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12 March 2025

Erik Munroe, Chief Mine Inspector
Coal Program
Mining and Minerals Division (MMD)
1220 South St. Francis Drive
Santa Fe, NM 87505

RE: *El Segundo Coal Mine Permit Revision, Highwall Miner Application 2024, McKinley County, New Mexico, Permit No. 2020-01; NMDGF Project No. NMERT-4226.*

Dear Mr. Munroe,

The New Mexico Department of Game and Fish (Department) has reviewed the above referenced mine permit revision. Peabody Natural Resources Company (Peabody) is requesting to add the highwall miner technique as a method used to extract coal at the El Segundo Mine.

Peabody's proposed use of the highwall miner technique within the mine permit area will involve boring horizontally into the coal seams of existing pits that have already been established through previous strip-mining operations. By using the proposed sub-surface mining technique, Peabody will avoid the surface disturbance that occurs when using conventional truck/shovel or dragline operations. The Department supports the use of a highwall miner to extract coal because it will help preserve wildlife habitat while also reducing the amount of reclamation needed at mine closure.

Thank you for the opportunity to review and comment on the proposed permit revision. If you have any questions, please contact Ron Kellermueller, Mining and Energy Habitat Specialist, at (505) 270-6612 or ronald.kellermueller@dgf.nm.gov.

Sincerely,

Virginia Seamster, Ph.D.
Assistant Chief, Ecological and Environmental Planning Section

cc: USFWS NMES Field Office