



STATE OF
COLORADO

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

C1980007, West Elk Mine, September Inspection Report

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

Wed, Oct 2, 2024 at 1:31 PM

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

Attached

Leigh Simmons
Environmental Protection Specialist



COLORADO
Division of Reclamation,
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Department of Natural Resources

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INSP-REPORTC_C1980007_LDS_10022024124403.pdf
7360K



PERMIT INFORMATION

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

INSPECTION INFORMATION

Inspection Start Date: September 26, 2024 Inspection Start Time: 09:30 Inspection End Date: Inspection End Time:		Inspection Type: Coal Complete Inspection Inspection Reason: Normal I&E Program Weather: Clear	
Joint Inspection Agency: None		Joint Inspection Contacts:	
Post Inspection Agency: None		Post Inspection Contacts:	
Inspector(s): Leigh Simmons	Inspector's Signature: 		Signature Date: October 2, 2024

Inspection Topic Summary

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

N - Air Resource Protection

R - Availability of Records

N - Backfill & Grading

N - Excess Spoil and Dev. Waste

N - Explosives

N - Fish & Wildlife

R - Hydrologic Balance

R - Gen. Compliance With Mine Plan

N - Other

R - Processing Waste

N - Roads

N - Reclamation Success

N - Revegetation

N - Subsidence

N - Slides and Other Damage

R - Support Facilities On-site

Y - Signs and Markers

N - Support Facilities Not On-site

N - Special Categories Of Mining

N - Topsoil

COMMENTS

This was a complete inspection by Leigh Simmons of the Division of Reclamation, Mining and Safety (Division). The weather was clear, warm and dry. The mine was active. The inspection was accompanied by Chase Hiatt of Mountain Coal Company (MCC).

AVAILABILITY OF RECORDS – Rule 5.02.4(1):

Records were available using a public access laptop in the small conference room at the mine office. Details are given at the end of this report.

Please update the records on the portable Flash drive.

HYDROLOGIC BALANCE - Rule 4.05

Drainage Control 4.05.1, 4.05.2, 4.05.3; Siltation Structures 4.05.5, 4.05.6; Discharge Structures 4.05.7, 4.05.10; Diversions 4.05.4; Effluent Limits 4.05.2; Ground Water Monitoring 4.05.13; Surface Water Monitoring 4.05.13; Drainage – Acid and Toxic Materials 4.05.8; Impoundments 4.05.6, 4.05.9; Stream Buffer Zones 4.05.18:

Work to clean the MB3 pond had been completed, and work to clean the MB5E pond was in progress. Material removed from the ponds was being transported by haul truck to the RPEE. A survey of the cleaned ponds was planned.

GENERAL MINE PLAN COMPLIANCE:

The longwall move to the LWE16 panel was complete and mining of the panel had begun.

Three development crews were working: in the B-seam NE Mains (contractors with Phoenix Mining), in the B26 head gate, and in the B27 head gate.

Contractors with Phoenix Mining continued to work on pillaring of the Sunset Mains, the job was expected to be completed by March 2025.

PROCESSING WASTE/COAL MINE WASTE PILES – Rule 4.10 and 4.11

Drainage Control; Surface Stabilization; Placement:

The RPE had been cleared of temporarily stockpiled processing waste.

Number of Partial Inspection this Fiscal Year: 2

Number of Complete Inspections this Fiscal Year: 1

Waste cleaned from sediment ponds was being transported to the RPEE and placed on the eastern edge of the pile to dry out. Work was in progress to compact the surface of the pile, which had been graded to drain to the north-west corner. A berm had been built up at the edge of the working surface of the pile, and a dozer was working on the outslope to finish grade the slope and spread topsoil.

SUPPORT FACILITIES - Rule 4.04:

At the Deer Creek Vent Shaft site work was in progress to line the shaft between the E and B seams. Although most of the work was taking place underground, a winch to control the level of the form was operated from the surface via the cased utility hole above the in-seam shaft, and concrete trucks (operated by United Companies) were used to pump concrete through a pipe running down the Deer Creek Vent Shaft, horizontally through the E seam workings, and down the in-seam shaft. Work to line the shaft was progressing at the rate of ~15 feet per day.

No work had yet begun to repair the silo, but materials and equipment were expected to begin arriving at the site in the first week of October.

Bids were being sought on the Loadout drainage project.

MCC were still waiting on a well permit before setting the pump on the Box Canyon North well.

