



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
Fax: 970-527-4151

File Code: 2820
Date: July 19, 2024

Howard Strand
Denver Field Branch Manager
Office of Surface Mining
P.O. Box 25065
Lakewood, CO 80225

Dear Mr. Strand:

The Paonia District of the Grand Mesa, Uncompahgre and Gunnison National Forest has reviewed the Proposed Decision and Findings of Compliance for the SL-17, Partial Phase III Bond Release for the West Elk Mine. The bond release contains 9.25 acres of reclaimed roads and well pads associated with exploration and methane drainage well disturbance on National Forest Service administered lands.

A representative of the Paonia Ranger District was present for the bond release inspection June 27-29, 2023 and visited all of the road and well pad locations. The Paonia Ranger District concurs with the Division's decision to release the West Elk Mine from liability for all the reclamation work that is part of this bond release.

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

Sincerely,

LEVI BROYLES
District Ranger

cc: Dan Gray

