



STATE OF  
COLORADO

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

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## C1980007, West Elk Mine, July Inspection Report

1 message

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

Wed, Jul 17, 2024 at 9:55 AM

To: "Wilczek, Jessica" <jwilczek@archrsc.com>

Cc: "Atchley, Garren" <gatchley@archrsc.com>

Attached.

Leigh Simmons  
Environmental Protection Specialist



**COLORADO**  
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Mining and Safety  
Department of Natural Resources

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**INSP-REPORTC\_C1980007\_LDS\_07172024091801.pdf**  
5477K



### PERMIT INFORMATION

<b>Permit Number:</b> C-1980-007 <b>Mine Name:</b> West Elk Mine <b>Operator:</b> Mountain Coal Company, LLC <b>Operator Address:</b> Jessica Wilczek 5174 Highway 133 Somerset, CO 81434	<b>County:</b> Delta, Gunnison <b>Operation Type:</b> Underground <b>Permit Status:</b> Active <b>Ownership:</b> Private
	<b>Operator Representative Present:</b>  Garren Atchley
<b>Operator Representative Signature: (Field Issuance Only)</b>  	

### INSPECTION INFORMATION

<b>Inspection Start Date:</b> July 16, 2024 <b>Inspection Start Time:</b> 08:30 <b>Inspection End Date:</b> <b>Inspection End Time:</b>	<b>Inspection Type:</b> Coal Partial Inspection <b>Inspection Reason:</b> Normal I&E Program <b>Weather:</b> Clear
<b>Joint Inspection Agency:</b>  None	<b>Joint Inspection Contacts:</b>  
<b>Post Inspection Agency:</b>  None	<b>Post Inspection Contacts:</b>  
<b>Inspector(s):</b>  Leigh Simmons	<b>Inspector's Signature:</b>  <b>Signature Date:</b>  July 17, 2024

**Inspection Topic Summary**

NOTE: Y=Inspected N=Not Inspected R=Comments Noted V=Violation Issued NA=Not Applicable

N - Air Resource Protection

N - Availability of Records

N - Backfill &amp; Grading

N - Excess Spoil and Dev. Waste

N - Explosives

N - Fish &amp; Wildlife

N - Hydrologic Balance

R - Gen. Compliance With Mine Plan

N - Other

R - Processing Waste

R - Roads

N - Reclamation Success

N - Revegetation

N - Subsidence

N - Slides and Other Damage

R - Support Facilities On-site

N - Signs and Markers

N - Support Facilities Not On-site

N - Special Categories Of Mining

Y - Topsoil

**COMMENTS**

This was a partial inspection by Leigh Simmons of the Division of Reclamation, Mining and Safety (Division). The weather was clear, hot and dry, although the mine had received frequent rain overnight. The mine was active. The inspection was accompanied by Garren Atchley of Mountain Coal Company (MCC).

**GENERAL MINE PLAN COMPLIANCE:**

Longwall mining of the LWE12 panel was in progress, between crosscuts 9 and 8 on the headgate. A longwall move to LWE16 was scheduled for August 19th.

Development of the B Northeast Mains and the B27 headgate was in progress.

Pillaring of the Sunset Mains South was in progress, at around crosscut 12. The work was being done by contractors with Phoenix Mining.

**PROCESSING WASTE/COAL MINE WASTE PILES – Rule 4.10 and 4.11****Drainage Control; Surface Stabilization; Placement:**

Refuse was being generated at the time of the inspection. New refuse continued to be temporarily stockpiled on the RPE. Some new refuse was being transported to the RPEE, but the work to spread, dry and compact material that had been transported before the winter was still in progress and was the priority. Most of that material had been dealt with, but a substantial stockpile remained on the western edge of the RPEE.

A contractor with Lambert and Associates was on site at the time of the inspection, carrying out compaction tests on the RPEE.

Topsoil on the eastern edge of the pile had been stripped, and the underdrain had been extended. The topsoil was not expected to be stockpiled, but transported directly to the front of the pile to reclaim the graded outslopes.