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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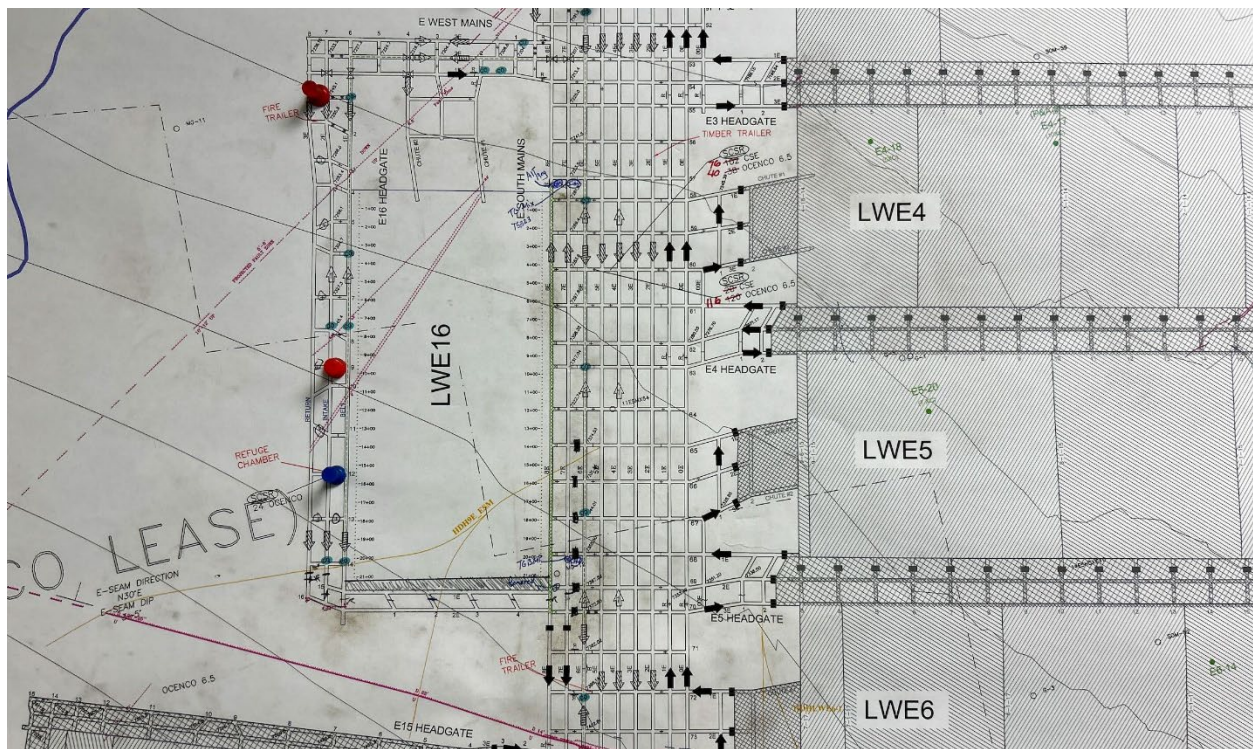
PHOTOGRAPHS

