

WESTERN ENERGY COMPANY - Rosebud Mine A Subsidiary of WESTMORELAND COAL COMPANY

P.O. Box 99 • 138 ROSEBUD LANE • Colstrip, MT 59323 • Phone: (406) 748-5100

November 5, 2019

Sent via ePermit system

Matt Dorrington, Program Supervisor Department of Environmental Quality Coal and Opencut Mining Bureau 2001 11th Ave, Building B PO Box 200901 Helena, MT 59620

Permit ID: C1984003B Revision Type: Permit Permitting Action: Deficiency Response #4 Subject: AM5: Round 4 Acceptability Deficiency Response

Dear Matt:

The purpose of this letter is to respond and address the deficiency comments on C1984003B:

General Comment: The following maps required updating:

- Exhibit A
- Exhibit B
- Exhibit C
- Exhibit D
- Exhibit O
- Exhibits T1 & T2
- Exhibits V1-V14
- Pond Designs

0	LCT-1	0	Rich-1	0	Rich-4
0	Lee-1	0	Rich-2 Premine	0	Rich-5
0	Lee-2 Premine	0	Rich-2 Postmine	0	Rich-6
0	Lee-2 Postmine	0	Rich-3 Premine	0	
0	Lee-3	0	Rich-3 Postmine	0	

<u>ARM 17.24.302(1)</u>: Please submit CAD .dwg files of Exhibit A, B, D, J, L, T1 and T2, and V1-V4 to match updated PDF files previously submitted.

Response: The requested CAD drawings are included for Exhibit A, B, D, J, L, T1 & T2, and V1-V14.

<u>ARM 17.24.303(1)(o)</u>: Please identify where the Surface Lease information for Section 36, T1N, R30E is located or upload the information under Status of Private Mineral/Surface Estate.

Response: WECo is pursuing a renewal of lease/land-use-license with DNRC on Section 36 (T1N, R40E).

ARM 17.24.303(1)(s): Numerous discrepancies remain in Table 303-3. Pursuant to ARM 17.24.302(1), WECO must change BXS 84 from year 10 to 18, BXS 76 from year 10 to 15, BXS 65 from year 19 to 11, BXS 89 from year 11 to 19 and add mine cuts BXS 69-2, 70-2, 71-2, 10-1 and 92-2 to the table.

Response: Please see Table 303-3. The table has been revised as requested.

<u>ARM 17.24.304(1)(e)</u>: The following issue needs to be addressed with the baseline information presented in "Appendix B – Baseline Hydrology Data.pdf":

The March 2017 surface water field sheets are included twice, on pages 2,819-2,862 (between the February and April field sheets) and 2,896-2,939 (between the April and May field sheets) of the pdf. Please remove the second set of March field sheets which is out of chronological order.

Response: Please see Appendix B. The duplicate field data sheets were removed as requested.

ARM 17.24.305(1)(r): "Area B AM5 Exhibit C Postmine Vegetation 2017-09 SP.pdf" does not use the most recent version of the postmine topography. The locations of the proposed postmine revegetation communities must be revised to be consistent with and appropriate for their respective landscape positions. DEQ acknowledges that updates of this exhibit are on hold pending PMT resolution.

Response: Please see Exhibit C. The postmine vegetation plan has been updated with the new PMT.

<u>ARM 17.24.308(1)(a)</u>: The size of stockpile SS-6 is depicted to be 22 acres on Exhibit A and listed as 13 acres on Table 308-1. Please update Table 308-1 to reflect the increased in size depicted on Exhibit A.

Response: Please see Table 308-1. The acreage of stockpile SS-6 has been updated to 22 acres.

Exhibit A depicts a haul road configuration that does not correlate with the mine sequence. The main haul road to the BXS pits conflicts with the timing and mining of the BX 6 through 19. Please correct the inaccurate information depicted on Exhibit A or, pursuant to ARM 17.24.308(1), WECO must describe the engineering techniques used to mine at the same time as the main haul road is proposed to be used. C1984003B: AM5: Round 4 Acceptability Deficiency Response November 5, 2019 Page 3 of 13

Response: Please see 17.24.303(1)(s) Table 303-3. The timing table has been updated and shows BX8 through BX19 will be mined-out in the first 5 years of mining. Passes BX8 through BX19 are the only passes that would be affected by the construction of the haul road. Mining will be more than halfway through, Year 5 pass, when the construction of the haul road will begin. No mining conflict remains due to the updated timing table.

