



September 10, 2009

Climate Action Reserve
523 W. Sixth Street, Suite 428
Los Angeles, CA 90014

Re: Climate Action Reserve's Coal Mine Methane Project Protocol, Version 1.0

Solvay Chemicals, Inc. operates an underground trona mine and soda ash refinery near Green River, Wyoming. Methane is released during mining and the mine is classified as a gassy mine by MSHA. The mining methods used and the ventilation system employed are similar to those used in underground coal mines in the U.S. Solvay appreciates the opportunity to comment on the Climate Action Reserve's Coal Mine Methane Project Protocol, Public DRAFT, Version 1.0, August 17, 2009.

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Section 2.1, Project Definition (Page 7): Solvay is pleased to see that the Reserve has included trona mines within the set of mine types that are eligible to use this protocol. We utilize the same underground longwall mining extraction techniques as those used at longwall coal mines in the U.S. and employ the same type of ventilation systems at our mine in order to manage mine methane emissions. To reduce the risk of methane gas from the gob migrating to the working face of the mine, we employ post-mine gob drainage techniques to supplement our central mine ventilation system.

Trona mines, like coal mines, are not subject to any requirements to collect and destroy methane emitted from central ventilation or drainage systems employed at the mine. By including trona as a type of mine eligible to use this protocol, companies like ours have an opportunity to implement a project to collect and destroy methane vented from our post-mine drainage system in order to generate carbon offset credits.

Section 2.1.1, Drainage Projects (Page 8): The sentence "The borehole(s) that make up each project's drainage system are to be defined by the project developer at the time of project submittal." seems to be too restrictive. Holes will have a relatively short operational life and their exact location may not be known at the beginning of the project. Making additional holes an expansion seems unnecessary.

Section 3.4.1, The Regulatory Test (Page 11): We disagree with the Reserve’s decision to not allow mine methane projects to generate offsets for the remainder of their crediting period in the event regulations are enacted that require mine methane to be destroyed. As currently written, project developers are eligible to register GHG reductions with the Reserve according to this protocol for 10 years or until the project activity becomes required by law. Mine methane projects require a significant amount of upfront capital to be deployed; project development will be stifled if companies run the risk of having their projects disqualified at an unforeseen point during their approved crediting period. Unlike landfills, which are already subject to regulations and can predict with relative accuracy if and when such regulations will go into effect, neither coal nor trona mines are currently subject to any regulation that could impact their ability to generate offsets. As a result, project developers should be protected during their crediting period from the impact of future regulatory changes that cannot be predicted at the time a decision is made to invest capital in a project to reduce GHG emissions.

We strongly encourage the Reserve to modify the terms of the Regulatory Test to preserve the ability of projects that achieve listing with the Reserve to generate offsets for a full crediting period.

Section 5, GHG Reduction Calculation Method (page 19): This section is probably the most important section in the Project Protocol. Even though it uses accepted methodologies and formulas it is the most difficult to understand for someone who has not been working with carbon credits. Two or three introductory paragraphs explaining the general approach and baseline methodologies used would help the layman to understand much more clearly what qualifies as a carbon credit and what does not.

Section 6.1, Project Monitoring (page 34): The protocol states that “all gas flow meters and continuous methane analyzers must be cleaned and inspected on a quarterly basis... and that if any field check reveals accuracy outside of a +/-5% threshold, calibration by the manufacturer or a certified service provider is required.” It’s unclear if the +/-5% accuracy requirement pertains to each individual piece of equipment, or if the threshold pertains to the project’s system of gas flow meters and continuous methane analyzers. Requiring a calibration by a manufacturer or a certified service provider for a specified error may be very difficult to make happen and is not practical for most mining operations. We encourage the Reserve to clarify this requirement.

(page 35) “ If a portable calibration instrument is used, such as a pitot tube or a calibrated portable gas analyzer, the portable instrument shall be calibrated at least annually at an ISO 17025 accredited laboratory.” This requirement is not practical and compliance would be difficult for almost all mines.

Section 6.1, Monitoring Parameters (page 37): Under equation 5.10, DCH₄, the units are wrong. The number 0.0423 should have units of lb.CH₄/scf not tCH₄/scf.

Section 7.1, Project Documentation (page 39): What does CAR want when it requests a “Current mine plan”? If what is wanted is a plan showing the development, mine layout and ventilation in the areas where mine methane will be captured and destroyed to earn carbon offset credits the request is reasonable. If it is substantially more than this then the reason for the need for the information needs to be presented.

Section 7.3, Record Keeping (Page 40): The record keeping requirement for “Copies of all coal mine operating permits, air, water, and land use permits, Notices of Violations (NOVs), and any administrative or legal consent orders dating back at least 3 years prior to the project start date, and for each subsequent year of project operation.” is good practice for any mining operation. However it is not something which has anything to do with carbon credits and it is inappropriate for either CAR or verification personnel to have access to this information.

What exactly does CAR envision a mine plan to be? Certainly mines will keep mine plans in their permanent records.

Section 7.4, Reporting Cycle (page 45): In the 7th comment on Section 6 the word “for” is misspelled.

If there are questions pertaining to these comments, please contact:

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