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State of Utah
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June 17, 1999

TO: File

THRU: Joe Helfrich, Permit Supervisor *JH*

THRU: Daron Haddock, Permit Supervisor *DH*

FROM: David Darby, Senior Reclamation Specialist *DD*

RE: Miller Canyon Reclamation, PacifiCorp, Cottonwood /Wilberg Mine, ACT 015/019-99B, File #2: Emery County, Utah

SUMMARY:

A proposal was received was by PacifiCorp on June 7, 1999 to reclaim the portal breakouts in Miller. The applicant submitted information indicating that some groundwater has been discharging from the portals, but in the past few years reduced in flow to only a few gallons per minute. The portals were developed in 1981 to supply air to the Wilberg Mine.

TECHNICAL ANALYSIS:

RECLAMATION PLAN

MAPS, PLANS, AND CROSS SECTIONS OF RECLAMATION OPERATIONS

Regulatory Reference: R645-301-521

Analysis:

The applicant submitted a set of maps in Attachments 1, 4 and 5 depicting the location, setting and condition of the portal site.

Findings:

The applicant has submitted sufficient information to address this issue.

HYDROLOGIC INFORMATION

Regulatory Reference: R645-301-761.

Analysis:

The applicant discussed the method of sealing the portals in a way to allow gravity discharge of mine water. French drains (rock and gravel bottoms) of backfill material will ensure drainage of small amounts of water from the mine.

Regulations require that mine closures prevent acid or other toxic drainage from entering ground or surface waters.

The applicant points out that Miller Creek is ephemeral and that the portals are 150 feet from the canyon floor. Water discharging from the mine is reduced before it reaches the channel.

The applicant indicates through water monitoring information that monitoring has been conducted since 1977. A summary of the monitoring data shows the average levels of several parameters. Throughout the monitoring history flow has sometimes been as high as 78 gpm and has recently reduced through inactive mining. Oil and grease have been identified during monitoring. Reduced flows have made it difficult to collect samples.

Findings:

The information provided by the applicant indicates that gravity flows still exists. The mine water discharge information does not draw conclusions to future discharge potential at the portals. It is recommended that the applicant commit to conduct monitoring in accordance with their UPDES discharge permit. Chuck Semborski stated in a telephone message on June 17, 1999 that PacifiCorp plans to continue the UPDES monitoring on 004 throughout the reclamation period. If any measurable flows appear the applicant will samples to ensure acid and toxic contamination does not occur.

RECOMMENDATION

It is recommended that this amendment be approved.