Exhibit A depicts a ramp configuration that does not correlate with the mine sequence. The ramp to BXS 70-1 through 77-1 conflicts with the timing and mining of the BXS 89-1 through 92-1. The inaccurate information depicted on Exhibit A must be changed or, pursuant to ARM 17.24.308(1), WECO must describe the engineering techniques used to mine at the same time as the ramp is proposed to be used.

Response: The ramps are designed to access all the passes listed in the comment. The deficiency suggests ramp BXS3 will create conflict, in actuality while BXS3 is transitioning to start the mining process in BXS89-1 through BXS92-1, ramp BXS6 will be used to access the passes BXS70-1 through BXS77-1.

Exhibit A depicts "SS" stockpiles 14, 15, and 16 configuration that does not correlate with the mine sequence. Current stockpile locations conflict with timing and mining of BSX 89 through 91 for SS 14 and 15 and BXS 89-1 through 91-1 for SS 16. Pursuant to ARM 17.24.308, WECO must describe techniques used to maintain stockpiles and mine at the same time or relocate proposed stockpiles to cuts that would not delay mining sequence.

Response: The sizes of the stockpiles have been increased to eliminate any possible conflict with the mining sequence.

- SS14 38 Acres: 2,900,000 CY
- SS15 43 Acres: 4,800,000 CY
- SS16 36 Acres: 3,800,000 CY
- SS17 26 Acres: 2,200,000 CY

<u>ARM 17.24.313(1)(c)</u>: DEQ acknowledges Western Energy's commitment to submit a revised bond after the PMT plan is acceptable.

Response: The bond calculation will be submitted upon the Department's acceptance of the PMT.

<u>ARM 17.24.313(1)(f)(i)</u>: In "Exhibit V1-V14 0485327 Western Energy Area B Conceptual Drainage Plan Set 26-FEB-2019.pdf" on Exhibits V-6 through V-11, please include the boundaries of highwall reduction and the pit on the cross sections.

Response: Please see Exhibits V1-V14. These exhibits have been updated to show the disturbance, highwall reduction, and pit boundaries on the cross sections.

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The drainage design in Exhibit V-10 shows a drainage profile for the Richard Coulee South Fork which is likely to be unstable through the highwall reduction area (subdrainage Rich 24 on Exhibit B). Please revise the PMT in this area to provide a concave longitudinal profile from native into reclamation by raising the elevation of the valley bottom near the stream confluence at E 2,662,753; N 580,875.

Response: Upon examination, after showing the boundaries on the cross sections, Exhibit V-10 shows that the nick point is outside the highwall reduction area and just inside the disturbance boundary. This nick point is caused by a breeched in-stream dam that is outside of the disturbance boundary and will not be disturbed.

Additionally, a nick point was identified in the PMT where the Richard Coulee North Fork crosses the pit boundary (E 2,664,341; N 585,943), although it is not visible in Exhibit V-9. Please adjust the 3,560 and 3,570 contour lines to accommodate a more even transition in the channel profile.

Response: The PMT in the area of Exhibit V-9 was updated and Exhibit V-9 was updated to reflect the changes.

ARM 17.24.314(2)(a): No updated CAD file was submitted for "Area B AM5 EXHIBIT D Hydro Control 2019-01 SP.pdf." DEQ cannot complete its review without this information. The hydro control plan shown in the pdf does not match haul road configuration in T1N, R40E, S16. Please correct this discrepancy.

Response: Please see Exhibit D. The discrepancy listed has been corrected.

Approximately 75 acres of undisturbed drainage southwest of culvert Rich-5 is impounded by the haul road embankment. Please include a drainage control structure (culvert or diversion) to convey runoff from this area downstream towards PO-129A. Additionally, approximately 50 acres of undisturbed drainage (Rich 69) north of culvert Rich-7 is impounded by the Richard 2.0 haul road embankment. Please include a drainage control structure to convey runoff from this drainage downstream into drainage Rich 64.

Culverts Lee-1, Lee-4, Rich-3, Rich-5, Rich-7, and Rich-9 are not aligned with the bottom of the drainage. Please change the alignment of these culverts to match the drainageway.

