21/4

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

Michael O. Leavitt
Governor

Ted Stewart
Executive Director

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Division Director

1594 West North Temple, Suite 1210
Box 145801
Salt Lake City, Utah 84114-5801
801-538-5340
801-359-3940 (Fax)
801-538-7223 (TDD)

July 18, 1997

Alan Wilson
Senior Reclamation Engineer
Hecla Mining Company
6500 Mineral Drive
Coeur d'Alene, Idaho 83814-8788

Re: Approval to Proceed with Tailings Underdrain Plugging Plan,, Hecla Mining Company, Escalante Silver Mine, M/021/004, Iron County, Utah

Dear Mr. Wilson:

Thank you for your May 14, 1997 letter provided in response to our letter dated February 18, 1997. I copied your letter to the Bureau of Land Management (BLM) and Division of Water Quality (DWQ) for their review and comment. On June 30, 1997, we received a letter from the BLM (copy attached) formally accepting your underdrain plugging proposal. On July 18, 1997, I spoke with Dennis Fredericks of DWQ and received his verbal concurrence to proceed with the proposed plugging plan.

The Division hereby grants its formal approval to proceed with the plugging of the underdrain collection pipe, the toe drain and the decant line according to the May 14, 1997, proposed plan. Additional water quality analyses of the underdrain discharge will not be required. I apologize for the unfortunate delay in responding to your latest reply. Thank you for your continued patience and cooperation in resolving this matter. We will continue to suspend any further processing of the latest application to change the post-mining land use, until you notify us differently. Please contact me at (801) 538-5286, if you have any other questions or concerns in this regard.

Sincerely,

D. Wayne Hedberg

D. Wayne Hedberg
Permit Supervisor
Minerals Regulatory Program

jb
Attachments
cc: Craig L. Egerton, BLM, Cedar City DO
Dennis Fredericks, DWQ
M021004.pip

M021/004

United States Department of the Interior

BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT
CEDAR CITY DISTRICT
BEAVER RIVER RESOURCE AREA
176 East D.L. Sargent Dr.
Cedar City, Utah 84720

RECEIVED
JUN 30 1997
DIV. OF OIL, GAS & MINING

IN REPLY REFER TO:
UT-044
3809
UTU-67116

June 27, 1997

Mr. D. Wayne Hedberg
Division of Oil, Gas, & Mining
1594 West North Temple, Suite 1210
Box 145801
Salt Lake City, Utah 84114-5801

Dear Mr. Hedberg:

This letter is in regards to correspondence, dated May 14, 1997, from Hecla Mining Co. to your Division, requesting plugging of the Escalante Mill tailings pond underdrain. The tailings pond is located entirely on public lands within Secs. 3 & 10, T. 36 S., R. 17 W.

Ed Ginouves of my staff inspected the site on June 26, 1997 to confirm the surface integrity of the tailings cap and measure the flowrate of the underdrain. The tailings pond soil cap has a stable cover of vegetation and no evidence of surface water penetration of the cap was noted. The flowrate of the underdrain was measured at the discharge point at the mill and was found to be 0.5 liters/min. We are satisfied that this extremely low flowrate is an indication that the pore fluids in the tailings pile are essentially drained, and that the tailings pile cap is functioning as designed, and has isolated the tailings from the hydrologic system. It would be acceptable to BLM to plug the underflow drain pipe at this time.

If you have an questions or concerns, please contact Ed Ginouves at (801) 865-3040.

Sincerely,

Craig L. Egerton
Area Manager