



COUNTY ADMINISTRATOR'S OFFICE

PIMA COUNTY GOVERNMENTAL CENTER
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C.H. HUCKELBERRY
County Administrator

June 29, 2017

Misael Cabrera, PE, Director
Arizona Department of Environmental Quality
1110 W. Washington, Suite 127
Phoenix, Arizona 85007

Re: Triennial Review of State Water Quality Standards

Dear Mr. Cabrera:

In 2005, Pima County requested to protect the waters of Davidson Canyon against future water quality degradation. In 2009, the Arizona Department of Environmental Quality (ADEQ) conferred the State's highest level of water quality protection to Davidson Canyon through a public process called the Triennial Review of State water quality standards.

Davidson Canyon is a rare, spring-fed, low-elevation desert stream located southeast of Tucson, Arizona within the Santa Cruz Watershed. Davidson Canyon has exceptional ecological significance and supports a variety of rare flora and fauna. Davidson Canyon is an important tributary of Cienega Creek, which also enjoys a similar level of protection against addition of new pollutants. The watershed contributes a significant part of the Tucson Active Management Area's water supply.

Davidson Canyon and Cienega Creek are among just 22 statewide waters in Arizona currently protected against future water quality impairment because of their Outstanding Arizona Water (OAW) designation (Attachment 1). This designation has proved troublesome to the mining industry because it limits the State's ability to issue permits to degrade water quality. In fact, the potential for the Highbay Rosemont Mine to degrade water quality and diminish the amount of water available to the OAW has presented a serious concern of the US Army Corps of Engineers as evidenced by the Corps' December 2016 letter (Attachment 2).

In February 2016, Highbay renewed an apparently long-standing request to eliminate the Outstanding Waters designation for Davidson Canyon. In January 2017, Highbay formally requested, and ADEQ agreed to initiate, a new Triennial Review in order to provide a process for removing or revising these designations statewide (Attachment 3).

Mr. Misael Cabrera
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The Triennial Review began last week with a public meeting that my staff attended. No mention was made that this process was motivated by Hudbay's request to review the protective designation of the 22 existing OAW streams. I have since learned of Hudbay's involvement through a public records request related to ongoing litigation.

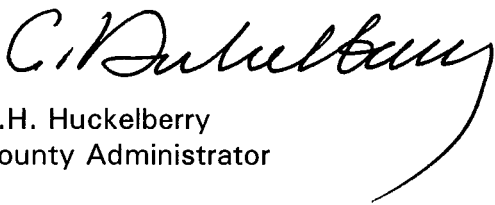
The Hudbay letter demonstrates a desire to diminish the protections of surface waters in Pima County and elsewhere in the State to obtain necessary permits to build the proposed Rosemont Mine.

The January 2017 Hudbay letter requests *"the Department undertake a review of both the rulemaking and listing process...that resulted in the listing of each of the Arizona Surface Waters classified as Outstanding Arizona Waters over the years."* This thinly disguised attempt by Hudbay to reverse the longstanding designation of Davidson Canyon as an OAW should be summarily rejected as a self-serving gesture to facilitate pollution of Arizona surface waters.

It is clear the present review of surface water standards is desired by mining interests to eliminate numerous existing OAW designations, which will make it easier to advance mining activities. Water quality standards are intended to protect Arizona residents, as well as the environment and ecosystem, from surface water degradation resulting from discharge of dangerous pollutants. These standards should not only be upheld, they should be strengthened.

We will vigorously oppose any attempt to remove Davidson Canyon from the present list of OAW in order to facilitate reduced water quality standards.

Sincerely,



C.H. Huckelberry
County Administrator

CHH/lab

Attachments

c: The Honorable Chair and Members, Pima County Board of Supervisors

ATTACHMENT 1

OUTSTANDING ARIZONA WATERS (OAWs)

A.A.C. R18-11-112(G)