Response: Culvert Rich-5A has been added to show conveyance southwest of culvert Rich-5. Culvert Rich 2.0-6 has been added to show conveyance for Rich 69 drainage area.

The culverts shown on Exhibit D have been updated per this deficiency. In addition, Exhibit O has been revised.

ARM 17.24.314(3): The following deficiencies were identified in "Appendix O B AM5 PHC R3 3-4-2019.pdf":

Section 3.2.9 and Section 3.3.8 should be updated when DEQ finalizes the AVF determination

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for Richard Coulee.

Response: Both sections were updated with the results of the September 2019 AVF determination for Richard Coulee.

Section 3.3.4.5 states wetland G300 and G602 will "likely" be disturbed by the haul road. The haul road design shows wetland G300 and the eastern portion of G602 being buried by 30 to 40 feet of fill. Please describe this impact as a certainty instead of a probability.

Response: The narrative was changed per the comment.

Table 36 does not include analysis of impacts to water rights located near exiting permitted portions of Area B. As this PHC will supersede the existing ABC PHC in the Area B permit if approved, this PHC must include analysis of all impacts from Area B. If impacts from existing mining are not altered by AM5, the PHC should state this.

Response: The narrative was changed per the comment.

Table 36

In general, "adequate supply for livestock use" or "adjacent to mine passes" does not sufficiently describe the anticipated impacts to a water user. Please describe the actual probable impact in terms of quality and quantity, or reason for lack of impact in the rationale column.

Response: The rationale for probable impacts or no impacts to water users was expanded.

• WR 42A 145442 00 – Listed as impacted with rationale "adjacent to mine passes." This stock dam is located in Rape Coulee with minimal disturbance by soil stockpiles upgradient, thus is unlikely to be impacted.

Response: The impact assessment and rationale was corrected per the comment.

• WR 42A 8206 00 – Listed as impacted with rationale "adjacent to mine passes." This spring is located in an upland area away from any mine passes and is not likely to be impacted.

Response: The impact assessment and rationale was corrected per the comment.

• WR 42A 8207 – Listed as not impacted, however a portion of this stock pond lies within the disturbance area around a topsoil stockpile. Please revise this water right to state it is impacted by surface disturbance or change the disturbance boundary to exclude this pond from the disturbance area.

Response: The water right will be impacted by surface disturbance; rationale was changed accordingly.

• WR 42KJ 183306 00 – Listed as not impacted, however a sediment pond is planned for this location, existing Area B highwall reduction disturbance impacts the location of the dam, and the Richard Haul Road is immediately adjacent to this stock pond.

Response: The impact assessment and rationale was corrected per the comment.

• Several water rights are listed as not impacted, but are within the disturbed area of an existing permit. All water rights impacted by coal mining should be listed as impacted. The source of the impacts (i.e. Rosebud Area B, AM5, Big Sky Area B) can be described in comments or rationale. Impacts from AM5 should be called out separately from other coal mining related impacts. For example, WR 42A 27319 00 is listed as "drainage not impacted by mining". This is incorrect as this drainage was mined by Big Sky Area B.

Response: The rationale was expanded to provide more clarification.

Table 50 and Table 51 contain some of the same wells with conflicting impact assessments. Please combine these two tables and present the analysis of impacts including AM5. Impacts from existing and previous mining should be identified but called out separately from AM5 impacts. In some cases, impacts which have likely already occurred are not described, or are described in the future tense. Please accurately describe the existing impacts.

Table 50

• The "Potentially Impacted" column is listed as unknown for many wells with a total depth recorded. Please assess the probable impacts at these wells using the assumption that these wells are completed to their total depth. Additionally, for many wells with unknown impacts listed, the impacts or lack thereof can be reasonably inferred solely from location even in the absence of well construction information. Please assess impacts at all locations where it is reasonable using professional judgement.

Response: An updated evaluation of potential impacts on water quantity and water quality was included in Table 50 to address this comment. This impact assessment is based on available data such well depth, nearby monitoring well data, predicted drawdown, outcrop maps and location. Additional rationale was added to Table 50, and Figure 74 was updated accordingly.

• In the comment column, please describe the actual probable impact in terms of water quality and quantity, or reason for lack of impact.

Response: Additional justification and / or narrative was added to the comment / rationale / assumptions column as requested. Figures 74 and 75 were updated with the additional information.