Figure 1: Mine map showing longwall progress in LWE16

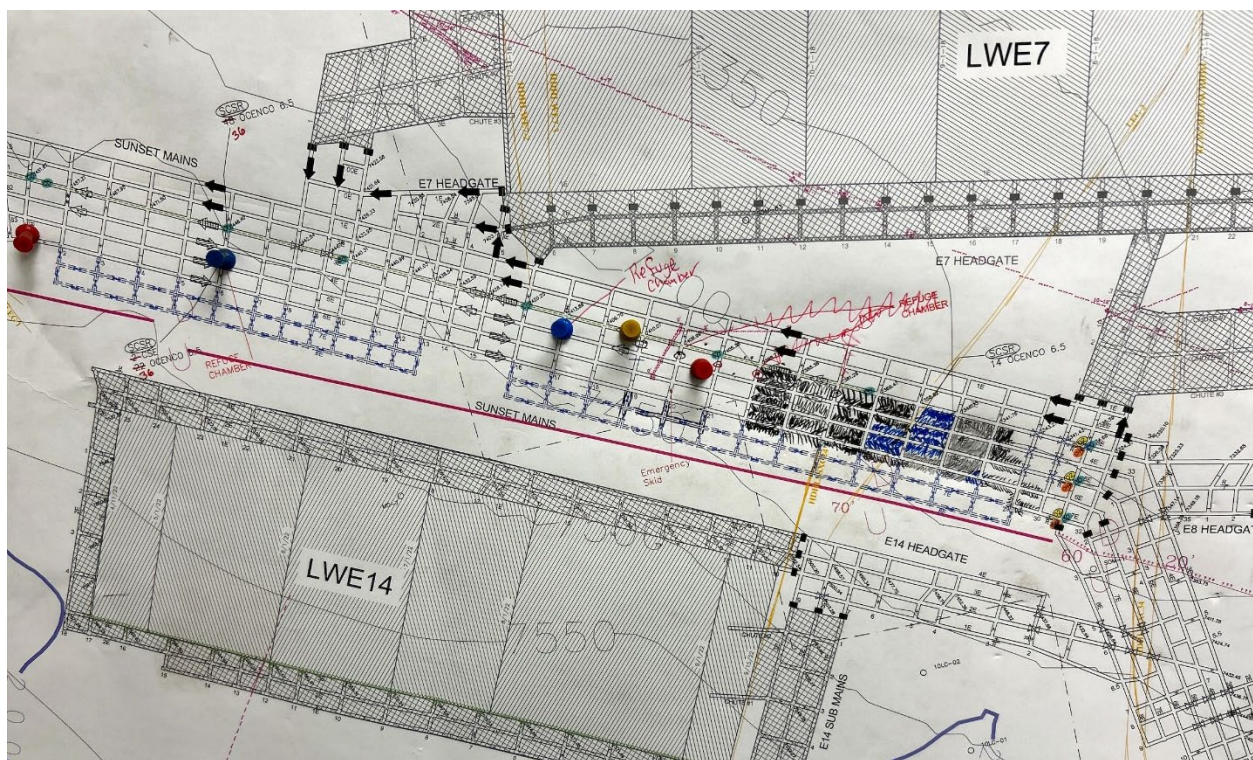


Figure 2: Mine map showing pillaring progress

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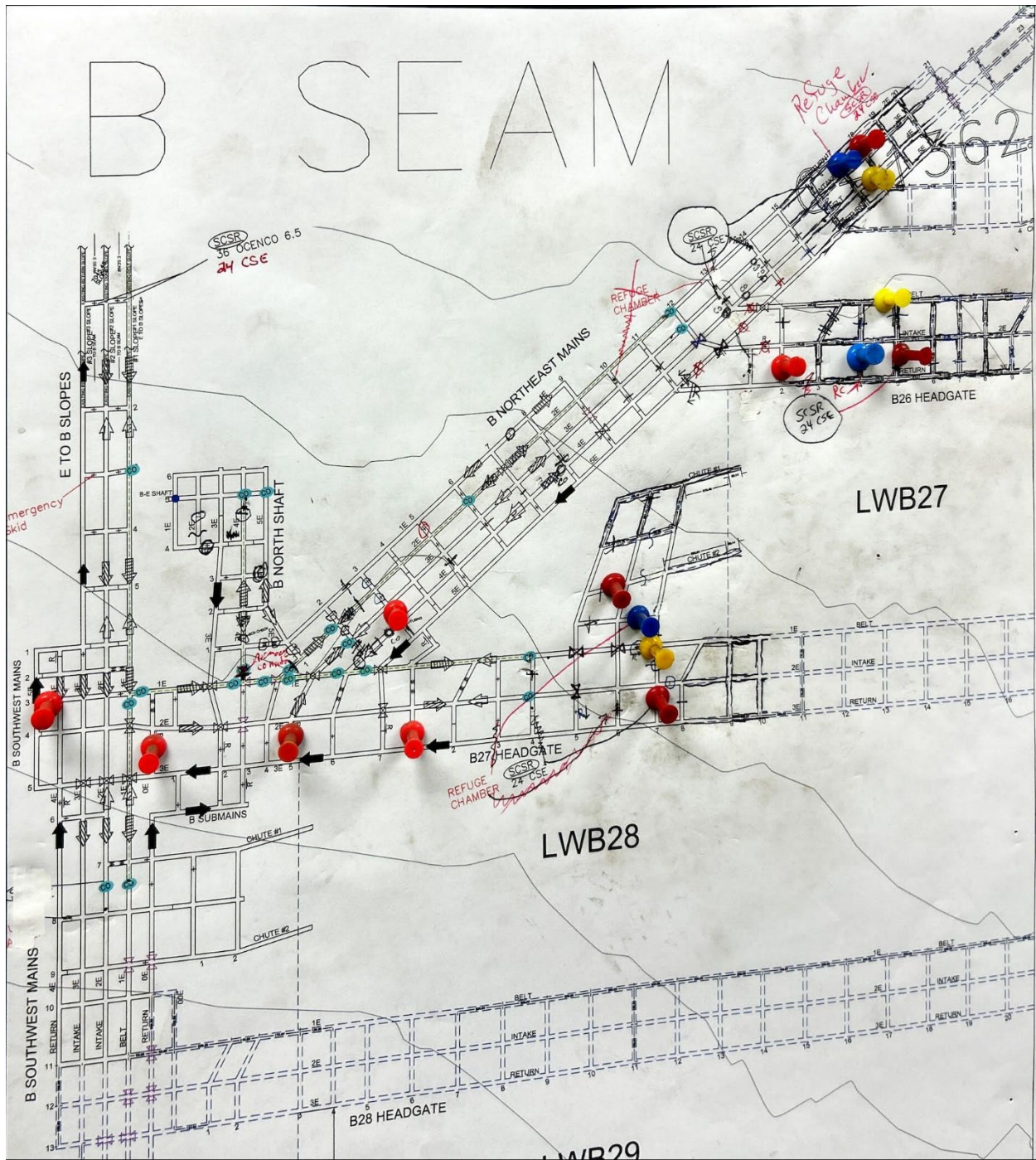


