

2.05.3 Operation Plan - Permit Area

(1) Production Methods and Equipment

The production methods and equipment in use at West Elk Mine are described above in Section 2.05.2.

(2) Operation Description

The coal seams mined and mine operations are also described above in Section 2.05.2

Manpower Requirements

Existing and projected manpower requirements are shown in Table 32 for the permit term. Projected manpower requirements are based on projected production levels to fulfill existing and anticipated contracted coal sales.

Table 32 Projected Production and Estimated Employment at West Elk Mine for the Permit Term		
Year	Coal Production (millions of tons per year rounded)	Total Employment (number of persons at year-end)
2018	3.0 - 6.0	250 - 350
2019	3.0 - 6.0	250 - 350
2020	3.0 - 6.0	250 - 350
2021	3.0 - 6.0	250 - 350
2022	3.0 - 6.0	250 - 350
2023	3.0 - 6.0	250 - 350

(3) Mine Facilities

West Elk Mine's major surface facilities are located about one (1) mile east of the town of Somerset, Colorado, and just south of State Highway 133. Access into the underground mine is primarily through the F Seam. The West Elk Mine's main portals are in the F Seam at an elevation of approximately 6,450 feet AMSL in a mountainside area of semi-consolidated slump debris. Additionally, access into the mine is provided through Shaft #1 in Sylvester Gulch. The location of the portals is shown on Maps 33 and 53. Sloped entries within the mine provide access from the F Seam down to the E and B Seams.

In all portal excavations, the material removed before reaching the F Seam is colluvium consisting of weathered debris, mainly sandstone blocks and clay. To assure stability in the main portal area, these colluvial materials were excavated and a concrete retaining wall was installed (Map 33). Logs of drill holes in the portal area are shown on the cross-sections shown in Exhibit 15.

The main surface facilities consist of sediment control structures, coal handling facilities, support facilities for mine operations, and other related facilities. Support facilities for mine operations include the offices, maintenance shops, warehouses, and bathhouse. Other related facilities include coal refuse disposal sites, equipment and material storage areas, and the mine ventilation fans. The