KU KANSAS GEOLOGICAL SURVEY
The University of Kansas

October 21, 2008

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

Re: Star Valley Road Reclamation Project
KS-0227
Parts of Sections 18 and 19, T. 32 S., R. 23 E.
Cherokee County, Kansas

Dear Murray:

I have reviewed the information that you recently sent to the Kansas Geological Survey concerning the proposed reclamation site titled "Star Valley Road Reclamation Project". This proposed reclamation project is located in the S/2 of Section 18 and the N/2 of Section 19, within T. 32 S., R. 23 E., Cherokee County, Kansas. A substantial amount of the reclamation effort will occur along the existing NW Star Valley Road where it presently exists in an east-west direction along the south side of Section 18, and the north side of Section 19 in the proposed reclamation area.

Strip-mining for coal was completed on nearly all of the area outlined on your map for the new reclamation efforts. The coals strip-mined in the outlined area were mainly the Mineral coal bed, most of the Fleming coal bed, and possibly some Croweburg coal--where present and thick enough to be mined separately. These coal beds are all part of the Cabaniss Formation of the Cherokee Group of rocks in southeastern Kansas.

The proposed reclamation efforts of the Star Valley Road Reclamation Project should correct physical problems created by past strip-mining of the coals, resulting in areas along the road that are potentially unsafe for vehicles using the road. The Mineral coal is the most important coal strip-mined in this general area and it was the lowermost of a two-seam (or possibly three-seam) mining operation at this site. Underlying the Mineral coal at a depth of about 25 feet is the Scammon coal that is not mined in this area due to the thin coal bed and quality concerns of the coal. About 80 feet deeper below the Mineral coal at the proposed site is the Weir-Pittsburg coal bed that was deep-mined about 1.5 miles north and about 0.5 miles to the east and northeast from the reclamation site. The Weir-Pittsburg coal was non-economic within the proposed reclamation area due to the thin nature of the coal bed.

From review of the map sent from your office, and other map information available at the Kansas Geological Survey, it appears that the reclamation area within both Section 18 and 19 is on previously mined land with future mining very unlikely. The potential for additional strip-mining of coal, or possible deep mining of Weir-Pittsburg coal at this proposed reclamation site should not be a concern and you should continue with your reclamation plans.

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,

Lawrence L. Brady

Lawrence L. Brady
Senior Scientific Fellow

KANSAS

Kathleen Sebelius, Governor
Roderick L. Bremby, Secretary

DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH
AND ENVIRONMENT

www.kdheks.gov

Division of Environment

October 15, 2008

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

Re: Star Valley Reclamation Project
Cherokee County, Kansas
KS-0227

Dear Dr. Harrison:

The Kansas Department of Health & Environment, Surface Mining Section, is currently performing design services for the reclamation of the Star Valley project (KS-0227). The project consists of several sites located in Sections 18 & 19, T32S, R23E in Cherokee County, Kansas. Please refer to the attached map for the location.

Reclamation of the site is being considered by the Surface Mining Section to minimize the hazards typically associated with abandoned mining operations. Attached is a project description that briefly discusses the area. We are 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.

We would appreciate a reply at your earliest convenience. If you have any questions, please feel free to contact us at (620) 231-8540.

Sincerely,

for Murray J. Balk, Chief
Surface Mining Section

Project file: B-6(1)