**SUPPORT FACILITIES - Rule 4.04:**

Colt Young, with Miller Contracting of Illinois, was operating a raisebore drill rig on the Deer Creek Shaft pad. The rig was to be used to construct a 22' diameter shaft between the B-seam and the E-seam. At the time of the inspection, the drill steel had just reached the floor of the B-seam through the pilot hole (which had previously

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been constructed and cased by RACS). Work was going on underground to assemble the reamer, and reaming was anticipated to begin the following day.

The rig itself is apparently one of only four in the United States. The drill steel used is 10 7/8" in diameter, and in 5' lengths. The torque that the assembled joints can handle is apparently the limiting factor on the diameter of shaft that can be constructed. Reaming was anticipated to take two weeks of constant operation (two 12-hour shifts, with a crew of two underground, and an operator on the surface). The bit will rotate at just 2 1/2 - 3 RPM during operation. The waste will fall into the mine workings, where a scoop will load it into a feeder and it will be conveyed out of the workings, in the same way that development material from continuous mining sections is handled.

**DOCUMENTS RECEIVED**

N/A

**OTHER (SPECIFY)**

N/A

**ENFORCEMENT ACTIONS/COMPLIANCE**

No enforcement actions were initiated as a result of this inspection, nor are any pending.

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## PHOTOGRAPHS



*Figure 1: Raisebore drill rig on Deer Creek Shaft pad*



*Figure 2: Drill steels and rig*

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Figure 3: Compaction testing equipment on RPEE



Figure 4: View to the south, showing extension of underdrain

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*Figure 5: RPEE underdrain*

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*Figure 6: Vegetation grubbed prior to topsoil stripping*



*Figure 7: Stripped topsoil on eastern edge of RPEE*

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*Figure 8: View to the northwest across the RPEE, showing stockpiled material remaining to spread and compacted*



*Figure 9: New material being transported to RPEE*

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*Figure 10: Temporary stockpile on RPE*

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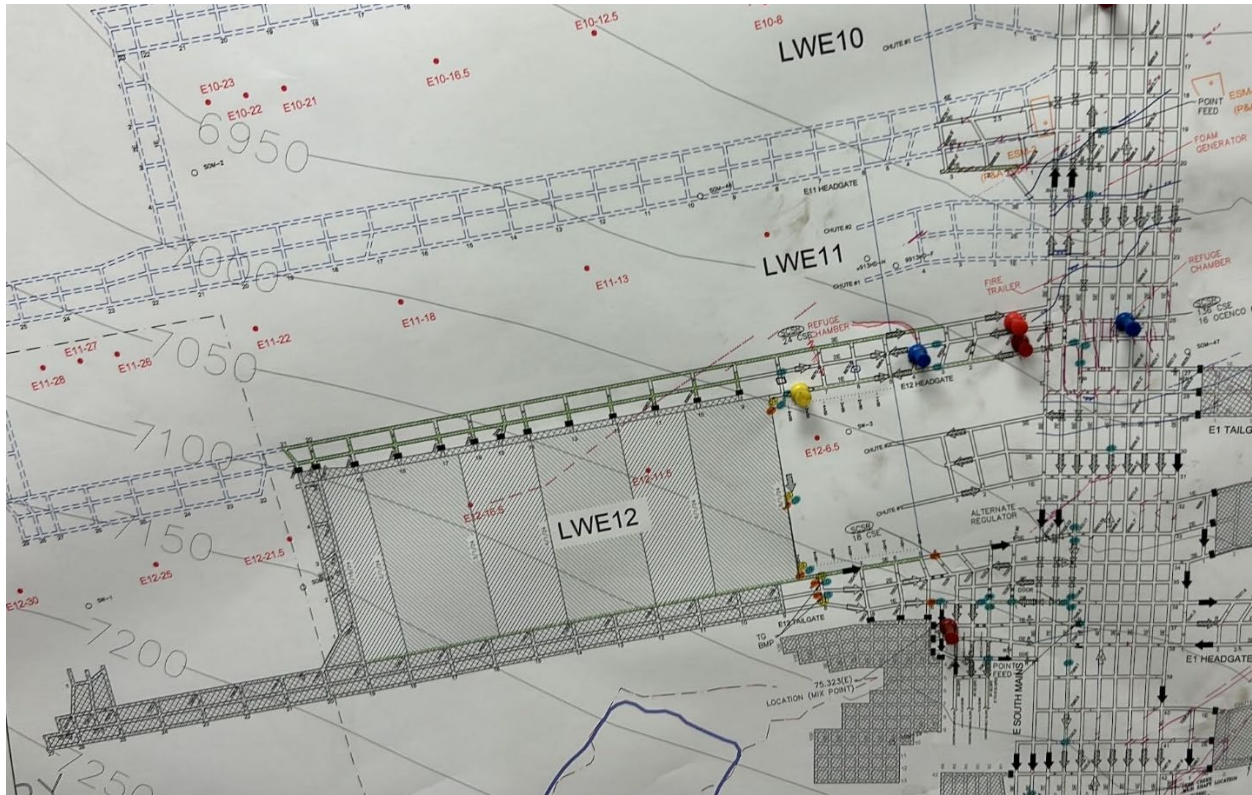