1. West Fork of the Little Colorado River, from its headwaters at 33°55'02"/109°33'30" to Government Springs at 33°59'33"/109°27'54" (approximately 9.1 river miles);
2. Oak Creek, from its headwaters at 35°01'30"/111°44'12" to its confluence with the Verde River at 34°40'41"/111°56'30" (approximately 50.3 river miles);
3. West Fork of Oak Creek, from its headwaters at 35°02'44"/111°54'48" to its confluence with Oak Creek at 34°59'14"/111°44'46" (approximately 15.8 river miles);
4. Peeples Canyon Creek, from its headwaters at 34°23'57"/113°19'45" to its confluence with the Santa Maria River at 34°20'36"/113°15'12" (approximately 8.1 river miles);
5. Burro Creek, from its headwaters at 34°52'46.5"/113°05'13.5" to its confluence with Boulder Creek at 34°37'4.5"/113°18'36" (approximately 29.5 miles);
6. Francis Creek, from its headwaters at 34°54'38"/113°20'30" to its confluence with Burro Creek at 34°44'29"/113°14'37" (approximately 22.9 river miles);
7. Bonita Creek, from its boundary of the San Carlos Indian Reservation at 33°03'08"/109°33'41" to its confluence with the Gila River at 32°53'36"/109°28'43" (approximately 14.7 river miles);
8. Cienega Creek, from its confluence with Gardner Canyon and Spring Water Canyon at 31°47'38.5"/110°35'21.5" to the USGS gaging station at 32°02'09"/110°40'34" (approximately 28.3 river miles);
9. Aravaipa Creek, from its confluence with Stowe Gulch at 32°52'10"/110°22'03" to the downstream boundary of the Aravaipa Canyon Wilderness Area at 32°54'23"/110°33'42" (approximately 15.5 river miles);
10. Cave Creek, from its headwaters at 31°50'30"/109°17'04.5" to the Coronado National Forest boundary at 31°54'38"/109°08'40" (approximately 10.4 river miles);
11. South Fork of Cave Creek, from its headwaters at 31°50'20"/109°16'33" to its confluence with Cave Creek at 31°53'04"/109°10'30" (approximately 8.6 river miles);
12. Buehman Canyon Creek, from its headwaters at 32°52'0.5"/110°39'54.5" to its confluence with unnamed tributary at 32°24'31.5"/110°32'08" (approximately 9.8 river miles);
13. Lee Valley Creek, from its headwaters at 33°55'49"/109°31'34" to its confluence with Lee Valley Reservoir at 33°56'28"/109°30'15.5" (approximately 1.6 river miles);
14. Bear Wallow Creek, from its headwaters at 33°35'54"/109°26'54.5" to the boundary of the San Carlos Indian Reservation at 33°37'52"/109°29'44" (approximately 4.25 river miles);
15. North Fork of Bear Wallow Creek, from its headwaters at 33°34'47.5"/109°21'59.5" to its confluence with Bear Wallow Creek at 33°35'54"/109°26'54.5" (approximately 3.8 river miles);
16. South Fork of Bear Wallow Creek, from its headwaters at 33°34'38.5"/109°23'58" to its confluence with Bear Wallow Creek at 33°35'54"/109°26'54.5" (approximately 3.8 river miles);
17. Snake Creek, from its headwaters at 33°37'21.5"/109°26'11" to its confluence with the Black River at 33°40'31.5"/109°28'58.5" (approximately 6.2 river miles);
18. Hay Creek, from its headwaters at 33°51'00"/109°28'48" to its confluence with the West Fork of the Black River at 33°48'30"/109°25'19" (approximately 5.5 river miles);
19. Stinky Creek, from the White Mountain Apache Indian Reservation boundary at 33°52'36.5"/109°29'45" to its confluence with the West Fork of the Black River at 33°51'21.5"/109°27'09.5" (approximately 3.0 river miles);
20. KP Creek, from its headwaters at 33°34'03"/109°21'19" to its confluence with the Blue River at 33°31'44"/109°12'04.5" (approximately 12.7 river miles);
21. Davidson Canyon, from the unnamed spring at 31°59'00"/110°38'46" to its confluence with Cienega Creek; and
22. Fossil Creek, from its headwaters at the confluence of Sandrocks and Calf Pen Canyons above Fossil Springs at 34°26'48.7"/111°32'25" to its confluence with the Verde River at 34°18'21.8"/111°40'31.6" (approximately 17.2 river miles).

