AHAMAKAV CULTURAL SOCIETY
Fort Mojave Indian Tribe
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January 25, 2016

Mr. Aaron Yue, Project Manager
DEPARTMENT OF TOXIC SUBSTANCES CONTROL
5796 Corporate Avenue
Cypress, California 90630

Ms. Pamela S. Innis
Topock Remedial Project Manager
Office of Environmental Policy and Compliance
U.S. DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
Bureau of Land Management - Arizona State Office
One North Central Avenue, Suite 800
Phoenix, AZ 85004-4427

SUBJECT: Fort Mojave Indian Tribe Comments on the January 13, 2016 *Topock Soil RFI/RI-Plan to Address Data Gaps Identified During Work Plan Implementation (DG-WP-01)*

Dear Mr. Yue and Ms. Innis:

The Fort Mojave Indian Tribe (Tribe) and its consultant Dr. Michael Sullivan have reviewed the PG&E/CH2M document *Topock Soil RFI/RI-Plan to Address Data Gaps Identified During Work Plan Implementation (DG-WP-01)* and also attended the January 21, 2016 site walk at the Topock Compressor Station. The Tribe appreciates the opportunity to continue to participate in the evaluation and selection of soil sample locations as part of the Soils Investigation. As the Tribe has consistently communicated to both oversight agencies, each and every soil sample collection activity is an unalterable intrusion on this site and affects the cultural and religious significance of the area. Therefore, our evaluation of the proposed data gap samples in the above-mentioned memorandum addresses both whether the sample is necessary and also the proposed location of that sample. Our evaluation is identical to that which the Tribe performed during the development of the Soils Investigation Work Plan. The bullets below summarize the Tribe's comments.

- DG-WP-01 proposes 22 new soil sampling locations. These locations each have between 1 to 4 samples proposed, based on sampling depth. These 22 locations are spread among 4 Areas of Concern (AOCs) and storm drain areas. Those proposed sample locations based on visual observation of debris, sub-surface findings using non-invasive techniques (e.g., ground-penetrating radar) or field observations of storm drains are acceptable as proposed in

DG-WP-01. However, the Tribe expects to be able to review and comment on any additional step-out samples that are proposed based on these results.

- Six of the 22 proposed new sample locations are based on the results of XRF screening of surface soil samples. The draft Technical Memorandum did not list either the concentrations that were detected or the criteria that were used to determine that a sample might be needed. The Tribe requests that this information be forwarded to us to enable us to complete our evaluation and that all future data gap technical memorandum include the concentrations of any detected chemical and the associated criteria that are used as the justification for any additional sampling. Dr. Sullivan did request this information at the CWG meeting on January 20, 2016 and while it was provided verbally on January 21 for three samples (AOC10-19, AOC14-18 and AOC 19-11) it was not provided for the remainder (AOC 27-9, AOC 27-20 and AOC 27-27).
- The Tribes notes that the screening criteria cited during the January 21 site walk are the screening criteria listed in Table 2-1 of the Soils Investigation Work Plan. The selected comparison criteria are generally based on the lowest criterion, which is often background. For example, the background value for copper is 16.8 mg/kg and the Residential Screening Level is 3,000 mg/kg. For some of these metals the Residential Screening Criteria are higher and the future Tribal land use-based criteria (if they existed) would be even higher. Therefore, if there is an XRF finding that is above background but below the Residential Screening Levels, the need for additional samples in these locations should receive additional evaluation based on these values. For example, copper was detected using XRF at sample locations AOC 14-8 at an estimated concentration of 88 mg/kg. While it is above the background of 16.8 mg/kg, this is far below the residential Screening Level of 3000 mg/kg. Is a sample really needed at this location?
- The Tribe also notes that sample SD-20 (listed on page 7 of DG-WP-01) was added and already collected. We assume that this was just an oversight by the field team, but in the future the Tribe requests to have the opportunity to review and comment on any soil samples that are added or moved prior to the collection of that sample. If the collection of a particular sample has a critical time component, the Tribe and its consultants can respond in a timely manner so as not to impede the progress of the sampling.

Again, the Tribe appreciates the opportunity to provide input into the need and location of proposed data gap soil samples. While the proposed samples are generally acceptable, our evaluation is incomplete pending the receipt of the missing XRF data.

Sincerely,

Janice Hinkle, Topock Project Manager
Fort Mojave Indian Tribe

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