

FILED

APR 23 2002

Terri A. Lorenzon, Director
Environmental Quality Council

BEFORE THE
ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY COUNCIL
STATE OF WYOMING

IN THE MATTER OF GENERAL CHEMICAL)
(SODA ASH) PARTNERS THIRD REQUEST)
FOR INTERIM MINE STABILIZATION FOR)
RESEARCH AND DEVELOPMENT, LICENSE)
NO. 12 RD, PERMIT NO. 464, TFN 3 2/289)

DOCKET NO. 00-4404

ORDER

This matter came before the Environmental Quality Council (EQC) for hearing on December 17, 2001, via videoconference, with sites in Gillette, Casper, Laramie, Kemmerer, and Cheyenne, Wyoming. EQC members Olin D. Sims, Thomas Dunn, Dr. Jason Shogren, Wendy Hutchinson, Lisa M. Lindemann and Robert Rawlings conducted the hearing, with Mr. Sims serving as hearing examiner. Terri A. Lorenzon, attorney for the EQC, assisted with the hearing. General Chemical Soda Ash Partners (General Chemical) was represented by Scott Britton, P.E., Underground Operations Manager. The State of Wyoming, Department of Environmental Quality, Land Quality Division (LQD) was represented by John Burbridge, Assistant Attorney General.

Immediately following the hearing, the EQC convened a public meeting to decide the case. Having reviewed the evidence and being advised in the premises, the Council finds and concludes as follows.

FINDINGS OF FACT

1. LQD issued research and development license 12RD, Permit No. 464 for a trona in situ solution mine in May 1982. Allied Chemical operated the in situ solution mine from July 1983 until May 1984.

2. In 1986, Allied Chemical sold its Green River operations to General Chemical, the current operator of the in situ site. Having determined that the solution mine was not economical, General Chemical applied for and was granted a five-year interim stabilization term for 12 RD, Permit No. 464 and a second five-year term was granted in 1994.
3. Although General Chemical has reclaimed most of the research and development site, it continues to develop in situ mining. Because advances in technology have resolved some of the problems with solution mining processes for trona, General Chemical has long-range plans for this site. General Chemical presented evidence that the remaining building and the two lined evaporation ponds on the site will be valuable assets when General Chemical reopens the site.
4. General Chemical has an employee inspect and monitor the site monthly.
5. General Chemical has received surface owner consent from the two landowners, the Bureau of Land Management and the Uinta Development Corporation.
6. DEQ does not object to General Chemical's request for interim mine stabilization.
7. Notice of, and an opportunity for, public comment was published in the Casper Star Tribune for three consecutive weeks ending December 17, 2001. At the hearing, no person indicated a desire to speak on this issue.
8. No evidence in opposition to the continued interim stabilization status of this site was presented.

CONCLUSIONS

1. The Environmental Quality Council has jurisdiction over the parties to, and the subject matter of, this case.

2. A third interim stabilization term will not result in harm to the environment and it will preserve the opportunity for further development at the site.
2. Final reclamation of the in situ site is not required at this time and a third, five-year term for interim stabilization should be allowed.
3. Monitoring and inspection of the site should continue on a monthly basis.

IT IS HEREBY ORDERED THAT the request to renew General Chemical (Soda Ash) Partners, Permit No. 12RD interim mine stabilization is approved.

DATED this 22 day of April, 2002.



Olin Sims, Hearing Examiner
ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY COUNCIL
Herschler Building, Rm. 1714
122 W. 25th Street
Cheyenne, WY 82002
Tel: (307) 777-7170
Fax: (307) 777-6134