

**In the Matter of Draft Discharge Permit DP-200;
Homestake-Barick Gold Mining Company Uranium Mill Site**

**Written Comments of YOUR NAME or NAME OF ORGANIZATION
ADDRESS
EMAIL**

April 29, 2014

Transmitted via email to:
New Mexico Environment Department
Felicia Orth, Hearing Officer
felicia.orth@state.nm.us
Room S2103
1190 St. Francis Drive
Santa Fe, New Mexico 87502

To Whom It May Concern:

**RE: Draft Discharge Permit DP-200; Homestake-Barick Gold Mining
Company Uranium Mill Site**

I believe, **OR NAME OF ORGANIZATION believes** the Discharge Permit DP-200 proposed for the Homestake-Barrick Gold Mining Company Uranium Mill Site contains a number of problems.

This matter is vital to New Mexico because the state needs every drop of water it can get. This contaminated Superfund site needs to be cleaned up in order to restore precious waters. Unfortunately, the discharge permit proposed neither stops the current contamination nor commits adequate and proven resources to a full cleanup of the site.

Homestake wants to discharge up to 5,500 gallons per minute of treated water from its uranium tailings piles, but the treated water is not safe to use. The increased discharge could also endanger the public water supply.

A US Army Corps of Engineers' report recommends that Homestake ends its flushing program at the large tailings pile. The current flushing programs uses a combination of treated water and clean water to flush uranium contaminants from the tailings pile. The flushing program simply dilutes the contamination making it look as though progress is being made. The contaminated water needs to be cleaned and not diluted. This is additional water being waste.

Secretary Flynn has stated that radiation leaks are unacceptable in New Mexico. Therefore, NMED must find a way to stop the exposure of residents near this site to ambient Radon emissions that are 5.5 times the Environmental Protection

Agency's (EPA) acceptable limit, resulting in increased lifetime cancer risks 18 times what the EPA deems acceptable.

NMED and other state and federal regulators must take into account the combined cumulative adverse impacts to our communities from all the uranium legacy sources of pollution in order to achieve environmental justice for our communities.

Cleaning the contaminated water and stopping further pollution is only possible if NMED works seriously with the USEPA, Nuclear Regulatory Commission, and Homestake-Barrick Gold to propose a permit and action plan that cleans the contaminated water and simply dilute it.

New Mexico needs this water. These residents are entitled to environmental justice.

Please reconsider DP-200 and force Homestake Mining Company to develop up a real plan that preserves New Mexico's limited waters and protects our communities.

Sincerely,

YOUR NAME
NAME OF ORGANIZATION
ADDRESS
EMAIL