



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

Michael O. Leavitt
 Governor

Kathleen Clarke
 Executive Director

Lowell P. Braxton
 Division Director

1594 West North Temple, Suite 1210

PO Box 145801

Salt Lake City, Utah 84114-5801

801-538-5340

801-359-3940 (Fax)

801-538-7223 (TDD)

**DIVISION OF OIL GAS & MINING
 FIELD VISIT FORM**

Date: April 10, 2000

Time: 10:45 AM to 3:30 PM

DOGM Staff: Paul Baker 

Other Attendees: Chris Hansen, Mike Davis, a mine employee operating the trackhoe, and a construction contractor

Purpose: To observe soils salvage operations and ensure adequate soil salvage at the Link Canyon substation, Canyon Fuel Company, LLC, SUFCO Mine, ACT/041/002, Internal File

Observations:

The soil survey estimated 127 cubic yards of soil could be salvaged, but we found differences between the soil survey and actual site conditions. One of the test pits found relatively deep salvageable soil toward the south end of the proposed pad, but during the salvage operations, we found there was actually a small lens of relatively deep soil; this deep soil was not present over the whole site.

Part of the area had been previously disturbed by an old coal mine, and it did not appear in the soil survey that the tram road had salvageable soil. We dug into this road, though, and found it was mostly composed of sandstone-based material. For this reason, the operator salvaged about one to two feet of soil in part of this area. There was less material available toward the hill, and within a few feet of the hill it became entirely unusable. Salvaging this soil was actually beneficial for the construction because it allowed the operator to widen the pad without using as much fill on the outslope.

There was some soil available on the outslope, but relatively little. It was mostly confined to small areas above and below large rocks where there were patches of grass. The operator was originally not going to salvage this material and started placing fill on it, but I asked Mr. Hansen to stop the operation so we could see what was there. The trackhoe operator dug a small pit where we were able to see roots extending about 6-12" down, and this is about how much soil was taken.

Once or twice, Mr. Hansen and I made the decision there was no more soil available in a certain area, but when the trackhoe operator started to excavate the area, there was some sandstone-based subsoil present. By the time we made this realization, the material was mixed with shale and coal. This material ended up being used for the pad, but I don't feel it was wasted because it will enhance subsoil quality for reclamation.

Overall, I felt good about the amount of soil that was salvaged compared to what appeared to be available. We took more soil from one area and less soil from another compared to what the survey said. There was some coal and shale mixed with the salvaged soil, but that was unavoidable. There should be enough good quality material to successfully reclaim the site.

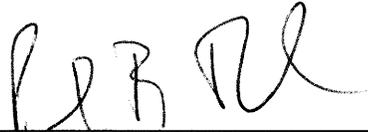
The Forest Service, Division of Wildlife Resources, and the Fish and Wildlife Service have been concerned about whether some eagle and peregrine falcon nests in the canyon would be affected by this construction activity. Previous monitoring showed no signs of nesting activity, and I saw no eagles. At one point we heard a red-tail hawk screeching above the cliffs to the east, but we did not see this bird. Screeching from a red-tail hawk this time of year is often indicative of nearby nesting activity. The only other birds we saw were ravens, magpies, and some small passerine birds.

Recommendations/Conclusions:

The operator will need to provide as-built drawings of the site so we can know exactly how much area was actually disturbed and how much soil is available for reclamation. Based on this information, it will probably be necessary to make some modifications to the reclamation plan.

The pad outslope was very steep to begin with, and the operator was placing fill on this slope. The inspector should watch to make sure rocks and other material do not roll off this hill and block the road. It will also be necessary for the operator to revegetate part of the area.

Perimeter markers were in place when I arrived at the site, and I saw no sign there was any disturbance outside these markers with the exception of a few rocks that fell to the road. These were pushed to the side so vehicles could pass, but they will need to be cleaned up.

Signature:  on April 14, 2000
Paul B. Baker, Reclamation Biologist

CC: Robert Davidson, Pete Heis