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Wilberg Mine file *UB*
cc Pam G.L.

United States
Department of
Agriculture

Forest
Service

Manti-LaSal
National Forest

599 West Price River Dr.
Price, Utah 84501

RECEIVED
JUL 13 1990

Reply to: 2820

Date: July 11, 1990

Lowell Braxton
State of Utah Natural Resources
Division of Oil, Gas and Mining
355 West North Temple
3 Triad Center, Suite 350
Salt Lake City, Utah 84180-1203

DIVISION OF
OIL, GAS & MINING

2-10-1990
#2

Dear Lowell:

A meeting was held at the Manti-La Sal National Forest Supervisor's Office in Price, Utah, on June 14, 1990, to discuss the progress of Utah Power and Light Company's escarpment failure study at the Cottonwood/Wilberg Mine. Representatives from the Bureau of Land Management (BLM), Utah Division of Oil, Gas and Mining (UDOGM), Utah Power and Light Company (UP&L), and the Forest Service, Manti-La Sal National Forest (FS), attended. A copy of the sign-in sheet circulated during the meeting is attached.

The purpose of the meeting was to review the progress of the geotechnical and environmental studies and to determine what additional information will be required. The following items were discussed:

1. The Forest Service is concerned that the study is bogged down and was not progressing as required. This was prompted by the fact that the required baseline environmental data report and recent results of the geotechnical study have not been submitted to the regulatory agencies. In addition, several of the original core committee members have transferred to other positions, resulting in some confusion regarding the objectives and requirements of the study.
2. It was discussed that Pamela Grubaugh-Littig will replace John Whitehead as the UDOGM representative on the core committee. For the time being, Val Payne will replace Dave Smaldone as the UP&L representative. The other members, Carter Reed (FS) and Brent Northrup (BLM) will remain on the committee.

3. The situation which prompted the study was reviewed. The escarpment failure in Newberry Canyon and the FS decision not to consent to mining beyond the 15 degree angle-of-draw in the south lease area resulted in an appeal by UP&L. Resolution of the appeal and the need to develop methods for predicting escarpment failures and the resulting impacts prompted the study. The Forest Service decision could conflict with BLM's directive for assuring maximum economic recovery of coal and UP&L's objective of minimizing mining costs and maximizing economic coal recovery within their permit area.
4. The objectives of the study were reviewed. It was discussed that the primary objective is to provide geotechnical and environmental data necessary to predict the extent, duration and magnitude of impacts of mining under the canyon escarpments on the Wasatch Plateau. Computer models based on geotechnical data would be developed to predict the potential for inducing escarpment failures and the duration and extent of the potential failures. Environmental conditions would be inventoried and monitored to evaluate the level of impact to Forest resources and mitigation measures would be tested to determine their effectiveness. With this data, the regulatory agencies could evaluate the potential for escarpment failures and impacts, and make informed decisions in regard to proposals for conducting full extraction mining in the escarpment areas.

The progress of the geotechnical studies was discussed. UP&L stated that the concurrent computer geotechnical studies by the University of Utah and Bureau of Mines are proceeding essentially as planned. They stated that presentations on the results of the studies are planned for a mining symposium in late June. It was decided that the representatives of the regulatory agencies need to be directly appraised of the progress and results of the studies, therefore, a meeting for this purpose was scheduled for July 19, 1990, to be held at the Manti-La Sal National Forest Supervisor's Office in Price, Utah.

6. The progress of the baseline environmental resources inventory and studies were discussed. Submittal of the baseline data is long overdue. UP&L indicated that they are in the process of preparing a report but have been delayed by the need to collect field data required under the mining permit. UP&L committed to submitting this data by August 1, 1990.
7. The FS stated that it has not received any data from UP&L from the laser prism studies being conducted to determine the amount of movement along the fractured escarpment areas. The FS has been monitoring the cracks which are located above the escarpment and the results indicate that the cracks are continuing to widen. UP&L stated that monitoring is being conducted and that data would be submitted at the meeting scheduled for July 19, 1990.

*Plan: Bring me
up to speed on
that meeting,
Thy LBS*

- Do we have an
observer from down?*
8. Recent failures on the south side of Newberry Canyon and the loss of golden eagle nest 61C was discussed. UP&L stated that the nest was not active when it failed and that the nesting pair of eagles has not occupied any of the nests in the study area. With the loss of this nest, it was decided that the impacts to the eagles need to be reassessed by a committee of FS, BLM, Utah Division of Wildlife Resources (UDWR), Fish and Wildlife Service (FWS), and UP&L Wildlife Biologists. This committee, to be coordinated by Ana Egnew, FS Wildlife Biologist, will assess the need for measures designed to mitigate impacts to the eagles. Measures could include construction of man-made nests and revegetation of the disturbed areas to restore habitat for the eagles and prey base. One of the objectives of the study is to determine the effectiveness of mitigation measures.
 9. The need for other studies such as sediment studies and monitoring of the flow in the spring at the head of Newberry Canyon were briefly discussed. The FS stated that monitoring of water flow from the spring needs to be conducted. The team will need to evaluate the need for sediment studies following submittal of the environmental baseline data.
 10. The obvious visual results of mining in the study area were discussed. The FS stated that the study is showing that longwall mining beyond the 15 degree angle-of-draw has a high potential for inducing escarpment failures. To emphasize the need for the study to generate meaningful results, the FS stated that without the necessary information needed to determine the potential for escarpment failures and the impacts, it will not consent to full extraction mining beyond the 15 degree angle-of-draw. This prompted a discussion of UP&L's plans to mine in the Rilda Canyon area.
 11. UP&L's Mining and Reclamation Plan Modification which proposes the addition of the Rilda Canyon leases into the permit area was discussed. The potential for inducing escarpment failures along the steep slopes of Rilda Canyon is an issue which could delay review of the modification. It was decided that an amendment to the modification would be submitted by UP&L stating that longwall mining will only extend to the 15 degree angle-of-draw along the escarpments. It was discussed that proposals to extend the longwall panels beyond the 15 degree angle-of-draw would require a review and environmental analysis. The results of the study would be needed before a meaningful analysis could be conducted.

The next meeting of the core committee will be held on July 19, 1990, at the Forest Supervisor's Office in Price, Utah. The results of the wildlife committee meeting will be discussed and the results of the computer geotechnical modeling will be presented by the University of Utah and Bureau of Mines. Additional data on monitoring of the escarpments will be presented.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "George A. Morris".

for
GEORGE A. MORRIS
Forest Supervisor

Enclosure

Sign-In Sheet

6/14/90 Escarpment Study Meeting

<u>Name</u>	<u>Representing</u>	<u>Location</u>
Carter Reed	USDA Forest Service	Price, Utah
PAMELA GRUBAUGH-LITIG	DOG M	SLC, Utah
Brent Northrup	BLM	Moab
Gary Torres	BLM	Moab
Stephen Falk	BLM	Price
VAL PAYNE	UP&L	HUNTINGTON
BART HYITA	UP&L	HUNTINGTON
Gary S. Takmalca	UP&L	Huntington
Ana Egnaw	USFS	Ferron
Jim Egnaw	USFS	Price
Dale Harber	USFS	Ferron