



United States Department of the Interior
OFFICE OF SURFACE MINING
Reclamation and Enforcement
POST OFFICE BLDG. RM. 270
1823 STOUT STREET
DENVER, COLORADO 80202

OFFICE OF THE REGIONAL DIRECTOR



9 NOV 1979

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Mr. Ron Daniels
Staff Assistant
Division of Oil, Gas and
Mining
Department of Natural Resources
1588 West North Temple
Salt Lake City, Utah 84116

Dear Mr. ~~Daniels~~ Daniels:

My staff has reviewed Utah Power & Light's (UP&L) exploration plan for the proposed Cottonwood Portal. We find that more information is needed before we can proceed with further evaluation of this proposal.

The plan states that no new fish and wildlife habitat study is necessary. This statement is based upon assumed similarities in vegetation and elevation between the present Wilberg Mine and the proposed exploration area. However, we believe that the presence of an elk wintering area near the confluence of Cottonwood Creek and the North Fork of Cottonwood Creek indicates a significant wildlife difference between the two sites. Therefore, UP&L should make a determination of whether the proposed exploration will have an impact on fish and wildlife habitat.

The plan also states that if the mining operation does not follow exploration, the site will be revegetated and restored to an approximate original contour. However, the proposal does not provide adequate information to evaluate the revegetation seed mixture and does not provide a topographic map showing the proposed approximate original contour. This information should be supplied. With respect to the seed mixture data, seeding rates (in pure live seed) and the rate of plant species cover should be provided. The plan should explain the reason for using any introduced species in the permanent seed mixture.

According to the plan, there will be a rock storage pile and a topsoil pile. The plan states that a berm will be constructed around the storage piles; however, no berm was shown on the diagrams enclosed with the plan. Diagrams showing this berm are needed to evaluate sediment control effectiveness. In addition, the rock storage area should be cleared of topsoil before placement of the rock spoil.

Mr. Ron Daniels

Page 2

A berm is proposed to be located below the exploration area to control sediment. If this berm is to be in place next spring, a temporary vegetative cover should be used to insure against erosion. This vegetative cover should also be used on the topsoil storage pile. A seed mixture designed for temporary cover should be used.

Due to the impact of the on-site abandoned mine, we find that no archeological clearance is needed for the exploration area.

A copy of this letter is enclosed for transmittal to the applicant by your office. If questions should arise with regard to the above comment, please contact John Nadolski or Tom Schultz on my staff (303-837-3773).

Sincerely,



DONALD A. CRANE