May 11, 2007

Mr. Eric Mein
U. S. Fish and Wildlife Service
New Mexico Ecological Field Office
NMESFO
2105 Osuna Road
Albuquerque, New Mexico 87113

SUBJECT: REQUEST FOR INFORMATION REGARDING ENDANGERED SPECIES FOR THE HOMESTAKE MINING COMPANY OF CALIFORNIA PROPOSED EVAPORATION POND #3, CIBOLA COUNTY, NEW MEXICO

Dear Mr. Mein:

The Homestake Mining Company of California (HMC) is proposing to build an evaporation pond on a 33-acre site in Cibola County, New Mexico, as part of a long-term groundwater restoration effort at the facility. The purpose of the pond is to add evaporative capacity, allowing HMC to extract contaminated groundwater at higher pumping rates; this will expedite the groundwater cleanup. The proposed location for the pond and alternatives is on private land adjacent to the HMC facility, located north of the City of Grants, in Section 26, T12N, R10W (Figure 1). HMC currently manages a groundwater restoration program subject to U. S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission (NRC) License SUA-1471, and New Mexico Environment Department Discharge Plans, DP-200 and DP-725.

HMC has applied for an amendment to the NRC Site License to add a new evaporation pond and expand the NRC-licensed site boundary. HMC has prepared an Engineering Design Package and Environmental Report in support of the amendment request that can be found at http://www.nrc.gov/reading-rm/adams/web-based.html, and by searching under ML063050641. The Environmental Report for the proposal can be found by searching under ML070850561. If you have difficulty accessing this information, you may contact the Public Document Room Librarian at 1-800-397-4209.

The action area is limited to those areas in close proximity to the proposed pond alternatives and the area in proximity to HMC site. Please provide any information that you may have regarding the presence of endangered or threatened species or critical habitat in the area. After assessing the information provided by you, we will determine what additional actions are necessary to comply with the Section 7 process.

If you have any questions, please contact me at 301-415-7777 or, by e-mail to rcl1@nrc.gov.

In accordance with 10 CFR 2.390 of the NRC's "Rules of Practice for Domestic Licensing Proceedings and Issuance of Orders," a copy of this letter will be available electronically for public inspection in the NRC Public Document Room or from the Publicly Available Records component of the NRC's Agencywide Documents Access and Management System (ADAMS). ADAMS is accessible from the NRC Web site at http://www.nrc.gov/reading-rm/adams.html.

Sincerely,

/RA/ SCohen for RLinton

Ron C. Linton, Project Manager
Decommissioning and Uranium Recovery
Licensing Directorate
Division of Waste Management
and Environmental Protection
Office of Federal and State Materials
and Environmental Management Programs

Docket No.: 040-08903
License No.: SUA-1471

Enclosure: Figure 1

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Enclosure: Figure 1

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