Figure 3: Mine map showing B seam development progress

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Figure 4: Pond cleanings on RPEE



Figure 5: Compaction of RPEE in progress

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Figure 6: Grading of RPEE outslope in progress



Figure 7: RPE and RPE pond

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Figure 8: Winch cable down utility hole at Deer Creek Vent Shaft pad

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Figure 9: Winch at Deer Creek Vent Shaft pad



Figure 10: Concrete delivery at Deer Creek Vent Shaft

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Figure 11: MB3 pond, cleaned

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Figure 12: Pond cleanings from MB5E being transported to RPEE

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Figure 13: MB5E pond, south cell cleaning in progress

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Figure 14: MB5E pond, north cell cleaning not yet begun

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AVAILABILITY OF RECORDS**PERMIT RECORDS**

DRMS Permit Expires 7/31/26
Permit Application w/Revisions LF
Findings Document RN-8, 6/1/2022

Insurance Certificate Expires 7/31/25
Bond Document \$5M & \$10M
Phased Bond Release Thru SL-17
Documents/Findings
Air Emission Permits*2 09GU1382
 10GU1130
 13GU1462

County Special Use Permits N/A

UG Mining Landowner Yes
Notification
Subsidence Monitoring Reports Fall 2023
Subsidence Monitoring Data Q1 2024
Rill & Gully Survey N/A

Vegetation Monitoring Data SL-17
Specific Variance Approvals Stream buffer zone

Annual Reclamation Reports 2023
Midterm Review Documents MT-08*1
DRMS/OSM Inspection Through 8/24

Reports/Enforcement Actions (3 Years)

Transfers/Succession of Operator Yes
Temporary Cessation Notification N/A
Reclamation Cost Estimate RN-08

CERTIFICATIONS

Pond Certifications Yes
Annual Certifications for N/A
Impoundments

Fill Certifications for Excess Spoil or Underground Development Waste

- Quarterly Inspections Q2 2024
- Compaction Testing Q2 2024
- Final Certification N/A

Coal Processing Waste Banks Yes

Haul Road Certifications Yes

Access Road Certifications Yes

COMMENTS:

*1 MT-09 is in progress

*2 A draft Air Permit is under review by the EPA

HYDROLOGIC RECORDS

NPDES Permit Exp 9/30/24, *3
NPDES Records Through 8/24
Stormwater Management Plan 2/23/2023

SPCC Plan 3/4/2022
MSHA Pond Inspections N/A
State Engineer's Pond Inspection 10/23/2018
Quarterly Pond Inspections Q2 2024

Annual Hydrology Reports 7/24 for 2023 water year
 Yes

- **Ground Water Monitoring** Yes
- **Surface Water Monitoring** Yes
- **Spring & Seep Monitoring** Yes
- **Mine Water Discharge Monitoring** Yes
- **Mine Inflow Study** Yes
- **Water Consumption** Yes

Records Yes
Well Permits Yes

BLASTING RECORDS

Blasting Publication N/A
Blasting Records (3 years) N/A
ATFE Explosives Permit Expires 6/1/24*4
Blasting Variances N/A
Pre-Blast Surveys N/A

ADDITIONAL RECORDS (specify)

Monthly Air Quality Cert.	Through 4/24
Rock Dust Maintenance	Through 3/24
Monthly Stormwater Outfall Inspections	Through 7/24

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*3 The renewed CDPS permit has been issued but is the subject of ongoing litigation. The dispute was heard by the appeals court in February 2024, but no verdict has yet been reached.

***4 The ATFE license on file has expired, please update the file with the renewed license**

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