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Memorandum

To: LaDonna Turner, Site Assessment Manager
Technical and Enforcement Branch
U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, Region 6

From: Dana Bahar, Manager, Superfund Oversight Section
Ground Water Quality Bureau, New Mexico Environment
Department.

Date: September 10, 2009

Subject: Pre-CERCLIS Screening Assessment of Roundy Manol Strip
Mine, McKinley County, New Mexico: Further action under
CERCLA recommended

Site name	Roundy Manol Strip Mine				
City	not applicable	State	New Mexico	Zip code	not applicable
County	McKinley				
Latitude	35° 19' 21.04"	Longitude	107° 50' 07.80"		

Site physical description: The Roundy Manol Strip Mine currently is an area of excavated pits and mine waste piles over a broad area south of Haystack Road. Surface water was present in several of the pits visited by NMED personnel.

Site identification: Potential alluvial ground water contamination within the Grants Mineral Belt was identified because background standards established for the contaminants of concern for ongoing remedial action associated with the Homestake Mining Company NPL site (CERCLIS NMD0007860935) are generally higher than Maximum Contaminant Levels (MCLs). NMED conducted sampling of private residential wells in subdivisions located in the vicinity of the HMC site, and found that the majority had one or more contaminant concentrations exceeding MCLs.

Site summary: Observations made during NMED's Site reconnaissance are shown on the accompanying figures. One excavated pit borders Haystack Road; erosion of the Haystack Road roadway is being temporarily impeded by concrete barriers, but shows evidence of undercutting (see P1). One pit that was examined by NMED had been used to dump trash and automobiles. Waste piles examined were comprised of limestone; the

highest radioactivity measurement from these materials was 683 counts per second (cps); background is presumed to be 34-41 cps from measurements on-site. Contamination of vicinity soils and surface drainages by precipitative erosion and wind dispersion comprise the primary contaminant pathways that may be associated with this site. Additionally, site runoff of contaminated wastes may impact ground water quality through seepage through alluvium.

Targets: The closest residence to the Site is located off of Haystack Road, approximately 1.15 air-miles to the northwest, from which another residence is visible further to the west. Residences also are located near the junction of State Hwy. 605 and 509, approximately 3 air-miles northeast of the Site. Other potential targets may include cattle and wildlife.

Closest well sampled to date: livestock well SMC-22 (0.5 air-miles; 48.2 µg/l total uranium in 2009 sampling).

Site ownership and Potentially Responsible Parties: Surface rights reportedly are private. Rimrock Mining Company reportedly last operated the mine in 1971.

File review: NMED staff reviewed the following files:

- Database compiled by Mining and Minerals Division of the New Mexico Energy, Minerals, and Natural Resources Department (07/20/2007).
- Anderson, Orin J., 1980. "Abandoned or inactive uranium mines in New Mexico".
- McLemore, Virginia T. and William L. Chenoweth, 1991. "Uranium mines and deposits in the Grants district, Cibola and McKinley Counties, New Mexico." New Mexico Bureau of Mines and Mineral Resources Open-file report 353.
- Rappaport, Linda, "Uranium deposits of the Poison Canyon ore trend, Grants District," in "Geology and technology of the Grants Uranium Region, 1963. State Bureau of Mines and Mineral Resources.
- U.S. Geological Survey, 1997. "Gallup quadrangle NURE HSSR study." OFR-97-492.

Site reconnaissance: NMED staff conducted a Site reconnaissance on July 2, 2009.

Recommendation: A release of CERCLA hazardous substances has been documented at the site. NMED recommends further investigation under CERCLA to assess the risk posed by the site using the Hazard Ranking System.

NMED recommends that the investigation include the following:

1. Sample sediments along drainages to characterize extent of Site-derived waste dispersion.
2. Investigate and characterize surface water accumulations and ground water impacts.

