

**ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT FOR MINOR REVISION
COAL AND URANIUM PROGRAM
MONTANA DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY**

COMPANY NAME: Western Energy Company – Area C

DATE: August 26, 2009

OPERATING PERMIT#: 85003

MR#: 09-03-02C

LOCATION: Area C

Type and Purpose of Action:

The proposed action includes constructing a toe drain for Pond PO-101 in Area C. It has been discovered that water seeps through the foundation of this newly constructed pond. Installation of a toe drain is the usual method for addressing possible embankment erosion associated with foundation seepage. The toe drain is basically a fabric lined trench filled with gravel installed across the downstream toe of the embankment.

Potential Impacts and Mitigation Measures:

This is a very small project in a recently disturbed area and located near an operational haul road. The additional disturbance associated with this modification will be very minor. Impacts might include additional soil erosion due to construction machinery. However, sediment controls are currently in place.

Alternative Actions:

The purpose of this action is to enhance the reliability of the pond embankment. Failure of the embankment could release significant sediment into natural waterways. Not constructing the toe drain could result in increased risk to the environment.