KU

The University of Kansas

December 14, 2007

Mr. Murray J. Balk, Chief
Surface Mining Section
Kansas Dept. of Health and Environment
4033 Parkview Drive
Frontenac, KS 66763

Re: Newcastle Abandoned Mine Land Reclamation Project
KDWP Areas 12, 13, & 15, (PAD Nos. KS-0411 & KS-0377)
Portions of Sections 17, 18, and 20, T. 32 S., R. 24 E.
Cherokee County, Kansas

Dear Murray:

I have reviewed the information that you recently sent to the Kansas Geological Survey concerning the proposed reclamation of two sites titled the "Newcastle Project" (KS-0411 & KS-0377), located in northeastern Cherokee County. The two site locations are both approximately 1.5 miles south of the City of Scammon, Kansas.

Strip-pit hazards are present as a result of past strip-mining for the Weir-Pittsburg coal. Location of the proposed reclamation effort is on two small areas approximately a mile apart where early strip-mining for the Weir-Pittsburg coal resulted in the hazards being left following mining. This coal bed is part of the Cabaniss Formation of the Cherokee Group of rocks in southeastern Kansas.

The proposed reclamation efforts would correct the physical problems in two areas often visited by the general public on Kansas Department of Wildlife and Parks designated areas 12 (part of Section 18), 13 (part of Section 17), and 15 (part of Section 20). The Weir-Pittsburg coal was the most important coal that was strip-mined and deep-mined in this general area. However most of the economic Weir-Pittsburg coal was strip-mined during this earlier mining period. No coal beds underlie the Weir-Pittsburg coal that could be economically stripped-mined on the proposed reclamation sites. Any Weir-Pittsburg coal that might remain adjacent to the unmined areas of the proposed reclamation effort is probably weathered or absent and would not be mined in the future. The Weir-Pittsburg coal was extensively deep-mined in southeast Kansas and it possibly could have been mined in the southwest part of the KDWP Area #12 (Section 18). If present, this underground mine would be very shallow with the potential for subsidence.

A Research and Service Division of the University of Kansas
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The potential for additional strip-mining or possible deep mining of Weir-Pittsburg coal at this proposed reclamation project is not a concern. I do not anticipate any additional mining in the areas of proposed reclamation and you should continue with your reclamation plans. Best wishes with correction of the recognized hazards on this proposed reclamation project.

The above discussion represents our best assessment based on the information that the Kansas Geological Survey has about this locality and/or proposed project at the time of this writing. Other geologic conditions, not discussed herein, or for which the Kansas Geological Survey has no knowledge, may affect the viability or safe operation of the reclamation of this property.

Sincerely,

Larry Brady

Lawrence L. Brady
Senior Scientific Fellow

KANSAS

DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH
AND ENVIRONMENT

Kathleen Sebelius, Governor
Roderick L. Bremby, Secretary

www.kdheks.gov

December 6, 2007

FCF:newcastle:C3

Dr. William E. Harrison, Director
Kansas Geological Survey, Kansas University
1930 Constant Ave. - Campus West
Lawrence, Kansas 66047-3726

Re: Newcastle Abandoned Mine Land Reclamation Project
KDWP Areas 12, 13, & 15, Cherokee County, Kansas
Sections 17, 18, & 20, T. 32 S., R. 24 E.

Dear Dr. Harrison:

The Kansas Department of Health and Environment, Surface Mining Section (SMS) has selected hazardous problem areas to be reclaimed at abandoned surface coal mine sites located in Cherokee County, south of Scammon, Kansas. The areas are outlined on the attached copy of a portion of the Cherokee, KS, USGS Quadrangle map, and they are located along Star Valley Road.

The reclamation work being planned at the sites by the Surface Mining Section consists of relocating a road within the Kansas Department of Wildlife and Parks Wildlife Management Area 12 away from a highwall, and filling the ends of the pits in Areas 13 and 15 along the county road to minimize the hazards typically associated with abandoned mine highwalls. As such, the SMS is requesting a letter from the Kansas Geological Survey stating whether or not it is considered likely that the area of this project will be mined in the future in any of the sections noted above.

We would appreciate a reply at your earliest convenience. If you have any questions or comments, please feel free to call Mr. Fred Foshag, Jr., or me, at (620) 231-8450.