STAR VALLEY ROAD RECLAMATION PROJECT

Project Description

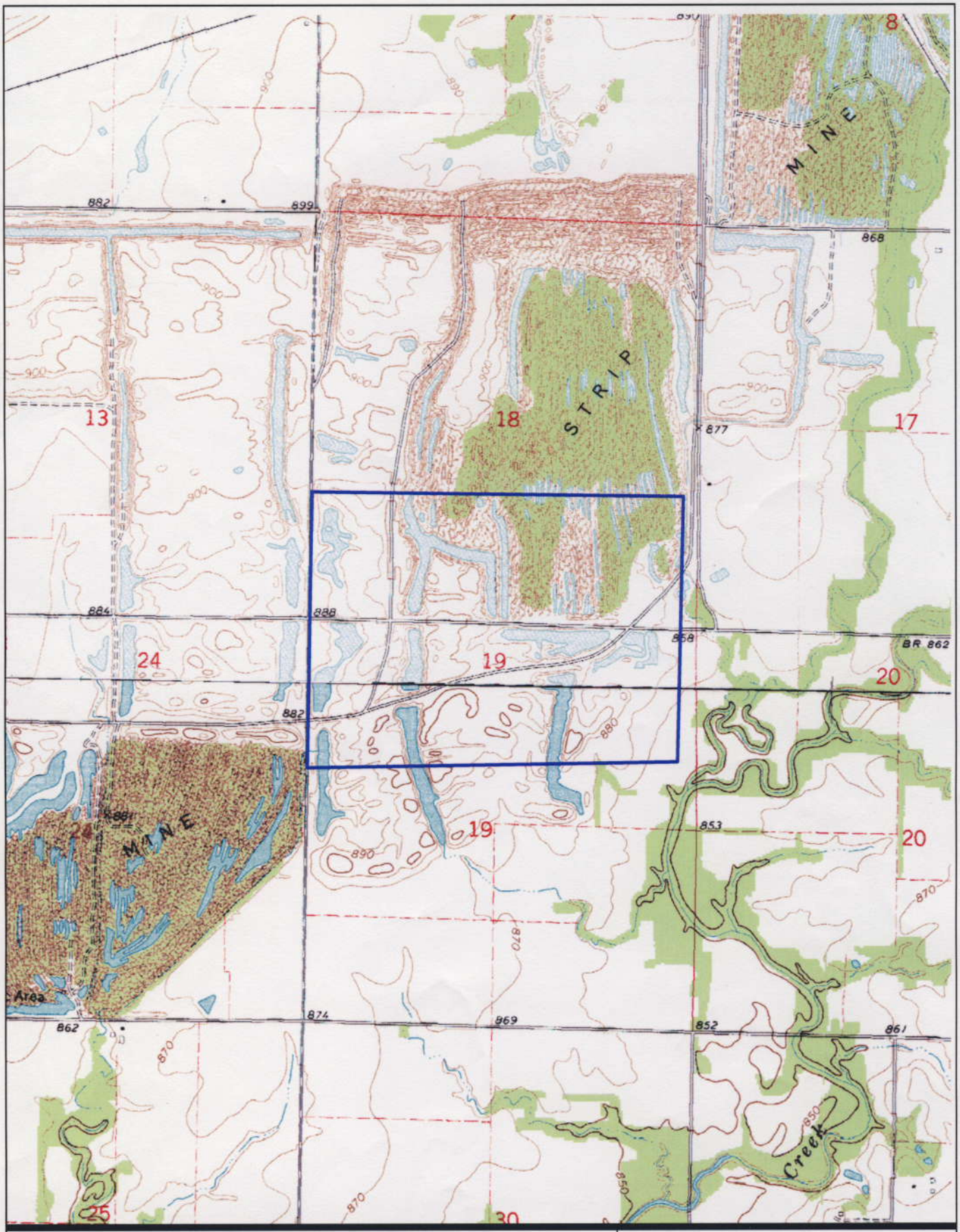
The Surface Mining Section of the Kansas Department of Health and Environment, Division of Environment, Bureau of Environmental Remediation, is the agency responsible for the reclamation of abandoned coal mines in Kansas under the Surface Mining Control and Reclamation Act of 1977 (P.L. 95-87). To this end, federal funds are available through the Office of Surface Mining Reclamation and Enforcement (OSM) for the reclamation of priority one and two problems which are hazards to the health, safety, and general welfare of the public.

Kansas currently has over 250 abandoned coal mine sites identified as priority one or two problems. The cost to reclaim all priority problems on the inventory is nearly 70 million dollars. The Kansas Abandoned Mined Land Program is proposing the Star Valley Road Reclamation Project in order to abate hazards to the public associated with strip pits adjacent to the county roads. Design work has been completed for the project and the Surface Mining Section is currently seeking authorization from OSM to fund the Project.

Reclamation at the site calls for the relocating a portion of the county road, backfilling existing strips pits along NW Star Valley Rd, as well as highwall slope reduction along a portion of an interior road on Wildlife and Parks property. Earth fills and a rock coffer dam will be used to construct recoverable slopes along the relocated county road. Due the proximity of the existing road to a 1500 ft long strip pit to the south, a 3100 ft portion of the road will be moved to the north in order to abate the hazard. Rock coffer dams and end fills will be used on the north side of the proposed road to allow for the construction of clear zones and recoverable slopes. All horizontal and vertical alignments were based on a design speed of 50 mph and ADT > 750. The alignment of the county and Wildlife and Parks access road will be addressed to improve the site distance at this intersection. Additionally, the vertical alignment of the access road will be decreased thus allowing for the construction of flatter slopes along the two adjacent strip pits. Riprap and revegetation mat will be installed to control erosion. Other construction includes fertilizing, liming, seeding, and mulching. A total of 13 acres will be revegetated on the project.

The project will impact both isolated and jurisdictional wetlands. These impacts will permitted through the COE 404 permitting process and mitigation will be addressed on adjacent property owned by Wildlife and Parks.

This Project will mainly benefit the public through the abatement of safety hazards along the highly traveled county road near West Mineral, Kansas.



KDHE - Surface Mining Section, Program Services	Project: PAD KS-0227 (Star Valley Project)
For: NEPA	Date: October 2008
Description: Area requested for clearance	By: MNS
Location: Section 18 and 19, T. 32 S., R. 23 E.; W. Mineral, KS Quad.	Drawing: starvalleynepa.dwg