



United States Department of the Interior



BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT
Uncompahgre Field Office
2465 South Townsend Ave
Montrose, CO 81401

In Reply Refer To:
3400 (COS05000)

Dan MacKinnon
Natural Resource Specialist
USDOI Office of Surface Mining (OSMRE)
P.O. Box 25065
Lakewood, CO 80225-0065

RE: Proposed Decision of the Colorado Division of Reclamation, Mining and Safety (CDRMS) SL-15
Partial Phase I Bond Release at the West Elk Mine, PN C-1980-007

Dear Mr. MacKinnon:

The Bureau of Land Management (BLM) has reviewed the CDRMS "Proposed Decision and Findings of Compliance" dated September 26, 2022. We note that CDRMS considers that based upon a review of the mine permit, the applicant's bond release application, and site inspections, the Division finds that Mountain Coal Company, LLC has successfully completed partial phase I surface coal mining reclamation operations encompassing 11.67 acres in accordance with the approved reclamation plan and met all requirements of the Act and the Rules.

We have determined that the lands included in the bond release area were federal surface lands managed by the Grand Mesa, Uncompahgre, and Gunnison National Forest (GMUG) while the coal mined there was federal mineral estate managed by the BLM. All the drill holes and the related pads and roads have served their useful purpose and are no longer necessary.

The reclamation appears to be properly carried out as CDRMS reported. If the GMUG is satisfied with the reclamation completed, then the BLM has no objection to the partial Phase I Bond Release.

If you have any questions, please contact Foster Beckett at 970-826-5077 or 970-326-5198.

Sincerely,

Suzanne Copping
Field Manager

CC Leigh Simmons, CDRMS
Dan Gray, USFS