8-21-80
#942

U. S. Department of Labor

Mine Safety and Health Administration
110 Gott Road
Princeton, West Virginia 24740

September 30, 1980

MEMORANDUM FOR: J. F. McMANUS Jack F. McManus
Subdistrict Manager

FROM: S. E. GASPERSICH SEG
Coal Mine Safety Specialist

SUBJECT: Report of investigation of nonfatal coal outburst accident, Beatrice Mine, Beatrice Pocahontas Company, Keen Mountain, Buchanan County, Virginia, August 18 and 21, 1980

Upon arrival at the mine to make a routine bump control survey, I was informed by Cecil Keene, secetion foreman, that a coal outburst occurred during the previous shift about 9:50 p.m., August 18, 1980. The outburst occurred between shuttle cars when the continuous-mining machine was outby the face. Ezra Hagerman, continuous-mining machine operator's helper, was near the canopy securing a water hose and was struck by flying coal particles which broke the glass lens on his cap lamp and caused some bruises; however, there was no lost time. Joe D. Harris, continuous-mining machine operator, was not injured and no damage to equipment resulted; however, ventilation controls were displaced and had to be restored. The outburst occurred in the vicinity of survey station No. 5620 skip south section (No. 9 unit) and affected the entire perimeter of the chain pillar (A pillar, Sketch No. 1). Following an investigation of the bump area and section, management and the writer concurred in adopting volley firing in an attempt to weaken pillars B, C, and D (Sketch No. 1) before attacking with the continuous-mining machine.

Pillar A was deemed sufficiently destressed and distant from the gob to permit splitting safely. This was to be done in conjunction with driving the split in pillar E. There were no incidents during the mining of splits in these pillars.

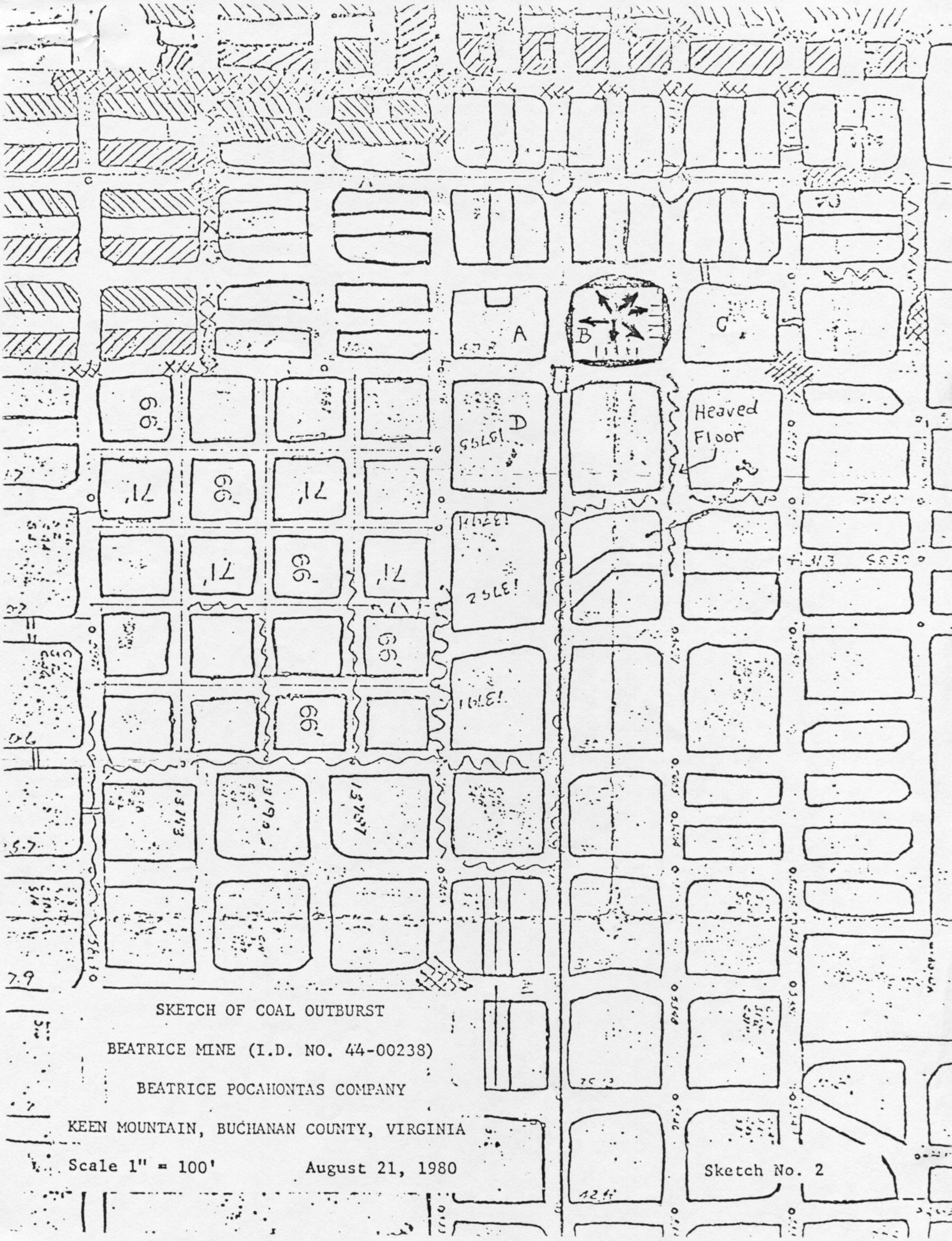
Blasting holes were drilled, charged, and fired along two sides of pillar B (Sketch No. 2) and blasting immediately induced an outburst about 4:30 a.m., August 21, 1980 (owl shift). The outburst affected the entire pillar and apparently destressed it. Maintenance men and the drill crew were the only personnel in the section since this was a nonproducing shift and all were intentionally isolated from the active pillar.

The plan to split two rows of pillars in advance of the gob was followed and was successful in that outbursts of any intensity were not experienced

since pillar mining was resumed in April 1980; however, in view of the subject events it was decided to split additional chain pillars before resuming pillar recovery and to volley fire before mining the pillars in the area where firm floor was predominant. It is interesting to note that the overburden in this area ranging from 1,360 to 1,520 feet in thickness is less than in any area where outbursts had occurred previously in this mine. The main contributing factor is apparently a dispositional change in floor condition.

Attachments:
Sketch No. 1
Sketch No. 2

cc: Herschel H. Potter



SKETCH OF COAL OUTBURST

BEATRICE MINE (I.D. NO. 44-00238)

BEATRICE POCAHONTAS COMPANY

KEEN MOUNTAIN, BUCHANAN COUNTY, VIRGINIA

Scale 1" = 100' August 21, 1980

Sketch No. 2