



United States
Department of
Agriculture

Forest
Service

Paonia Ranger District

403 North Rio Grande Avenue
P.O. Box 1030
Paonia, CO 81428
970-527-4131
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File Code: 2820
Date: October 20, 2022

Howard Strand
Manager OSMRE Denver Field Branch
OSMRE
Attention: Daniel MacKinnon
P.O. Box 25065
Lakewood, CO 80225-0065

Dear Mr. Strand

The Paonia Ranger District has reviewed the Proposed Decision and Findings of Compliance for the West Elk Mine's SL-15 Partial Phase I Bond Release. The SL-15 bond release contains 11.67 acres of reclaimed access roads and mine ventilation borehole well pads associated with the SS1, SS2, E7, and E8 longwall panels.

A representative of the Paonia Ranger District was present for the entire inspection process of these reclaimed roads and well pads on July 14, 2022 and agrees with the findings of the Colorado Division of Reclamation, Mining and Safety's report of September 26, 2022. The Paonia Ranger District concurs with the decision for Phase I Bond Release.

If you have any questions please contact Daniel Gray at daniel.gray@usda.gov or at (970) 527-4131.

Sincerely,

Levi Broyles/Paonia District Ranger

