

# Chino Facts from FCX

## Reclamation at Chino Mines Company

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Former Smelter Site

Tailings dam reclamation is under way at Chino Mines Company. In addition, the site of the former Chino smelter – demolished during 2006-2007 – has been reclaimed and capped with soil (photo above).

- The processing of copper-bearing ore requires that it be crushed and ground as part of a process called concentrating. After copper minerals are removed from ore, the residual – a fine, sandy material – is transported as slurry and permanently placed within large tailings impoundments. The water is collected and recycled.
- Since open-pit mining began in 1910 at Chino Mines, tailings deposition has covered almost 3,000 acres. Reclamation began in 2008 on about 2,000 of these acres no longer required for current or future operations.
- Reclamation activities at Chino are mandated by requirements of the New Mexico Environment Department and the NM Energy, Minerals & Natural Resources Department's Mining & Minerals Division.
- As a first step, pipelines and power lines were moved from the top of those old structures. Next, earthmoving equipment began reducing side slopes on the impoundments and preparing them for capping with soil and the development of storm water diversions. Diversions are critical to ensure soil capping is not washed off, cutting into the underlying tailings.
- Finally, the entire area will be reseeded with native grasses and shrubs, with a post-mining land use as wildlife habitat.
- The project is scheduled to be completed by 2012.



Reclamation Area

### ***What is the purpose of reclamation?***

Tailings impoundments and rock stockpiles may contain sulfide minerals that can react with storm water runoff to potentially impact surface and groundwater. Capping these sites with soil, promoting vegetation growth and managing storm water runoff will help to protect surface and ground waters for future generations.



Reclamation Area