• 14252 – This well is located inside the Area A permit and is visible on aerial photos but is listed as unknown under Potentially Impacted. Mining near this well occurred from 1987 to

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1995, thus any impacts should already have been observed.

Response: Additional analysis shows this well is not likely impacted. Rationale to that effect was included in Table 50.

• 192519 – Well log indicates well is located in T2S, not T2N as recorded in GWIC.

Response: The corrected location is outside the influence of potential mining impacts. This well was removed from Table 50.

• 212086 – This well will be mined through by AM5.

Response: The anticipated impacts to duplicate wells (present both in Table 50 and 51) are now only shown in Table 51. Table 51 shows this well will be mined out by AM5.

• 12019 – This well is located in the Big Sky Area B mine footprint and has likely been mined through.

Response: The anticipated impacts to duplicate wells (present both in Table 50 and 51) are now only shown in Table 51. Table 51 shows this well was mined out by Big Sky Mine.

• 42A 52220 00 – This well will be mined through by AM5.

Response: The anticipated impacts to duplicate wells (present both in Table 50 and 51) are now only shown in Table 51. Table 51 shows this well will be mined out by AM5.

• 42A 56520 – This well is completed in Big Sky Area A mine spoil and has been converted to stock water use (ASPW1).

Response: Table 50 was updated with this information.

• 42A 5968 – This Big Sky Mine production well was abandoned during reclamation.

Response: Table 50 was updated with this information.

Table 51

• In the rationale column, please describe the actual probable impact in terms of water quality and quantity, or reason for lack of impact.

Response: Additional rationale was added Table 51 to evaluate potential water quality and quantity impacts.

• Wells 231 and BUN9100 (and water rights numbers which may be associated with these wells) are listed as impacted with the rationale "within disturbance area" but are

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located such that disturbance of these well could possibly be avoided. Please consider if it is feasible to avoid disturbance of these wells, and if so, please commit to avoiding disturbance of these wells.

Response: The disturbance boundary has remained the same, both wells will be impacted.

• 212086 – Well is located at GPS coordinates on well log, TRS-quarters information is incorrect. Well location is still within AM5 mining footprint.

Response: The location of 212086 on Figure 75 was updated as specified.

The analysis in Attachment R still needs additional explanation and corrections:

• While similar in many respects, the two types of analyses performed use distinct methods and assumptions. On page 2, assumption 1) under Analysis Conducted states recharge was ignored, but the analysis in Figure R-3 included recharge. Please describe the mass loading projection method and concentration change projection method separately.

Response: The narrative was updated.

• There is no explanation of the origin and justification for the selected Transmissivity value of 13. Please include a discussion of the source of this value.

Response: The narrative was updated to explain that the selected transmissivity was Rosebud Mine model calibrated transmissivity for the spoils

• There are values contained in the tables on Figure R-1 and R-2 which are not used in the calculations (Flow mil/day). Please remove unused values.

Response: The unused column was removed.

• In Figures R-1 and R-2 the units for "Init C" are listed as gm/L. Please correct this typo.

Response: The typo was corrected.

• While a technical audience can follow the calculations presented in the Attachment R figures, the explanation of the analysis in the text should be summarized in such a way that a layperson can reach a reasonable level of understanding of the analysis and conclusions.

Response: The text was expanded with additional explanation and an example calculation provided.

• In Attachment R, Figure R-1, footnote * states that the "Init C" variable is based on alluvial groundwater quality. However, the flow tubes represent flow through the Rosebud Coal and overburden, not alluvium. Please change "Init C" to a TDS value representative of baseline water quality in the Rosebud Coal and overburden.

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Response: The initial concentration was modified; and the mass balance was updated accordingly.

ARM 17.24.314(5): DEQ will evaluate if there are cumulative impacts of the Rosebud and Big Sky mines on the Rosebud Creek drainage. To support this evaluation please provide an estimate of the postmine equilibrium spoil water quality and the postmine steady state groundwater flux out of spoil in the Rosebud Creek drainage for Area B, Area D, Area E, and Pit 6. WECo may also provide the same estimates for Big Sky Mine Area A and Area B.

Response: Attachment U was added to the PHC. This Technical Supplement includes preliminary estimates of groundwater mass loading change from current and historic mining.