Figure 11: Mine map showing longwall progress

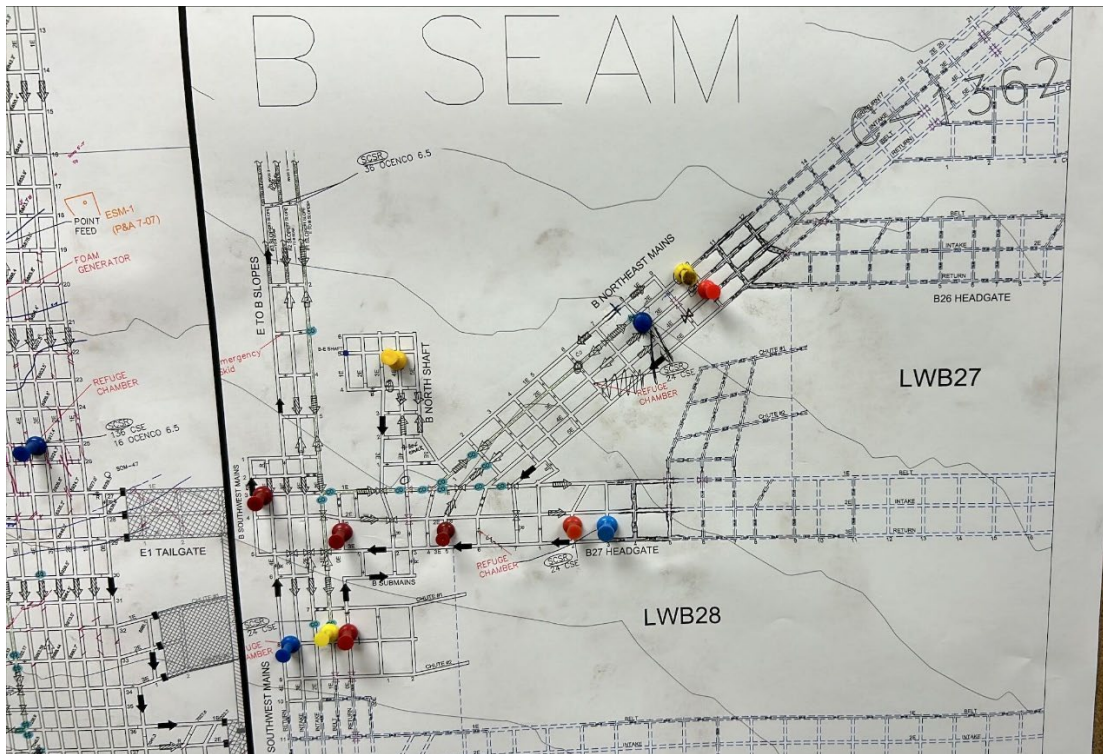


Figure 12: Mine map showing development progress in B-seam

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