




**COLORADO DIVISION OF RECLAMATION, MINING AND SAFETY  
COAL PROGRAM INSPECTION REPORT**



**PERMIT INFORMATION**

<b>Permit Number:</b> C-1980-007 <b>Mine Name:</b> West Elk Mine <b>Operator:</b> Mountain Coal Company, LLC <b>Operator Address:</b> Ms Kathleen G Welt P.O. Box 591 Somerset, CO 81434	<b>County:</b> Delta, Gunnison <b>Operation Type:</b> Underground <b>Permit Status:</b> Active <b>Ownership:</b> Federal
<b>Operator Representative Present:</b>  Jessica Loveland	
<b>Operator Representative Signature: (Field Issuance Only)</b>  N/A – Report Issued from Denver Office	

**INSPECTION INFORMATION**

<b>Inspection Start Date:</b> November 19, 2013 <b>Inspection Start Time:</b> 08:00 <b>Inspection End Date:</b> November 19, 2013 <b>Inspection End Time:</b> 13:30	<b>Inspection Type:</b> Coal Complete Inspection <b>Inspection Reason:</b> Normal I&E Program <b>Weather:</b> Clear
<b>Joint Inspection Agency:</b>  None	<b>Joint Inspection Contacts:</b>
<b>Post Inspection Agency:</b>  None	<b>Post Inspection Contacts:</b>
<b>Inspector(s):</b>  James R. Stark	<b>Inspector's Signature:</b>  <b>Signature Date:</b>  29 November 2013

**Inspection Topic Summary**

NOTE: Y=Inspected N=Not Inspected R=Comments Noted V=Violation Issued NA=Not Applicable

N - Air Resource Protection

R - Availability of Records

N - Backfill &amp; Grading

N - Excess Spoil and Dev. Waste

N - Explosives

N - Fish &amp; Wildlife

R - Hydrologic Balance

R - Gen. Compliance With Mine Plan

N - Other

R - Processing Waste

N - Roads

N - Reclamation Success

Y - Revegetation

N - Subsidence

R - Slides and Other Damage

N - Support Facilities On-site

N - Signs and Markers

N - Support Facilities Not On-site

N - Special Categories Of Mining

R - Topsoil

**COMMENTS**

This was a complete inspection of the West Elk Mine conducted by Jim Stark of the Colorado Division of Reclamation, Mining and Safety (Division). Jessica Loveland, representing Mountain Coal, accompanied me on the inspection. During the inspection the mine was actively producing coal, hauling refuse to the refuse pile and loading and shipping coal from the loadout. The weather was warm and sunny and the ground was dry.

**AVAILABILITY OF RECORDS – Rule 5.02.4(1):**

- All of the required records were available in Kathy Welt's office in the main office building. Please see the Division's Availability of Records form at the end of this inspection report for more detailed information.

**HYDROLOGIC BALANCE** - Rule 4.05 Drainage Control 4.05.1, 4.05.2, 4.05.3; Siltation Structures 4.05.5, 4.05.6; Discharge Structures 4.05.7, 4.05.10; Diversions 4.05.4; Effluent Limits 4.05.2; Ground Water Monitoring 4.05.13; Surface Water Monitoring 4.05.13; Drainage – Acid and Toxic Materials 4.05.8; Impoundments 4.05.6, 4.05.9; Stream Buffer Zones 4.05.18:

- Pond SG-1 contained water approximately two feet below the primary spillway and four feet below the emergency spillway and was not discharging at the time of the inspection. The pond embankment was well vegetated and stable and no erosional problems were noted.

- The North Soil Storage Area (NSSA) pond was dry at the time of the inspection. The pond embankment was well vegetated and stable and no erosional problems were noted. All of the ditches around the stockpiles were clean and functioning as designed. the ditches were well vegetated and no erosional problems were noted.

- Pond MB-4 contained water approximately one foot below the primary discharge pipe and was not discharging at the time of the inspection. The pond is a concrete, incised pond. The pond was stable at the time of the inspection. The presettling sump was basically full at the time of the inspection but water was not flowing into Pond MB-4. The presettling sump is also a concrete, incised sump. It was also stable.

