

State of Utah



Coal Regulatory Program

Deer Creek Mine
NOI to Conduct Minor Coal Exploration
C/015/0018
Task ID #4589
Minor Exploration Analysis and Findings
May 19, 2014

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EXPLORATION TECHNICAL ANALYSIS

INTRODUCTION

Energy West Mining Company submitted a Notice of Intent to Conduct Minor Coal Exploration on behalf of PacifiCorp (the Permittee). The proposed holes are being drilled from the surface into the mine in order to monitor the depth and quality of ground water that may accumulate within the Mill Fork are of the mine after closure. Two wells each are being proposed at two different sites. Energy West may drill as many as 6 holes if they encounter difficulty in completing any of the holes. The holes will be drilled on leases UTU-88554/UTU-06039 using helicopter-supported drilling. The project will occur on Forest Service surface with the subsurface being owned by the BLM.

COAL EXPLORATION

Regulatory Reference: R645-200.

SCOPE AND RESPONSIBILITIES

Regulatory Reference: 30 CFR 772.1; 30 CFR 772.10; 30 CFR 772.11; R645-100-400; R645-200-100; R645-200-200; R645-201-100.

Analysis: Energy West Mining Company submitted a Notice of Intent to Conduct Minor Coal Exploration on behalf of PacifiCorp (the Permittee). The proposed holes are being drilled from the surface into the mine in order to monitor the depth and quality of ground water that may accumulate within the Mill Fork are of the mine after closure. Two wells each are being proposed at two different sites. Energy West may drill as many as 6 holes if they encounter difficulty in completing any of the holes. This project is not subject to 43 CFR Parts 3480-3487, so it falls under the responsibility of the Division .

Findings: The applicant has submitted the necessary information to meet the minimum requirement of this section.

REQUIREMENTS FOR NOTICE OF INTENTION TO CONDUCT MINOR COAL EXPLORATION

Regulatory Reference: 30 CFR 772.10; 30 CFR 772.11; R645-100-412; R645-201-200.

Analysis: The appropriate Name Address, phone number and responsible representative have been identified. A description of the exploration area has been provided. The Date of startup is identified as July 5, 2014 with a completion date of September 30, 2014 also being identified in the NOI.

The applicant has provided a thorough description of the drilling method. Helicopter assisted methods are planned to produce 3” diameter holes that will extend into the Deer Creek Mine workings. At each of the two sites at least two holes will be drilled for the purpose of installing water monitoring wells.

Findings: The applicant has met the minimum requirements of this section.

COMPLIANCE DUTIES

Regulatory Reference: 30 CFR 772.13; R645-202.

OPERATIONAL STANDARDS

Regulatory Reference: 30 CFR 772.13; R645-202-100.

Analysis:

Biology

Habitats of unique or unusually high value for fish, wildlife, and other related environmental values and critical habitats of endangered or threatened species will not be disturbed during this exploration project. T&E surveys have been completed with no TES plants or animals being found in the area of the proposed drilling. Raptor surveys show that there are no raptor nests within ½ mile buffer zones from the drill locations.

Roads

This proposal contemplates helicopter drilling. No new roads will be built for this exploration project.

Topsoil

For the most part, topsoil is not disturbed during the helicopter-assisted drilling project. Brattice cloth is used under the rig to protect the topsoil and vegetation. Where small excavations may be required to level the drill rig, topsoil will be separately removed and stored and then redistributed.

Diversions of Overland flows and streams

Water for drilling is planned to be taken from local drainages in the vicinity of the drill holes. A temporary exchange application was filed with Water Rights and has been approved.

Hydrologic Balance

No drill pad will be constructed and there will be no additional runoff coming from the site. No impoundments are being built to contain runoff water.

Acid- or toxic forming materials

No acid or toxic forming materials have been produced from the drilling at Deer Creek. MSDS sheets of the drill fluid concentrates have been provided.

Findings: The applicant has met the minimum requirements of this section.

RECLAMATION STANDARDS

Regulatory Reference: 30 CFR 772.13; R645-202-200.

Analysis:

Approximate original contour

As the drilling is being done with a helicopter-assisted rig, no significant excavation or disturbance is planned.

Revegetation

All areas disturbed by the drilling operations will be revegetated. All areas will be promptly seeded with an approved seed mix. Seed will be hand broadcast and then raked in. Since vegetation will not be removed, it should spring back quickly and provide erosion and sediment control.

Boreholes

The disturbed area of each of the boreholes will be reclaimed immediately following the drilling. If the holes are turned into water monitoring wells, Energy West will promptly amend the mine permit to include the holes in the monitoring program as well as the reclamation plan (See letter dated May 15, 2014).

Facilities and Equipment

All facilities and equipment will be removed from the exploration area when they are no longer needed for exploration. If the wells are completed as monitoring wells, they will be cased and left for future collection of environmental data. If this occurs they will need to be made part of the MRP and have reclamation plans and a bond posted for future reclamation.

Findings: The applicant has met the requirements of this section of the exploration rules.

PUBLIC AVAILABILITY OF INFORMATION

Regulatory Reference: 30 CFR 772.15; R645-203.

Analysis: Surveys and maps of T&E species and raptors has been placed in confidential files. The rest of the information in the NOI is available for public review.

Findings: The applicant has met the minimum requirement of this section.