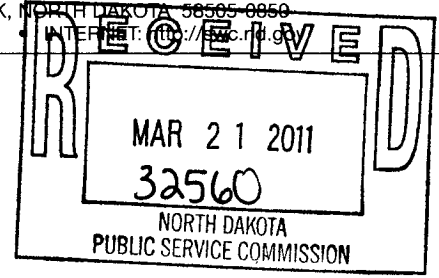


North Dakota State Water Commission

900 EAST BOULEVARD AVENUE, DEPT 770 • BISMARCK, NORTH DAKOTA 58505-0850
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WATER APPROPRIATION DIVISION
(701) 328-2754

March 17, 2011

Mr. James R. Deutsch, Director
Reclamation Division
Public Service Commission
State Capitol Building
Bismarck, North Dakota 58505

FROM DIRECTOR - RECLAMATION DIV.

Date: _____

Action: _____

Info. Only: _____

Info & File: _____

Dear Mr. Deutsch:

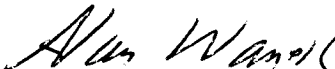
In a January 19, 2011 letter, you requested our review and comments regarding South Heart Coal, LLC's Application SHSH-1001 for the proposed South Heart Lignite Mine. I have the following suggestions.

I suggest consideration be given to adding monitoring wells near the northeast corner of Section 22 and the northwest corner of Section 21, both in Twp. 139-098, in the vicinity of private wells and downgradient of the first line of planned mining. A third location is suggested along the southern part of the line between Sections 15 and 16. The suggested completion zones for the monitoring wells are the D Coal and in the underburden, either in the interval used to make potentiometric surface map Fig 2.5-3 or in a common interval of nearby private well completions.

I suggest adding the monitoring well-screened interval elevations to Table 2.5-2A and making a similar table of the private wells inventoried. I found it necessary to go to multiple basic data sources to compare the underburden elevation(s) monitored with private well completion intervals.

Additional information on pre-1971 private wells in the proposed mine area, not included on the Water Commission webpage map service, is available in "Ground Water Basic Data Hettinger and Stark counties, North Dakota," H. Trapp (1971), County Ground Water Studies 16 – Part II, Tables 1, 4, and 5 and Plate 1, available on the Water Commission web page, under Reports and Publications.

Construction permits will be needed from the Office of the State Engineer for permanent ponds capable of holding 50 acre-feet of water.


Alan Wanek, Hydrologist Manager
AW:/1687.29