ATTACHMENT 2



DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY
SOUTH PACIFIC DIVISION, U.S. ARMY CORPS OF ENGINEERS
1455 MARKET STREET
SAN FRANCISCO, CALIFORNIA 94103-1399

28 DEC 2016

REPLY TO
ATTENTION OF

Commander, South Pacific Division

Mr. Patrick Merrin, Vice President
Hudbay – Arizona Business Unit
Rosemont Copper Company
5255 East Williams Circle
Suite 1065
Tucson, Arizona 85711

Dear Mr. Merrin:

Thank you for your letter dated November 17, 2016, concerning Rosemont Copper Company's ("Rosemont") application for a Department of the Army ("DA") permit to discharge dredged or fill material into waters of the United States associated with its proposed Rosemont Open Pit Copper Mine ("Rosemont Mine"). In the letter you asked for a phone call to discuss an opportunity to respond to Los Angeles District concerns, a confirmation of a site visit and the process for obtaining an approved Jurisdictional Determination ("AJD").

As you recall, we had a call on December 2, 2016. In that call I confirmed the December 6, 2016 site visit, provided a general list of Corps of Engineers ("Corps") concerns with the permit application, and said that an AJD could be requested at any time. I also stated that I planned on issuing a decision as soon as my assessment was complete. I stated that if my decision is to deny the permit, I would provide prior notification about the reasons the application does not meet regulatory requirements and would discuss any measures that could lead to a permit approval.

I also thank you for hosting the Corps on a site visit conducted on December 6, 2016. The opportunity to see the proposed site, the surrounding area and some of the potential mitigation pieces helped me form a clearer picture. As part of my review and evaluation of the documents supporting the District's recommendation, I agreed to schedule a follow-up technical meeting with you and your staff to discuss the application and to provide you an opportunity to address Corps concerns. My team will work with you to set a date for this meeting in January 2017.

In determining whether to issue a DA permit and, if so, in defining its terms, the Corps bases its decision upon the proposal contained in the permit application, including any mitigation plan, and analyses of the proposal prepared by the Corps, other agencies and the applicant itself. My decision will be based on compliance with the Clean Water Act ("CWA") 404(b)(1) guidelines and a determination of public interest factors.

The key CWA 404(b)(1) factors identified by the District that support a permit denial are determinations that the proposed Rosemont Mine will cause or contribute to violations of state water quality standards and significant degradation of waters of the United States, including shortfalls in the proposed compensatory mitigation. Due to the contrary positions of the U.S.

Environmental Protection Agency ("EPA") and the Arizona Department of Environmental Quality, the District was required to make an independent judgement as to impacts of the proposed project on water quality. In this case, the District concluded that implementation of the proposed project would cause or contribute to violations of state water quality standards, and that minimization and mitigation measures, along with proposed monitoring were inadequate to ensure that degradation did not occur. The District further concluded that implementation of the proposed project would result in significant degradation of waters of the United States, as a result of a substantial reduction of functions and services and that the project would contribute to the degradation of Outstanding Arizona Waters. The District concluded that implementation of the proposed project would, among other things, adversely affect sediment delivery, hydrological functions, surface water quality, and use by humans and wildlife, including listed species.

The District also concluded that mitigation proposed to offset project impacts would be inadequate. Specifically, while enhancement parcels would be appropriate and sufficient to mitigate indirect impacts to 123.5 acres of waters of the United States, the permanent loss of 40.4 acres of waters would not be mitigated by the proposed re-establishment at Sonoita Creek Ranch, along with proposed mitigation on Davidson Canyon parcels and on proposed mitigation parcels, located outside of the impacted watersheds. District Regulatory staff worked with Rosemont's team to provide advice about and review of Rosemont's compensatory mitigation efforts. District staff met with Rosemont's team approximately weekly for over a year and frequently throughout the multi-year federal environmental review process. It is my understanding that Rosemont submitted a mitigation plan in April 2014, and after further consultation with the District then submitted a revised final mitigation plan in September 2014. An amended biological opinion, based in part on the September 2014 mitigation plan, was issued by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service in April 2016. The final mitigation plan is being evaluated by the Corps in reaching a final permit decision.

Finally, the District concluded that implementation of the proposed project would be contrary to the public interest. Among the key public interest concerns are adverse effects to cultural resources and traditional cultural properties important to tribes.

Your letter states that you would like the opportunity to respond to the District's concerns. If at any point you intend to modify, supplement or withdraw the proposal, please let me know promptly. Supplementation or any other changes should be in writing. If the proposal were to change, it may be sent back to the District Engineer so that District staff could evaluate the revised proposal and conduct any further analyses that the changes to the proposal might warrant, which may include consulting with other agencies and obtaining comments from the public.