- The south cell of Pond MB-5E contained a small amount of water and was not discharging at the time of the inspection. The inlet area of the south cell of the pond was recently cleaned. The north cell of the pond was basically full but was not discharging at the time of the inspection. West Elk is not yet permitted to discharge from Pond MB-5E. If the pond needs to be discharged the water must be pumped up to Pond MB-3 and discharged through that outfall. The pond is basically an incised pond. The pond inslopes and the area around the

Number of Partial Inspection this Fiscal Year: 3

Number of Complete Inspections this Fiscal Year: 2

pond are well vegetated and stable. No erosional problems were noted on the inslopes or areas around the pond. The emergency spillway is a riprapped, open channel. The emergency spillway was stable at the time of the inspection.

- Pond MB-3 contained water approximately three feet below the primary discharge pipe and was not discharging at the time of the inspection. The pond is basically an incised pond. The pond inslopes and the area around the pond are well vegetated and stable. No erosional problems were noted on the inslopes or areas around the pond. The emergency spillway is a second pipe at an elevation slightly higher than the primary discharge pipe. The emergency spillway was stable at the time of the inspection.

- The east cell of the RPE Pond was basically full at the time of the inspection. The cell was not discharging into either the west cell of the pond or into the receiving stream. The west cell of the RPE Pond was basically dry at the time of the inspection. The pond is basically an incised pond. The pond inslopes and the area around the pond are well vegetated and stable. No erosional problems were noted on the inslopes or areas around the pond.

- The ditches around the RPE and the ditch on the east side of the RPE were all stable and well maintained at the time of the inspection. The ditches were all clean. West Elk has completed the placement of the culvert in the ditch at the point between the two pond cells. This culvert was clean at the time of the inspection. This culvert was approved with Minor Revision 402.

- West Elk was working on replacing the lower portion of the half-culvert for the RPEE sediment control ditch. The portion that is being replaced is the portion that flows into the RPE pond to a point just above the highest French drain outlet. The ditch is being changed from the half-culvert to an open, riprapped channel. The first 3-4 sections of the culvert were removed at the time of the inspection. The operator will leave the bentonite mat that is currently under the half-culvert. There will also be a layer of gravel or crushed rock to help lock in/stabilize the riprap and channel. This riprapped channel will help with the overall stability of the RPEE ditch. West Elk needs to make sure that the correct size of riprap is used in the channel. This ditch modification was approved with Minor Revision 401.

- Both cells of Freshwater Pond FW-1 were almost dry at the time of the inspection. West Elk is using the water from the pond since the North Fork of the Gunnison River is running very high in suspended solids (this causes problems for their water treatment plant). The pond embankments were well vegetated and stable and no erosional problems were noted.

- Freshwater Pond FW-2 contained water approximately three feet below the spillway at the time of the inspection. The pond embankment was well vegetated and stable and no erosional problems were noted.

#### **GENERAL MINE PLAN COMPLANCE:**

- West Elk is currently mining in longwall panel E4. They are at station 35+00, which is half-way between cross-cuts 20 and 21.

- West Elk has completed development on the headgate for longwall panel E5. They should be moving the longwall in early spring 2014.

- West Elk is currently developing the longwall panel E6 headgate. They are at station 13+00, which is at approximately cross-cut 9.

- West Elk is currently working on extending the E-Seam South Mains. They have completed all of the entries to cross-cut 79 and are currently extending the first three entries to a location half way between cross-cuts 83 and 84.

- All of the mining at the West Elk is progressing as permitted and shown on approved Map 51 - E-Seam Projected Operations.

Number of Partial Inspection this Fiscal Year: 3

Number of Complete Inspections this Fiscal Year: 2

**PROCESSING WASTE/COAL MINE WASTE PILES** – Rule 4.10 and 4.11 Drainage Control; Surface Stabilization; Placement:

- West Elk has completed the subsoil and topsoil replacement on the outslopes of the RPE. These areas have been graded to a slope of approximately 40%, which is the slope that is in the approved permit. A contractor was working on completing hydroseeding on the RPEE at the time of the inspection. The surface of the RPE was well graded and stable at the time of the inspection. There is positive drainage on the pile and there are was no water pooling on the surface. the surface of the pile is being used to store equipment (trucks, excavators, compactors, etc.) that are being used for the RPE and RPEE.
- West Elk was working on removing the internal haul road at the RPEE and dressing up the outslopes in the process. They were working on the road at the third lift. Each of the lifts is approximately 50 feet and there is a small, approximately ten foot wide, terrace bench between each of these lifts. The outslopes were all stable and there were no erosional problems noted. They were also working on hauling, spreading and compacting the remaining refuse from the top of the LRP to the RPEE. This work will be the last work on the RPEE until it is “shut down” for the winter. The top of the pile was graded to allow for positive drainage and no water was pooling on the pile at the time of the inspection.

