

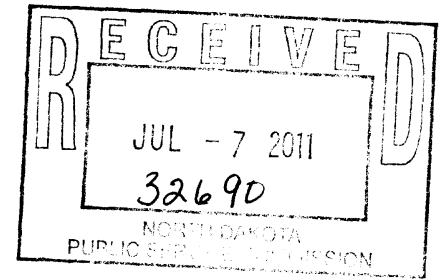


State of North Dakota

Office of the State Engineer

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WATER APPROPRIATION DIVISION
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July 6, 2011

Mr. James R. Deutsch, Director (via inside mail)
Reclamation Division - Public Service Commission
State Capitol Building
Bismarck, North Dakota 58505

RE: Revision 24 to KRSB-8603

Dear Mr. Deutsch:

In a May 24, 2011 letter, you requested comments regarding Dakota Westmoreland Corporation's application for Revision Number 24 to Surface Coal Mine Permit KRSB-8603. Revision Number 24 includes the 2011-2016 proposed mining in the southwestern part of the mine.

Mining through 2016 is to extend southerly, primarily through the northern halves of Sections 20 and 22 of Twp. 143-088, southwest of Beulah. Before being mined, the local direction of groundwater movement in the Beulah-Zap bed was generally to the east or northeast. In Section 20 there is an indicated local reversal to a southerly movement of groundwater in the Beulah-Zap bed, following the bed's structural dip. In southern Section 20 the coal is eroded away by an intermittent tributary of Coyote Creek, which is tributary to the Knife River. Where mining is proposed to resume south of the tributary, in southern Section 20, there are only monitoring wells along the east section line of Section 20. Additional monitoring might be in order along the south line of Section 20. Mining in Section 20 might affect the quality and quantity water in wells and springs in sections 19 and 20.

If you have any further questions, please feel free to contact me.

Sincerely,

Alan Wanek,
Hydrologist Manager

AW:sc/1687.7