Lastly, your letter raises the subject of the jurisdictional determination of the waters of the United States within the project's footprint. As you know, the Corps' current analysis of the permit application is based upon a preliminary JD that was developed by Rosemont's consultant and accepted by the Corps. Corps regulations at 33 C.F.R. § 320.1(a)(6) authorize district engineers to issue formal determinations of the applicability of the Clean Water Act to tracts of land. As stated in Regulatory Guidance Letter 16-1, the JD requester determines which form of JD, if any, is best for his/her particular circumstance. You may request an approved JD at any time, including before the final permit decision or during an administrative appeal. Depending on

the results of such an investigation, supplementation of the Environmental Impact Statement and a new CWA 401 water quality certification could be required.

As you may know, the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency is the final authority on CWA jurisdiction, but for all practical purposes the Corps makes thousands of JD's annually in executing its Regulatory Program mission. For EPA to make the final determination of the geographic jurisdictional scope of waters of the United States for purposes of section 404 CWA, they must designate a "special case" per our 1989 memorandum of agreement ("MOA") on jurisdiction and 404(f) exemptions. To do so, the EPA Regional Administrator would submit a request for designating a "special case" to EPA Headquarters for approval. If not approved for "special case" designation by EPA Headquarters, the Corps would make the final CWA JD.

In addition, since 2008 for approved JD's only involving a "significant nexus determination", the Corps provides EPA with the draft JD for review. EPA then has 15-days to exercise their "special case" authority per the 1989 MOA. If EPA does not respond within 15-days, the Corps would finalize the approved JD.

I appreciate the opportunity to meet with you and visit the site of the proposed project. Both the site visit and our discussions were helpful in facilitating my understanding of the proposed project. We look forward to addressing questions regarding our review and evaluation of this DA permit application in the technical meeting to be scheduled in January 2017. Mr. Stu Townsley, Chief, Operations and Regulatory Division, will contact you shortly to set the schedule and agenda for that meeting. If you have additional questions, he can be reached at (415) 503-6593.

BUILDING STRONG!

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'D. Peter Helmlinger', with a stylized flourish at the end.

D. Peter Helmlinger, P.E.
Colonel, U.S. Army
Commanding

ATTACHMENT 3



January 10, 2017

Mr. Trevor Baggione, P.E.
Water Quality Division Director
Arizona Department of Environmental Quality
1110 W. Washington
Phoenix, AZ 85007

Re: Triennial Review Rulemaking


Dear Mr. Baggione:

Hudbay has learned that the Arizona Department of Environmental Quality (the Department) has commenced a rulemaking process to review the surface water standards for waters in Arizona (commonly called the Triennial Review process).

In this rulemaking process, Hudbay requests that the Department undertake a review of both the rulemaking and listing process, as well as the historical water quality data underlying those rulemakings, that resulted in the listing of each of the Arizona Surface Waters classified as Outstanding Arizona Waters over the years. Hudbay encourages the Department to include in its review an evaluation of stormwater runoff contributions to intermittent and perennial waters.

Thank you for your consideration, and if you need to reach me I am available via email at Kathy.Arnold@hubbay.com or at (520) 495-3502

Regards,



Katherine Ann Arnold, PE
Director, Environment

Doc. No. 002/17-15.5.6.1



Douglas A. Ducey
Governor

ARIZONA DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY



Misael Cabrera
Director

January 11, 2017

Kathy Arnold
Rosemont Copper Company
5255 E. Williams Circle
Suite W1065
Tucson, AZ 85711

Re: Triennial Review Rulemaking

Dear Ms. Arnold:

The Arizona Department of Environmental Quality (ADEQ) has received your January 10, 2017, letter commenting on ADEQ's periodic review of the surface water standards for waters in Arizona (Triennial Review). To be clear, the review and subsequent rulemaking has not yet commenced. However, we are gathering data and preparing a review calendar.

We appreciate your interest in the process and will certainly include a review of current and historical listing processes, as well as the data which has resulted in the listings of the Outstanding Arizona Waters (OAW). We are interested in providing clarity to areas of the OAW listing process that are ambiguous, including the evaluation of storm water runoff contributions to intermittent and perennial waters.

Again, thank you for your interest.

Sincerely,

Trevor Baggione, Director
Water Quality Division
Arizona Department of Environmental Quality