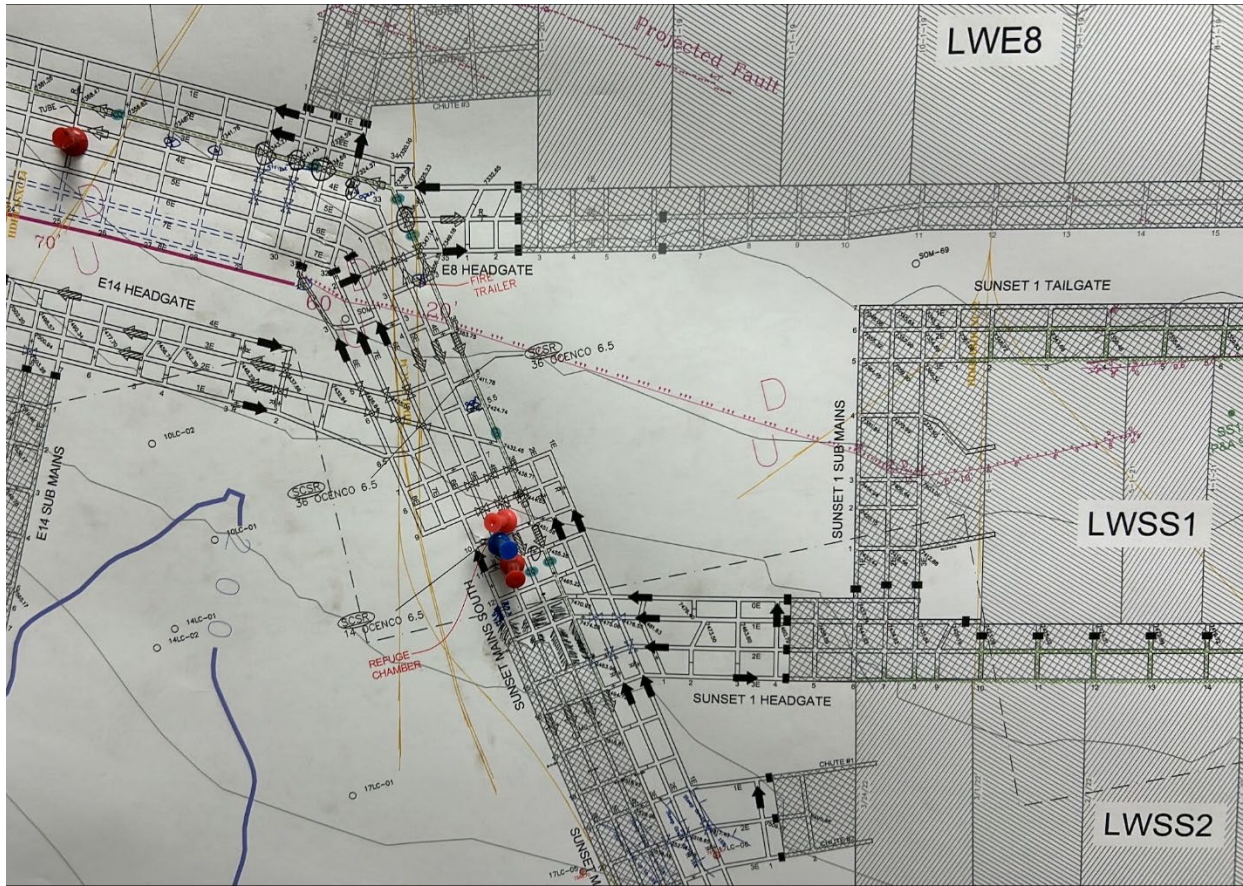


Figure 13: Mine map showing pillaring progress in Sunset Mains South

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