. The remaining three portals were developed in 1977 and were utilized for intake ventilation purposes until 1990.

Joe DiBenedetto, Staff Geologist, represented the Manti-La Sal National Forest in the bond release inspection meeting held May 17, 2011. His inspection report is attached to this document.

If you have any questions, please contact Joe DiBenedetto at 435-636-3539.

Sincerely,

Pamela E. Brown
PAMELA E. BROWN
Forest Supervisor

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DIV. OF OIL, GAS & MINING





Regraded and re-vegetated area above Vent 3.



Vent 3 area re-vegetated and regraded.



A full view showing the Vent 2 area and access road regraded and re-vegetated.



Another view of the Vent 2 area showing regrading and re-vegetation.



Vent 2 area showing the regraded vent area and the re-vegetation progress.



View back down the access road illustrating the recovery and re-vegetation work.



Signs delineating the disturbed area will be removed once the bond release is accomplished.



Reclaimed area along the recovered access road above Vent 1.

Conclusion:

Based on the inspection and comparison to the undisturbed areas adjacent to the access road and the vents, Manti-La Sal NF believes the PacifiCorp/Energy West has fulfilled their obligation to reclaim and recover the access road and vents at the Deer Creek Mine above the area associated with Wilberg Mine burn.



Vent 1 Recovery Area: Regraded and re-vegetated

May 17, 2011

Field Inspection of Deer Creek Mine Reclamation for Phase II and III Bond Release Review

Location: PacifiCorp/Energy West Office, Huntington, UT

Date: May 17, 2011

Attendees:

PacifiCorp/ Energy West: Ken Fleck, Dennis Oakley

OSM: Elizabeth Shaeffer, Howard Strand

UDOGM: Darron Haddock, James Owen, Ingrid Campbell, Jim Smith, Joseph Helfrich

Manti-La Sal NF: Joseph N. DiBenedetto

BLM: No representation

Our meeting began at the PacifiCorp/Energy West office in Huntington, UT at approximately 1330 hours on Tuesday May 17, 2011. The list of attendees is listed above. We were gathered together to inspect the Phase II and Phase III reclamation of portions of the Deer Creek Mine for the purpose of releasing PacifiCorp from their bond liabilities. Dennis Oakley and Ken Fleck displayed and explained a map illustrating the three vents and the reclamation area for the Phase II and III bond release inspection at the Deer Creek Mine. We were told to follow the Energy West representatives to the mine to gain access to the areas to be inspected.

We followed Ken and Dennis along an access road which led to the area above the Hiawatha coal seam where the vents and access road reclamation had begun ten years previous. At the first vent area Dennis explained how the reclamation was implemented and reseeded.

The access road was regraded using a backhoe and pocked to accept seed. The area was reseeded with native seed (one ton/acre) and hydro-mulched (one thousand pounds/acre). Native cover was reintroduced to the area and the brush varieties consisted of salt brush, rabbit brush, native mahogany, and sage brush. Attached photographs show the re-vegetation effects and the decommissioning of the vents. PacifiCorp told us the recovery of the ground cover to a pre-disturbed state was approximately 157% of the original condition and the brush was recovered to 227% of the original condition. Photographs of the access road illustrate the effectiveness of the recovery.

The three vents mentioned in our office session at PacifiCorp were equally as well recovered. Locating the exact area of the vents was difficult because the regrading and re-vegetation had been so well executed. The PacifiCorp representatives had problems identifying the exact area of the vents.

Signs along the access road and the disturbed areas delineated the native from the disturbed areas. We were told the signs would be removed upon decision of bond release. The following photographs illustrate the vegetation recovery and the decommissioning of the three vents.

The attached photographs document the group's movement along the access road and through the vegetation recovery area up to the three vent locales.