<u>ARM 17.24.315(1)</u>: Please include the design plan for proposed sedimentation pond LCT-1.

Response: The design plan has been included for Pond LCT-1.

<u>ARM 17.24.325(2)(b)</u>: DEQ has not yet made written findings concerning this rule. Further evaluation of the subsequent rules will be completed after DEQ's determination is complete.

Response: Noted.

ARM 17.24.501(4)(c): Changes made to the PMT in the northeast quarter of Section 28 increased slope diversity, but do not result in a concave slope profile as requested. DEQ evaluated potential changes to this slope and creating a concave profile would require removal of spoil from this area. This material could potentially be used as part of the solution to address changes necessary to correct the drainage profile of the Richard Coulee South Fork [See ARM 17.24.313(1)(f)(i)].

DEQ also evaluated moving the drainage divide between Rich-7 and the main stem of Richard Coulee in Section 29 to closer to its premine location, and determined this change could likely be accomplished while balancing spoil volumes within an area of an approximately 1,500 feet radius to the north and east. As significant changes to the PMT will be necessary immediately to the southeast of this divide to correct the drainage profile of Richard Coulee South Fork, adjusting the location of this drainage divide could be incorporated into the revision of the PMT in this general area.

Response: The following conclusions have been reached after evaluating the requests in this deficiency:

(1) The changes have been made to the Rich-7 ridge and the spoil balances
(2) The changes to Rich-65 area would result in excess spoil of ~1,000,000 yards and so were not made.

ARM 17.24.605(3): Remove the reference to Exhibit 01 from "Typical Culvert Cross Section" on page 605-4 and include details on riprap apron under ARM 17.24.605.

Response: Please see ARM 17.24.605. The reference to Exhibit 01 has been removed and replaced and the correct reference to ARM 17.24.605 has been added. The details on the rip rap apron has also been included in ARM 17.24.605.

<u>ARM 17.24.634(1)</u>: Deficiencies in drainage basin reclamation have been identified in 17.24.313(f).

Response: Please refer to the deficiency response for ARM 17.24.313(f).

ARM 17.24.638(2)(a): The life of mine disturbance limits in portions of Sections 13 and 24 are located a substantial distance from the mine passes and haul road. There appears to be no reason for disturbance to occur in much of this area. Please revise the limits of disturbance in this area to more accurately reflect the actual expected area of disturbance or provide a description of the activities which are expected to disturb these areas.

Response: At this time, WECo would like to leave the disturbance boundary as proposed. The location of the disturbance boundary in section 24 reflects the alignment of the haulroad and location of Pond Lee-1. This portion of the disturbance boundary, along with the location in section 13, also allows for the inclusion of the proposed coal in the pending lease modification (under BLM review). Depending on the outcome of the lease modification, WECO will assess the need to request a modification at that time. Also, it is understood by both WECO and DEQ that the disturbance boundary is the maximum extent and not the eminent extent of disturbance. WECO makes every effort to minimize disturbance.

<u>ARM 17.24.751(2)(f)</u>: The updated Appendix N-1 referenced in the response letter was not uploaded to the epermit system. As a result, this deficiency could not be evaluated during this round.

Sites proposed for wetlands mitigation (Appendix N-1) are exclusively in the Armells Creek drainage, whereas the majority of wetland likely to be disturbed are in the Rosebud Creek drainage. While wetlands in adjacent drainages can be used for mitigation there should be some mitigation alternatives in the Rosebud Creek drainage.

Appendix N-1 Section 3.3, p. 3-5, states one of the waters (G700) will be impacted by "development of the high wall." This term is unclear as to the extent of the impact, and no mention is made of water 4-4/8 which will also be impacted by mining. Please state that waters 4-4/8 and G700 will both be mined out.

Based on the proposed mineplan, the descriptions in Appendix N-1, Table 3-3, are not accurate for several sites. These wetlands sites are expected to be impacted as follows:

G011: Disturbed – buried under soil stockpile

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G012: Within disturbance limits – likely to be disturbed for access road to soil stockpile G300: Buried under haul road fill G602: Partially buried by haul road fill G400: Partially disturbed by highwall reduction, haul road fill, and excavation for pond Rich-4 G500: Partially disturbed by highwall reduction and excavation for pond Rich-6

Please verify that this table is consistent with the expected impacts of the proposed mineplan.

