




**COLORADO DIVISION OF RECLAMATION, MINING AND SAFETY  
COAL PROGRAM INSPECTION REPORT**



**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> Ms Kathleen G Welt P.O. Box 591 Somerset, CO 81434	<b>County:</b> Delta, Gunnison <b>Operation Type:</b> Underground <b>Permit Status:</b> Active <b>Ownership:</b> Federal
<b>Operator Representative Present:</b>  Kathy Welt and Jessica Loveland	
<b>Operator Representative Signature: (Field Issuance Only)</b>  N/A – Report Issued from Denver Office	

**INSPECTION INFORMATION**

<b>Inspection Start Date:</b> April 30, 2013 <b>Inspection Start Time:</b> 08:00 <b>Inspection End Date:</b> April 30, 2013 <b>Inspection End Time:</b> 12:30	<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>  None
<b>Post Inspection Agency:</b>  None	<b>Post Inspection Contacts:</b>  None
<b>Inspector(s):</b>  James R. Stark	<b>Inspector's Signature:</b>  <b>Signature Date:</b>  13 May 2013

**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

R - Hydrologic Balance

R - Gen. Compliance With Mine Plan

N - Other

R - Processing Waste

N - Roads

N - Reclamation Success

N - Revegetation

N - Subsidence

R - Slides and Other Damage

N - Support Facilities On-site

N - Signs and Markers

N - Support Facilities Not On-site

N - Special Categories Of Mining

N - Topsoil

**COMMENTS**

This was a partial inspection of the West Elk Mine conducted by Jim Stark of the Colorado Division of Reclamation, Mining and Safety. Kathy Welt and Jessica Loveland, both with Mountain Coal Company, were present for discussions of current and future permitting actions and Jessica Loveland was present on the field inspection. The main reason for this inspection was to get an on the ground view of some items that were seen in the 19 April 2013 aerial photographs. The weather was warm and sunny and the ground was dry in the well traveled areas and wet in all of the other areas.

**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:

- Pond SG-1 contained water several feet below the discharge pipe and was not discharging at the time of the inspection. The pond embankment was well vegetated and stable and no erosional problems were noted.
- The mine dewatering ponds in Sylvester Gulch both contained water approximately six feet below the top and were not discharging. The pond embankments were well vegetated and stable and no erosional problems were noted at the time of the inspection.
- The east cell of the RPE pond was basically full at the time of the inspection but was not discharging. The west cell contained a small pool of water. The operator is actively pumping the water from the RPE pond for use in the coal prep plant. The water is pumped via a small overland pipe. The pond embankments were well vegetated and stable and no erosional problems were noted.
- The ditch at around the RPE was clean and stable at the time of the inspection. The ditch along the east side of the RPE was reconstructed several months ago. This ditch remains stable.
- The portions of the RPEE ditch that were visible from the buttress area appeared to be clean and stable. Conditions did not allow for a closer inspection of these ditches. The half-culvert that flows from the RPEE ditch into the RPE pond appears to have a small amount of side and under cutting. This will need to be closely monitored by the operator to ensure its long term stability.

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**HYDROLOGIC BALANCE** (cont.) - The ditches along the haul road to the Sylvester Gulch facilities area had some sediment in them due to the recent rains. There was also some damage to some of the check dams in the ditch. The operator is aware of these check dams and is working on a plan to replace all of these check dams.

**GENERAL MINE PLAN COMPLIANCE:**

- West Elk was currently mining in the E-Seam in longwall panel E4. They were at approximately cross-cut 48, at station 89.60.
- Development mining continues in the longwall panel E5 headgate. They were at approximately cross-cut 62 at station 118+40.
- There was no change in the longwall panel E6 headgate of the E-Seam south mains.
- Mining is progressing as permitted and shown on approved Map 51 - E-Seam Projected Operations.

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

- There were several piles of refuse dumped on the east side of the RPE that have not yet been spread. The remaining areas of the RPE were all well graded and appeared to be stable. The pile appeared to be properly graded and there was no water pooling on the surface of the pile. The area between the refuse bin and the haul road was dry and there was some dust when the wind would blow. The operator needs to ensure that the area is kept watered to keep fugitive dust down. The reclaimed lifts of the RPE were well vegetated and stable.
- The operator was working on the fourth lift of the RPEE at the time of the inspection. They were actively hauling, spreading and compacting refuse. They were also working on excavating and drying refuse material in this lift that did not meet required compaction results. The pile was well graded and stable and no erosional problems were noted on the pile. There was no water pooling on the surface of the pile. The outcrops of the first three lifts were well graded and stable and no erosional problems were noted on these lifts. The Phase IA buttress was stable and no problems were noted. West Elk will begin constructing the Phase IB portion of the buttress this summer. The haul road to the RPEE was stable, with no rutting or erosional problems noted. The roadside ditches were generally clean.

**SLIDES and DAMAGE** - Rule 4.12:

- The ST-02 slide area that was repaired last year remains stable. There has been some movement of the coconut fiber matting but the surface material remains in place.
- There is a small slide that has developed on the slope below the material storage bench south of the facilities area and east of the portals. This slide was less than an acre in size. West Elk is aware of the slide and is monitoring it and will repair it as soon as ground conditions allow.
- The HR-01 slide area has had some movement of some of the surface material in response to the runoff and rains this spring. None of this material has moved off-site and none of the material went into the RPE pond. West Elk will work on cleaning up and replacing this material once the conditions on the ground allow. While there was some movement on the surface, the repaired slide area remains stable. There was also a small amount of flow out of the pipe from the rock drain. This was flowing into the half-culvert that flows into the RPE pond.

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**DOCUMENTS RECEIVED:** None

This concludes the 30 April 2013 partial inspection report for the West Elk Mine.

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**ENFORCEMENT ACTIONS/COMPLIANCE**

There are no outstanding enforcement actions at the West Elk Mine and none were issued as a result of the 30 April 2013 partial inspection report.

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**PHOTOGRAPHS**



Half culvert at outlet of RPEE ditch side-cutting

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RPE

Number of Partial Inspection this Fiscal Year: 8

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RPEE

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ST-02 repaired slide area

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New slide below material storage bench

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HR-1 slide area

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HR-1 slide area

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