Datil Mountains Coal Field

Location

The Datil Mountains coal field is located on the southeastern edge of the Colorado Plateau in Catron, Cibola, and Socorro Counties, New Mexico.

Stratigraphy

An early study of the coal geology was by D.E. Winchester of the USGS, but this work was never published according to Pike (1947). Winchester (1920) did place the coal into a stratigraphic context and called the coal-bearing unit the Chamiso Formation. The stratigraphy in current usage was worked out by Pike (1947) and modified by Maxwell (1976). Coal is present in the Dilco Coal Member of the Crevasse Canyon Formation (Frost and others, 1979).

Table. Stratigraphy—Datil Mountains coal field.

Stratigraphic units	Depositional environment	Thickness (ft)
Mancos Shale (Mulatto Tongue)	marine	100
Crevasse Canyon Formation (part)		
Dilco Coal Member	coastal plain; coal	173
Gallup Sandstone	nearshore marine	27

Coal Deposits

Most coal beds are generally less than 3 ft thick (Hoffman, 1996) but can be as thick as 4.5 ft (Frost and others, 1979).

Coal Quality

The coal in this field has an average apparent rank of subbituminous A; average ash content is about 13 percent, and average sulfur is about 0.7 percent on an as-received basis (Hoffman, 1996).

Table. Coal in Dilco Coal Member.

[Values reported on an as-received basis]

	Ash content (percent)	Sulfur content (percent)	Heating value (Btu/lb)
Average	12.84	0.72	11,465
Standard deviation	6.34	0.54	869
Number of analyses	10	10	10

Resources

About 47 million short tons of coal are estimated for the field by Hoffman (1996), who incorporated both new data and data collected by Frost and others (1979) and Osburn (1982).

Production History

Five small mines operated between about 1917 and 1940 (Frost and others, 1979).

References

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