

20180619-004



NEW MEXICO
ENVIRONMENT DEPARTMENT



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Governor

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BUTCH TONGATE
Cabinet Secretary

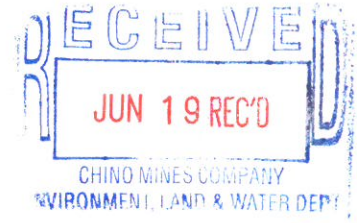
JOHN A. SANCHEZ
Lieutenant Governor

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J.C. BORREGO
Deputy Secretary

June 11, 2018

Ms. Sherry Burt-Kested, Manager
Environment Services
Freeport-McMoRan Chino Mines Company
P.O. Box 10
Bayard, New Mexico 88023



RE: Approval of Hanover/Whitewater Creek Investigation Unit, Interim Removal Action Work Plan, Chino Administrative Order on Consent

Dear Ms. Burt-Kested:

The New Mexico Environment Department (NMED) has reviewed the Hanover/Whitewater Creek Investigative Unit interim removal action work plan (IRAWP) dated May 24, 2018. NMED previously commented on the February 9, 2018 draft IRAWP on March 6, 2018. In those comments NMED disagreed with the description that the Groundhog # 5 waste rock pile has been reclaimed. The only work NMED is aware of on the waste rock pile are run-on and run-off controls, placement of a concrete lid over the shaft, regrading of the waste rock pile and ground water quality monitoring. Current results show exceedances of sulfate and total dissolved solids above groundwater quality standards in seepage captured at the toe of the pile and a final decision on the reclamation of the pile has not been made.

Considering that the final reclamation decision for the Groundhog # 5 has no bearing on the IRAWP, the work plan is approved with the understanding the Groundhog #5 Stockpile is not reclaimed and its completion remains pending.

NMED looks forward to the clean-up effort within the Whitewater Creek corridor. If you have any questions, please contact me at (575) 956-1550.

Sincerely,

David Mercer, Chino AOC Project Manager
Mining Environmental Compliance Section
Ground Water Quality Bureau
New Mexico Environment Department

Silver City Field Office

DWM: dwm

cc: Bruce Yurdin, NMED (via email)
Kurt Vollbrecht, NMED (via email)
Joseph Fox, NMED (via email)
Petra Sanchez, USEPA (via email)
Alicia Voss, Freeport-McMoRan Inc. (via email)
Pam Pinson, Freeport-McMoRan Chino Mines Company (via email)