2.2 SURFACE FACILITIES

Initial earthwork involved the construction and improvement of an access road to the coal outcrop (3.1acres) and the excavation of a bench for support activities relative to the exploration operation. The bench was excavated to only the size necessary for its purpose (2.9 acres). The access road was provided along the hillside and adjacent to an ephemeral drainage to a minimum width necessary to facilitate the desired road width (approximately 30 feet) including a diversion ditch, a portion of the road with a MSHA required berm, and sedimentation traps. Some fill was provided where possible to minimize the width of the cut and the gradient of the access road. All excavation was conducted in a manner necessary to create the most moderate slope possible. An additional area of disturbance consisting of 1.7 acres in the vicinity of the canyon mouth was used after the initial permit approval for construction of a sedimentation pond and topsoil stockpile, as shown in Figure 2.2.1. A new disturbance consisting of 0.1 acres will be used after the approval of technical revision application TR-20 which includes the new disturbance required to convert the Construction Materials Pile into a secondary Sediment Drying pile, to receive additional sediment from the sediment pond.

The earthwork on the access road was carried out almost exclusively by bulldozer and grader; however, a loader and trucks were used to remove excess material from the steeper slopes and bench area to the improved roadbed on the canyon floor.

All earth and rock removed in the construction of the bench area and upper reaches of the access road were retained in the area for purposes of providing adequate work area at the face-up and an MSHA required berm along, the steeper portion of the road. All excess materials as noted above were removed from the area for improvement of an existing road from State Highway 139 into McClane Canyon (see Figure 2.2-1). Placement of material on out slopes, for reasons explained above, does not constitute a significant aerial disturbance, was not done in a manner that would affect stability, and does not pose a potential harm to the hydrologic balance of the area.