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

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DIVISION OF OIL GAS & MINING
FIELD VISIT FORM
TECHNICAL

Date: April 14, 1999

Time: 8:00 AM to 2:30 PM

Mine: SUFCo, Convulsion Canyon

File Number: ACT/041/002, Folder #2

DOG M Staff: Paul Baker, Pete Hess and Mike Suflita

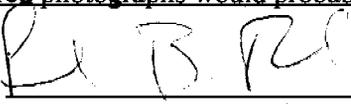
Other Attendees: Dale Harbor and Will Wilson (USES), Kelly Payne (Mayo and Associates), Chris Hansen and Mike Davis (Canyon Fuel)

Purpose: To look at the springs and other features in Box Canyon near the 150-acre IBC.

Observations: Soil on top of the plateau between the main fork and the east fork of Box Canyon contains little sand. This is consistent with information the operator has supplied indicating the soil is derived from the Price River formation. Wet soil was not particularly sticky, and this indicates it has more silt than clay. Vegetation in the area is almost entirely sagebrush/grass. Toward the rims of the canyons, vegetation changes to a Ponderosa pine community with much shallower and sandier soils. Again, this is consistent with information from the operator that the soil near the canyon rims is derived from sandstones of the Castle Gate formation.

We hiked down the east side of the main fork of Box Canyon to see some of the springs. As one descends this canyon, the dominant vegetation changes to curlleaf mountain mahogany then Douglas fir/Engelmann spruce. There are places near the bottom of the canyon where a lot of horsetail (*Equisetum*) is growing over a widespread area with concentrated stands near the springs. This indicates water is seeping into the soil along the entire area. Other species growing in areas near, but not at, the bottom of the canyon include Rocky Mountain maple, birch, and Wood's rose. Except Wood's rose, these species normally grow in riparian areas rather than upland areas. This is evidence there is water seeping from under the soil even where there is not a flowing spring.

Recommendations/Conclusions: The Division required the operator to include a plan for monitoring vegetation in the canyon to determine whether mining had any effects on vegetation. I still feel this monitoring is needed, but, after discussing monitoring options with Forest Service representatives, I believe aerial infrared photographs would probably be the best way to do the monitoring.

Signature:  on April 19, 1999

Paul B. Baker, Reclamation Biologist

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