**TOPSOIL** – Rule 4.06 Removal 4.06.2; Substitute Materials 4.06.4(4); Storage and Protection 4.06.3; Redistribution 4.06.4:

- The two topsoil stockpiles at the NSSA were well vegetated and stable at the time of the inspection. There were no signs of any erosional problems noted on either of the piles.
- The active subsoil stockpile along the Sylvester Gulch haul road was stable at the time of the inspection. The majority of the stockpile, with the exception of the active areas, was well vegetated and no erosional problems were noted on the pile. The topsoil stockpile, which is a bit farther up the road, was also well vegetated and stable, with no erosional problems noted. There was a topsoil sign in place on the pile as required.

**DOCUMENTS RECEIVED:** None

This concludes the 19 November 2013 complete inspection report for the West Elk Mine.

Number of Partial Inspection this Fiscal Year: 3

Number of Complete Inspections this Fiscal Year: 2

**ENFORCEMENT ACTIONS/COMPLIANCE**

There are no outstanding enforcement actions at the West Elk Mine and none were issued as a result of the 19 November 2013 complete inspection.

Number of Partial Inspection this Fiscal Year: 3

Number of Complete Inspections this Fiscal Year: 2

**PHOTOGRAPHS**



RPEE sediment ditch work

Number of Partial Inspection this Fiscal Year: 3

Number of Complete Inspections this Fiscal Year: 2





Regraded RPE slopes prior to hydroseeding

Number of Partial Inspection this Fiscal Year: 3

Number of Complete Inspections this Fiscal Year: 2



Hydroseeding RPE

Number of Partial Inspection this Fiscal Year: 3

Number of Complete Inspections this Fiscal Year: 2





Hydroseeding RPE

Number of Partial Inspection this Fiscal Year: 3

Number of Complete Inspections this Fiscal Year: 2



Removing internal haul roads at RPEE

Number of Partial Inspection this Fiscal Year: 3

Number of Complete Inspections this Fiscal Year: 2

**AVAILABILITY OF RECORDS****PERMIT RECORDS**

DRMS Permit	Exp 31 July 2016
Permit Application w/Revisions	X
Findings Document	RN-06
Insurance Certificate	Exp 31 July 2014
Bond Document	\$15,000,000.00
Phased Bond Release	SL-05
Documents/Findings	
Air Emission Permits	X
County Special Use Permits	X
UG Mining Landowner Notification	X
Subsidence Monitoring Reports	2012 Rpt
Subsidence Monitoring Data	X
Rill & Gully Survey	NA
Vegetation Monitoring Data	SL-04
Specific Variance Approvals	NA
Annual Reclamation Reports	2012 Rpt
Midterm Review Documents	MT-06/TR-117
DRMS/OSM Inspection	X
Reports/Enforcement Actions (3 Years)	
Transfers/Succession of Operator	X
Temporary Cessation Notification	NA
Reclamation Cost Estimate	RN-06
<b>CERTIFICATIONS</b>	
Pond Certifications	X
Annual Certifications for Impoundments	X
Fill Certifications for Excess Spoil or Underground Development Waste	X
• Quarterly Inspections	3Q13
• Compaction Testing	3Q13
• Final Certification	NA
Coal Processing Waste Banks	X
Haul Road Certifications	X
Access Road Certifications	X

**HYDROLOGIC RECORDS**

NPDES Permit	Exp 31 May 09 <sup>A</sup>
NPDES Records	3Q13
Stormwater Management Plan	X
SPCC Plan	X
MSHA Pond Inspections	NA
	X
State Engineer's Pond Inspection	
Quarterly Pond Inspections	3Q13
Annual Hydrology Reports	2012 Rpt
• Ground Water Monitoring	In ARR
• Surface Water Monitoring	In ARR
• Spring & Seep Monitoring	In ARR
• Mine Water Discharge Monitoring	In ARR
• Mine Inflow Study	In ARR
• Water Consumption Records	In ARR
Well Permits	X

**BLASTING RECORDS**

Blasting Publication	NA
Blasting Records (3 years)	X <sup>B</sup>
ATFE Explosives Permit	Exp 1 June 2015
Blasting Variances	NA
Pre-Blast Surveys	NA

**ADDITIONAL RECORDS  
(specify)**


COMMENTS: A – Operating under an administrative extension.

B – No blasting on site in the last three years.

Number of Partial Inspection this Fiscal Year: 3

Number of Complete Inspections this Fiscal Year: 2