Sincerely,

Murray J. Balk
Section Chief

FCF/MJB:sjd
Enclosure
Cc: TW, MNS

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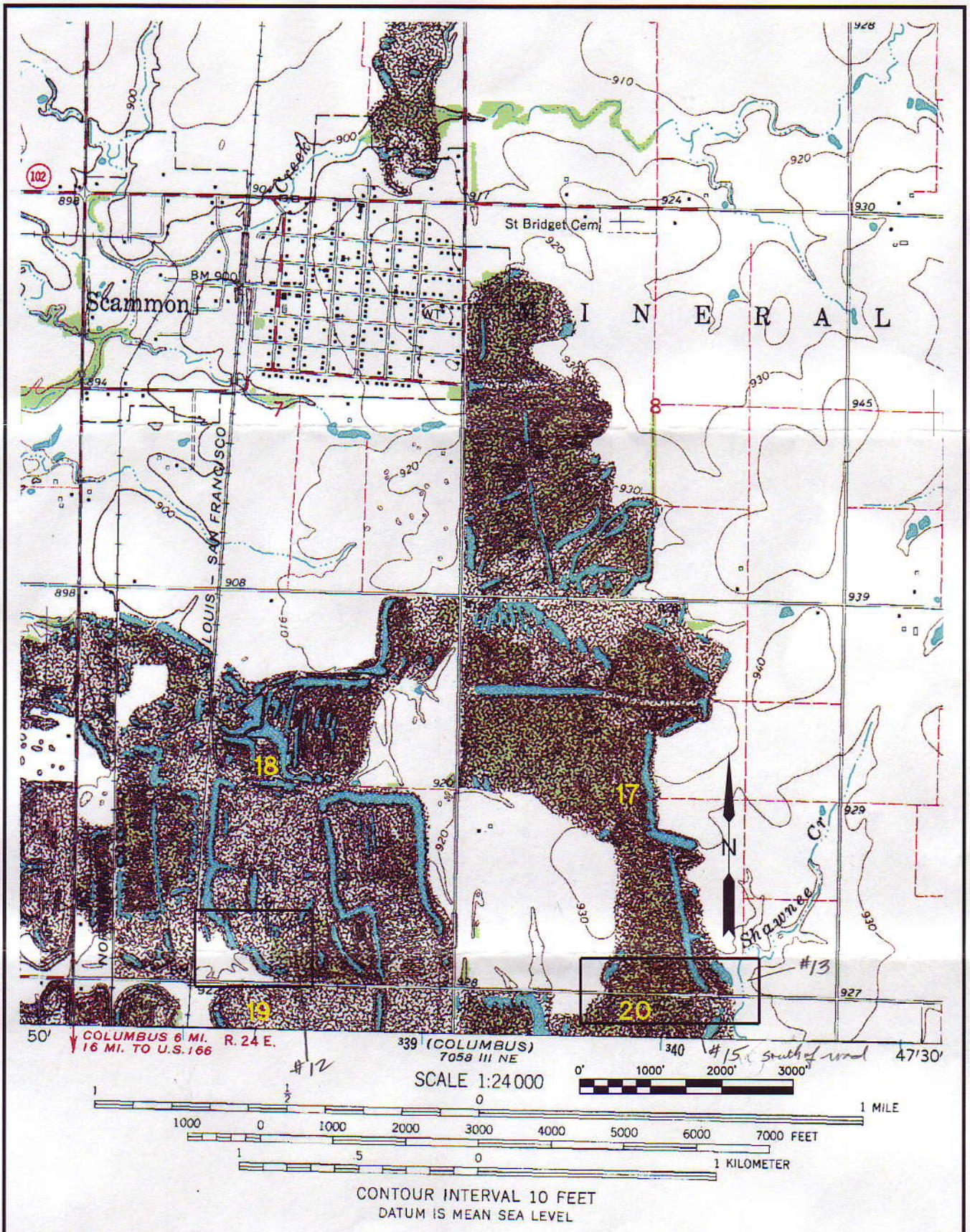
BUREAU OF ENVIRONMENTAL REMEDIATION
SURFACE MINING SECTION
4033 PARKVIEW DR., FRONTENAC, KS 66763
Voice 620-231-8540 Fax 620-231-0753



KDHE - Surface Mining Section, Engineering	PAD Nos.: KS-0411 & -0377
For: NEPA Compliance Review Comments - AML Reclamation	Date: December 5, 2007
Description: Newcastle Project Location Map KDWP - Areas 12, 13, & 15 Cherokee, KS QUAD.; SECs 17, 18, & 20, T 32 S, R 24 E	By: FCF
	Drawing: chrkeeqd.dwg