



United States Department of the Interior

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



In Reply Refer To:
COS05000, 3400

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-7
Partial Phase III Bond Release at the Elk Creek Mine, PN C-1981-022

Dear Mr. MacKinnon:

In response to your request to provide written concurrence or objection before the close of the CDRMS 30-day comment period. My staff has reviewed the CDRMS "Proposed Decision and Findings of Compliance" dated January 18, 2023.

We note CDRMS's acceptance that Oxbow Mining, LLC has completed all surface coal mining reclamations, followed the approved reclamation plan, and met all requirements of the Act and the Rules at all sites. Therefore, qualifying them for Phase III bond release on the requested 21.24 acres.

We acknowledge that the reclaimed lands in the partial Phase III bond release area total 21.24 acres. Per PN C-1981-022, this leaves 73.16 acres remaining for Phase II bond release and 168.11 acres for Phase III bond Release. Per the Mine Permit, CDRMS will maintain a performance bond for all the final Phase III bond releases.

We agree that the subject reclamation acres are complete, as CDRMS reported on July 12, 2022 inspection, and the Proposed Decision on January 18, 2023. If the USDA Forest Service (FS) and private landowners are also satisfied with the reclamation completed on their surface, then the BLM has no objection to the subject bond release.

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

Sincerely,

Suzanne Copping
Field Manager

CC Leigh Simmons, CDRMS
Dan Gray, USFS