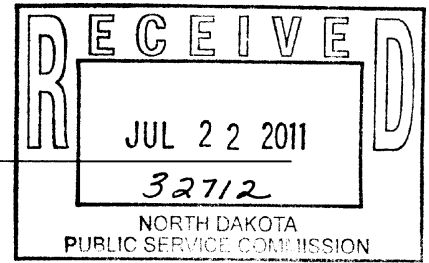


United States Department of Agriculture



Natural Resources Conservation Service
P.O. Box 1458
Bismarck, ND 58502-1458



July 21, 2011

James R. Duetsch
ND Public Service Commission
600 E. Boulevard Avenue, Dept. 408
Bismarck, ND 58505-0480

RE: Surface Coal Mining Permit NAFK-9503
Falkirk Mining Company

Dear Mr. Duetsch:


This letter is in reference to the application for Revision No. 20 to Surface Coal Mining Permit NAFK-9503 submitted by the Falkirk Mining Company.

After discussing this application with the Public Service Commission's Reclamation Division, Natural Resource Conservation Service (NRCS) did not find deficiencies in the prime farmland section of the Falkirk Mining Company's application for revision. We are encouraged with the fact that Falkirk Mining Company has proposed to segregate sandy soils from glacial till and reworked till during the reclamation process.

Thank you for the opportunity to discuss their revision and we look forward to working with you in the future.

If you have additional questions pertaining to FPPA, please contact Steve Sieler, State Soil Liaison, at (701) 530-2019.

Sincerely,


JEROME M. SCHAAR
State Soil Scientist/MO 7 Leader

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