

ATTACHMENT J-3

REGULATORY CORRESPONDENCE



Montana Department of
ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY

Judy H. Martz, Governor

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February 15, 2001

Mr. Allen Nipple
Environmental Coordinator
Spring Creek Coal Company
PO Box 67
Decker, MT 59025-0067

RE: Use of Curve Numbers for Drainage Channel Designs at SCC

Dear Allen:

I have reviewed the drainages at SCC in an effort to determine if a composite curve number could be used for drainage channel designs. The review indicated the permit area could be divided into three distinct areas, each with its own composite curve number. The use of composite curve numbers should expedite drainage channel design and review. The three areas are composed of all drainages found on the north side of Spring Creek, those found on the south side of Spring Creek as well as those found on the north side of the South Fork of Spring Creek, and finally, those found on the south side of the South Fork of Spring Creek. The composite curve numbers are as follows:

| <u>Drainage Area</u> | <u>CN</u> |
|---|-----------|
| North side of Spring Creek | = 64 |
| South side of Spring Creek and North side of the South Fork of Spring Creek | = 77 |
| South side of the South Fork of Spring Creek | = 81 |

Composite curve numbers cannot be used for design of sediment ponds or impoundments due to variations in individual drainages that might critically affect pond capacity and spillway design, while the design of drainage channels allows more flexibility. Use of composite curve numbers would only slightly affect the final design of any particular channel at the Spring Creek mine.

Sincerely,

Herb Rolfes, Surface Water Hydrologist
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HR/dv

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