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RON CURRY
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November 23, 2005

Sai Appaji, Remedial Project Manager
Superfund Division
U. S. Environmental Protection Agency, Region 6
1445 Ross Avenue, Suite 1200
Dallas, TX 75202

RE: Correction for New Mexico Environment Department Acceptance of Proposed Site Ground Water Contaminant Standards for the Homestake Mining Company Mill Site (CERCLIS ID NMD007860935), Milan, New Mexico

Dear Sai:

The New Mexico Environment Department (NMED) issued a letter dated August 18, 2005 which supported approval of concentrations for aquifers as representative of current background concentrations at the Homestake Mining Company (HMC) Mill (Site) located in Milan, New Mexico. It has come to our attention that the concentrations listed in our August 18, 2005 letter differ from those listed in the background document entitled "Background Water Quality Evaluation of the Chinle Aquifers" (Hydro-Engineering, LLC for HMC, October 2003), which was the basis for our approval.

Below you will find the corrected table listing concentrations for aquifers as representative of background concentrations for contaminants:

<u>Contaminant</u>	<u>Aquifer</u>				
	<u>Alluvial</u>	<u>"Mixing zone"</u>	<u>Upper Chinle</u>	<u>Middle Chinle</u>	<u>Lower Chinle</u>
Selenium (mg/l)	0.32	0.14	0.06	0.07	0.32
Uranium (mg/l)	0.16	0.18	0.09	0.07	0.02
Molybdenum (mg/l)	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA
Sulfate (mg/l)	1500	1750	914	857	2000
Chloride (mg/l)	NA	NA	412	NA	634
TDS (mg/l)	2734	3140	2010	1560	4140
Nitrate (mg/l)	12	15	NA	NA	NA

NA = Not Applicable because the background value was lower than the New Mexico numerical standard for chloride at 250 mg/L, nitrate at 10 mg/L and molybdenum at 1.0 mg/L.

----- = Corrected value

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Additionally, the U.S. NRC has set the following ground water contaminant concentration standards for the alluvial aquifer, with NMED's agreement:

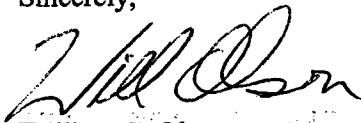
Vanadium	0.01 mg/l
Thorium-230	0.30 pCi/l
Ra-226 + Ra-228	5 pCi/l

For all other parameters not specifically cited herein, the groundwater standards are the numerical State standard pursuant to 20.6.2.3103 NMAC. The background standards selected above do not apply outside the Homestake mining operation. If these concentrations resulted from upgradient contamination by a responsible person and not a natural source, the background concentrations set forth do not preclude NMED from requiring the responsible person to clean-up the contamination. In the event new information becomes available, the background values may require revision.

NMED will incorporate these standards in the forthcoming renewal of DP-200 for the Site. Additionally, NMED expects the forthcoming revision of the Site's Corrective Action Plan to reference these standards.

Please contact Jerry Schoeppner at (505) 827-0652 if you should have any questions.

Sincerely,



William C. Olson
Bureau Chief

Cc: Mary Ann Menetrey, MECS Manager
Dana Bahar, SOS Manager
Jerry Schoeppner, MECS
Jake Ingram, SOS
William von Till, U.S. NRC
Al Cox, Homestake Mining Company
Milton Head, Murray Acres Community Association
HMC 2005 correspondence file
NMED/GWQB/SOS November 2005 read file