



STATE OF  
COLORADO

Simmons - DNR, Leigh <leigh.simmons@state.co.us>

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## C1980007, West Elk Mine, SL-14, Initial Adequacy Review

1 message

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**Simmons - DNR, Leigh** <leigh.simmons@state.co.us>

Fri, Jun 25, 2021 at 7:13 AM

To: "Poulos, Nicki" <npoulos@archrsc.com>

Cc: "Welt, Kathy" <KWelt@archrsc.com>, "Wilczek, Jessica" <jwilczek@archrsc.com>, "Gray, Daniel E -FS" <degray@fs.fed.us>

Attached

Leigh Simmons  
Environmental Protection Specialist



**COLORADO**  
Division of Reclamation,  
Mining and Safety  
Department of Natural Resources

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**Adequacy letter, West Elk, SL-14, 1.pdf**

140K



**COLORADO**  
**Division of Reclamation,**  
**Mining and Safety**  
Department of Natural Resources

Nicki Poulos  
Mountain Coal Company, LLC  
5174 Highway 133  
Somerset, CO 81434  
June 25, 2021

**Re: West Elk Mine (Permit No. C-1980-007)**  
**Surety Release No. 14, (SL-14)**  
**Initial Adequacy Review**

Dear Ms. Poulos,

The Colorado Division of Reclamation, Mining and Safety (Division) has completed the initial review of materials submitted by Mountain Coal Company, LLC (MCC) in support of the SL-14 Partial Phase I Bond Release application. Please respond to the adequacy items below.

1. Although holes E7-6, E7-8, E7-9 and E8-6 have been plugged and abandoned, the pads associated with them have not been reclaimed and are not yet eligible for Phase I Bond Release.

In the past the Division has incorrectly included plugged and abandoned holes on unreclaimed pads in Phase I Bond Releases. This practice was a misinterpretation of the rules, and tends to lead to confusion. For example, the E3-29 hole was included in SL-10 (with no acres released); the E3-29 pad was subsequently included in the SL-13 Phase II application, despite never having actually been reclaimed. It is helpful to think of the hole and the pad as a single unit which is eligible for Phase I Bond Release when the hole has been plugged and abandoned, AND the pad has been backfilled and graded.

**Please withdraw E7-6, E7-8, E7-9 and E8-6 from the SL-14 application.**

2. The following holes are not associated with disturbed acreage – per previous communication with MCC they were either drilled without a pad or were drilled on previously existing pads. They have not received Phase I Bond Release, and the only reclamation task associated with them is plugging and abandonment, which is a Phase I task.
  - RPEE I12-04
  - RPEE I12-05
  - Well 96-2-2
  - Well SOM-3B
  - Well SOM-3E



Nicki Poulos  
Page 2 of 2  
June 25, 2021

**Please withdraw these holes from the SL-13 application and include them with the SL-14 Partial Phase I application.**

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Leigh Simmons', with a stylized flourish at the end.

Leigh Simmons  
Environmental Protection Specialist

CC: Kathy Welt, Jessica Wilczek, Dan Gray