Response: The updated Appendix N-1 has been included. Please see Operations => Fish and Wildlife Plan => Appendix N-1 Fish Wildlife Plan Area B 2019-01.

ARM 17.24.801(1): Appendix Q has now been included. Subsequent material is contingent on DEQ's determination pursuant to ARM 17.24.325(2)(b).

Response: The final AVF Determination for Richard Coulee was received September 11, 2019. The document has been included with this submittal.

<u>ARM 17.24.801(2)</u>: Appendix Q has now been included. Subsequent material is contingent on DEQ's determination pursuant to ARM 17.24.325(2)(b).

Response: Please see response to 17.24.801(1).

<u>ARM 17.24.801(3)</u>: Appendix Q has now been included. Subsequent material is contingent on DEQ's determination pursuant to ARM 17.24.325(2)(b).

Response: Please see response to 17.24.801(1).

<u>ARM 17.24.802(1)(a)</u>: Appendix Q has now been included. Subsequent material is contingent on DEQ's determination pursuant to ARM 17.24.325(2)(b).

Response: Please see response to 17.24.801(1).

<u>ARM 17.24.802(1)(b)</u>: Appendix Q has now been included. Subsequent material is contingent on DEQ's determination pursuant to ARM 17.24.325(2)(b).

Response: Please see response to 17.24.801(1).

<u>ARM 17.24.802(2)</u>: Deficiency User Appendix Q has now been included. Subsequent material is contingent on DEQ's determination pursuant to ARM 17.24.325(2)(b).

Response: Please see response to 17.24.801(1).

<u>ARM 17.24.802(3)</u>: Appendix Q has now been included. Subsequent material is contingent on DEQ's determination pursuant to ARM 17.24.325(2)(b).

Response: Please see response to 17.24.801(1).

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<u>ARM 17.24.804(1)</u>: Appendix Q has now been included. Subsequent material is contingent on DEQ's determination pursuant to ARM 17.24.325(2)(b).

Response: Please see response to 17.24.801(1).

<u>ARM 17.24.804(2)</u>: Appendix Q has now been included. Subsequent material is contingent on DEQ's determination pursuant to ARM 17.24.325(2)(b).

Response: Please see response to 17.24.801(1).

ARM 17.24.804(3): Appendix Q has now been included. Subsequent material is contingent on DEQ's determination pursuant to ARM 17.24.325(2)(b).

Response: Please see response to 17.24.801(1).

<u>ARM 17.24.804(4)</u>: Appendix Q has now been included. Subsequent material is contingent on DEQ's determination pursuant to ARM 17.24.325(2)(b).

Response: Please see response to 17.24.801(1).

ARM 17.24.805(1): Appendix Q has now been included. Subsequent material is contingent on DEQ's determination pursuant to ARM 17.24.325(2)(b).

Response: Please see response to 17.24.801(1).

<u>ARM 17.24.806(1)</u>: Appendix Q has now been included. Subsequent material is contingent on DEQ's determination pursuant to ARM 17.24.325(2)(b).

Response: Please see response to 17.24.801(1).

ARM 17.24.806(2): Appendix Q has now been included. Subsequent material is contingent on DEQ's determination pursuant to ARM 17.24.325(2)(b).

Response: Please see response to 17.24.801(1).

<u>ARM 17.24.806(3)</u>: Appendix Q has now been included. Subsequent material is contingent on DEQ's determination pursuant to ARM 17.24.325(2)(b).

Response: Please see response to 17.24.801(1).

<u>ARM 17.24.806(4)</u>: Appendix Q has now been included. Subsequent material is contingent on DEQ's determination pursuant to ARM 17.24.325(2)(b).

Response: Please see response to 17.24.801(1).

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ARM 17.24.806(5): Appendix Q has now been included. Subsequent material is contingent on DEQ's determination pursuant to ARM 17.24.325(2)(b).

Response: Please see response to 17.24.801(1).

If you have any questions, please feel free to contact me at (406) 748-5124.

Sincerely,

Dichi Peterzon

Dicki Peterson Permit Coordinator Westmoreland Rosebud Mining LLC Rosebud Mine – Area B Phone: (406) 748-5124 Fax: (406) 748-5202 Email: dpeterson@westmoreland.com