In addition NMED recommends the following actions be performed to address immediate threats to public health and the environment:

1. Remove waste with elevated radioactivity.
2. Stabilize unstable pit highwalls.

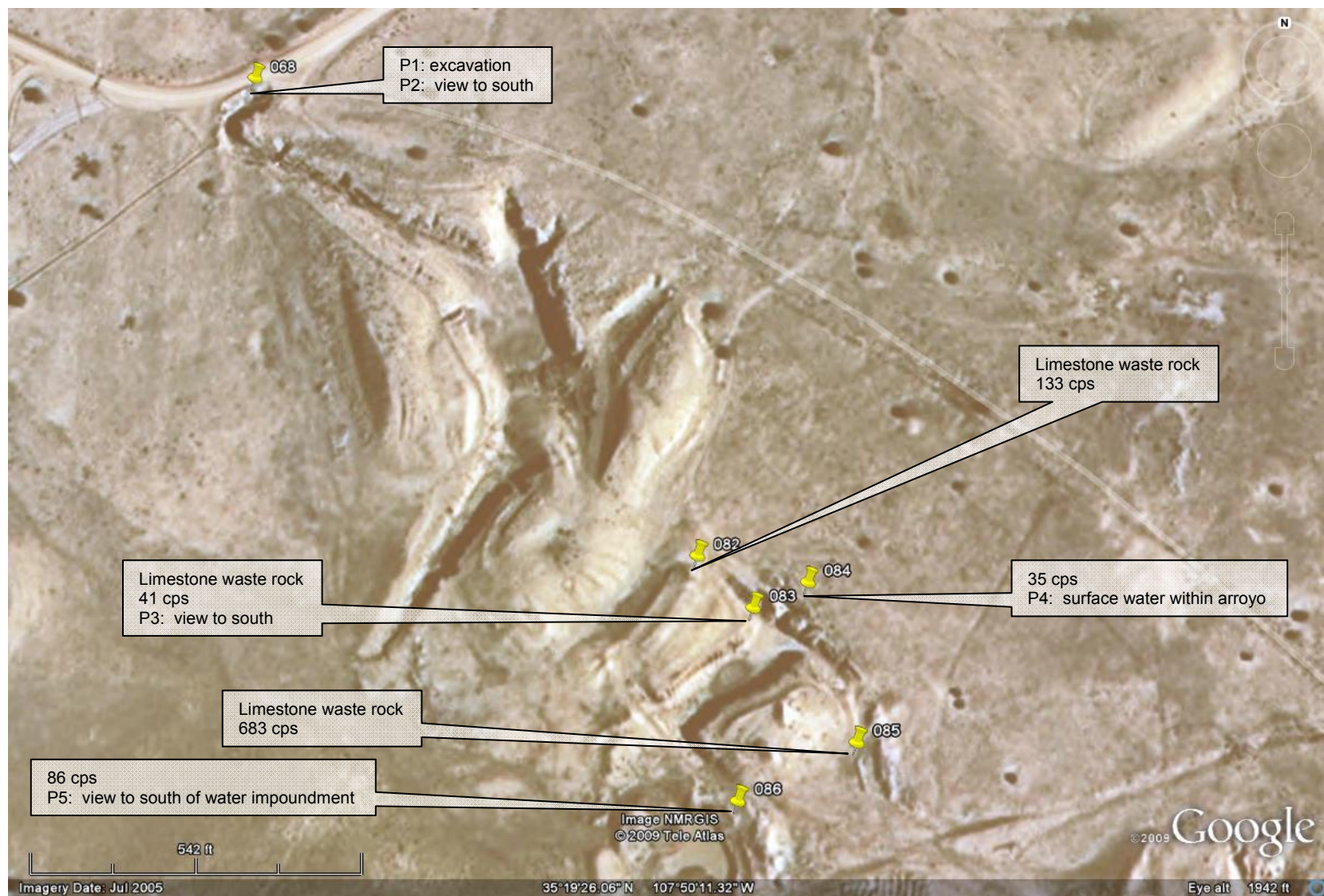


Figure 1: Roundy Manol Strip

“Px” reference the location of photographs on pages following.



P1: Roundy Manol Strip excavation



P2: Roundy Manol Strip view to south



P3: Roundy Manol Strip view to south



P4: Roundy Manol Strip surface water within arroyo

Ms. LaDonna Turner, EPA Region 6 Site Assessment Manager
Pre-CERCLIS Screening Assessment of Roundy Manol Strip Mine, McKinley County, New Mexico
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P5: Roundy Manol Strip view to south of water impoundment