



State of Utah  
DEPARTMENT OF NATURAL RESOURCES  
DIVISION OF OIL, GAS AND MINING

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February 11, 1997

TO: File

THROUGH: Joe Helfrich, Permit Supervisor

FROM: Paul Baker, Reclamation Biologist

Re: Exploration Plan, Canyon Fuel Company, Convulsion Canyon Mine,  
ACT/007/041, Folder #2, Sevier County, Utah

*04/1/002 EXP-96A 96C*

Canyon Fuel is proposing to drill three exploration holes within the permit area for the Convulsion Canyon Mine. Since the sites are on federal land, the Division is not the lead permitting agency but simply provides comments.

The exploration plan is basically acceptable, but a few changes would probably improve reclamation. The plan indicates all trees and brush will be grubbed (cleared) as the first step for new access and drill site construction. Topsoil will be stripped and stockpiled at a location where loss and contamination will be minimized, preferably on the uphill side of the disturbed area.

In many cases, it is best not to remove topsoil from access roads that are to be reclaimed. If the topsoil was not stripped, the existing vegetation would probably be able to recover more quickly than if it was stripped and the road reseeded. This is assuming there is not significant compaction. If there is too much compaction, it might be necessary to rip the wheel tracks.

The plan mentions a "specified seed mix" but doesn't show what this seed mix is. The mining and reclamation plan contains a seed mix that was used two years ago for some exploration sites on the plateau, and this mix is acceptable. Seed mixes used in the past have sometimes had some very aggressive introduced species (smooth brome).

Other aspects of the exploration proposal and stipulations are desirable and should help to ensure successful reclamation without introducing noxious weeds and without disturbing wildlife.