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August 22, 2011

Mr. Eric Urban  
Technical Coordinator  
Industrial & Energy Minerals Bureau  
Montana Department of Environmental Quality  
PO Box 200901  
Helena, MT 59620-0901

RE: Spring Creek Mine Bond Release Request, SMP No. C1979012

Dear Eric:

Spring Creek Coal LLC (SCC) herewith submits the enclosed bond release request materials for the Department's review. Enclosed materials include:

- A completed bond release form;
- A copy of the proposed public notice; and
- A copy of the notification letter sent to the BLM as a surface owner affected by the proposed request.

A total of 157.0 acres of Phase I and 29.0 acres of Phase II bond release are being requested at this time. On these lands, applicable reclamation requirements have been completed in accordance with the Montana Strip and Underground Mine Reclamation Act, the rules and regulations adopted thereunder and, the approved mining and reclamation plan and permit for the Spring Creek Mine.

The current bond for the Spring Creek Mine is \$114,967,071; SCC is requesting no reduction in bond at this time. However, successful bond release efforts are effective in documenting reclamation progress.

SCC believes the enclosed bond release application materials have been completed in accordance with all applicable requirements and we look forward to working with the Department on this request. If you have any questions or comments, feel free to contact me at (406) 757-4234.

With kind regards,

Eric Detmer, PE  
Senior Environmental Engineer

cc: OSM – Casper Field Office (with enclosures)  
OSM – Denver Office, Attn: Floyd McMullen (with enclosures)  
CF 10.6.7 (2011)

Enclosures

FE: 620.411 (SL6)