

13-035-184/Rocky Mountain Power
April 15, 2014
Sierra Club Data Request 4.9

Sierra Club Data Request 4.9

See the Direct Testimony of Cindy Crane 404-414.

- (a) Provide an up-to-date map of the Bridger Mine complex (surface and underground), including expected development dates for future areas or panels. It is expected that this map will be similar to the map provided in discovery in the Bridger CPCN docket? (Wyoming Docket No. 20000-418-EA-12).
- (b) To what extent is the Bridger Coal Company (BCC) aware of mine ash content in advance of mining operations? Has BCC identified any other regions of the underground mine that might include higher-than acceptable ash levels?

Response to Sierra Club Data Request 4.9

- (a) Please See Confidential Attachment Sierra Club 4.9a.
- (b) As the underground mine's geology is complex and varying, Bridger Coal Company conducts an aggressive drilling program. Drilling allows Bridger Coal personnel to determine seam thickness, geologic faults, adverse quality and appropriate extraction points. In most of Bridger Coal's previous longwall panels, Bridger Coal has encountered pockets of high ash coal due to narrowing seam thickness. However, usually the mine can advance through these high ash areas by blending with lower ash coal. As a result of additional drilling in March/April of 2013, Bridger Coal personnel were able to conclude that the majority of the coal in the 12th right longwall contained elevated ash levels far in excess of quality targets resulting in the bypass of the 12th right panel.

While Bridger Coal will continue to encounter areas of elevated ash, Bridger Coal's drilling program allows the geologists and engineers to refine the underground mine plan through its development of the mains, longwall set-up and extraction points.