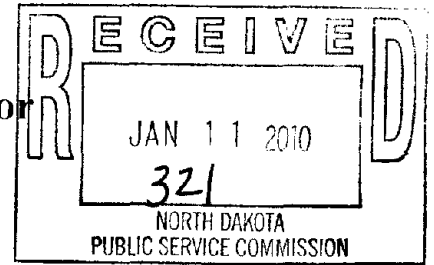




IN REPLY REFER TO:

United States Department of the Interior

OFFICE OF SURFACE MINING
Reclamation and Enforcement
Casper Field Office
150 East "B" Street, Rm 1018
Casper, Wyoming 82601



January 6, 2010

Mr. James Deutsch, Director
Reclamation and AML Divisions
North Dakota Public Service Commission
600 E. Boulevard Ave., Dept. 408
Bismarck, ND 58505-0480

Dear Mr. Deutsch:

We received the FY2010 Grant Application for the State of North Dakota Abandoned Mine Lands Reclamation Program. We have completed the programmatic review of your grant application and recommend the grant be approved in the amount of \$3,498,697. The award process should be completed well in advance of the March 1, 2010 start of the grant year. If you have any questions, please feel free to contact John Sieving of my staff at (307) 261-6541.

Sincerely,

Jeff Fleischman, Director
Casper Field Office