

**From:** [Hamlet, Robert, EMNRD](#)  
**To:** "Raley, Jim"; Ashley Ager  
**Cc:** [Bratcher, Mike, EMNRD](#); [Venegas, Victoria, EMNRD](#); [Eads, Cristina, EMNRD](#); [Billings, Bradford, EMNRD](#)  
**Subject:** RE: Remediation Denied - WPX - Swearingen #1 - (Incident #NAB1927155176) (ZRP-5628)  
**Date:** Thursday, October 29, 2020 11:27:00 AM  
**Attachments:** [image001.png](#)

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Jim,

I don't agree or disagree with your assumption pertaining to groundwater impact. Since, SB1 hit groundwater at 19.8' and has been temporarily cased, a groundwater sample will probably need to be collected and analyzed for TDS? After we see the results, we can move forward with outlining what type of remediation needs to be accomplished. Please, keep us informed of the results.

Thanks,

Robert J Hamlet  
State of New Mexico  
Energy, Minerals, and Natural Resources  
Oil Conservation Division  
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OCD approval does not relieve the operator of liability should their operations fail to adequately investigate and remediate contamination that may pose a threat to groundwater, surface water, human health or the environment. In addition, OCD approval does not relieve the operator of responsibility for compliance with any other federal, state, or local laws and/or regulations.

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**From:** Raley, Jim <[James.Raley@wpxenergy.com](mailto:James.Raley@wpxenergy.com)>  
**Sent:** Tuesday, October 27, 2020 12:30 PM  
**To:** Hamlet, Robert, EMNRD <[Robert.Hamlet@state.nm.us](mailto:Robert.Hamlet@state.nm.us)>; Ashley Ager <[aager@ltenv.com](mailto:aager@ltenv.com)>  
**Cc:** Bratcher, Mike, EMNRD <[mike.bratcher@state.nm.us](mailto:mike.bratcher@state.nm.us)>; Venegas, Victoria, EMNRD <[Victoria.Venegas@state.nm.us](mailto:Victoria.Venegas@state.nm.us)>; Eads, Cristina, EMNRD <[Cristina.Eads@state.nm.us](mailto:Cristina.Eads@state.nm.us)>; Billings, Bradford, EMNRD <[Bradford.Billings@state.nm.us](mailto:Bradford.Billings@state.nm.us)>  
**Subject:** [EXT] RE: Remediation Denied - WPX - Swearingen #1 - (Incident #NAB1927155176) (ZRP-5628)

Robert,

Thank you for reviewing the remediation plan submitted for **Incident #NAB1927155176 Swearingen #1**. Below is our response to denial of the proposed remediation plan; attached is relevant maps and lab information supporting our response.

- A variance for each composite sample not exceeding 500 ft2 is denied. **WPX accepts this condition and will collect confirmation composite samples at a 200 square foot frequency.**
- The only background sample that follows current protocol is BG01. The other boreholes are on an active well pad or sandwiched between roads and the well pad. The clarification states, "A grab, not composite, sample(s) should be gathered in areas undisturbed by oil and gas activities, nominally uphill from the release area, and no closer than 50 feet but no farther than 100 feet from the lateral and horizontal extents of a release's impact. The Chloride value of 1,300 mg/kg will be the background value that the release should be horizontally/vertically delineated too. **WPX agrees to a background value of 1,300 mg/kg for chloride for remediation. During excavation, WPX will conduct field screening to direct progress. Remediation to 1,300 mg/kg chloride laterally and vertically will be confirmed with laboratory analytical results from excavation confirmation samples collected from the sidewalls and floor at the above-stated frequency.**
- 3 groundwater (monitoring) wells will be required. One in the center of the release, one down gradient, and one up gradient to be used for collecting groundwater samples. The monitoring well up gradient will be placed off pad north of pothole PH07. Convert pothole PH02 to a monitoring well or drill one in very close proximity to this location for the one in the center of the release. Finally, drill a monitoring well about 50 feet southwest of PH09 off pad for the down gradient monitoring well. The groundwater is most likely moving from north to south down toward the river. **WPX disagrees with NMOCD's presumption that groundwater is impacted and requests NMOCD reconsider the requirement to install monitoring wells based on the following clarification and additional information. The vertical extent of impacted soil was defined at PH02 by a sample collected from 10 feet to 12.2 feet bgs in SB01. That sample contained 1,130 mg/kg chloride, which is below the background directed by NMOCD of 1,300 mg/kg. Similarly, vertical delineation was achieved in other potholes and boreholes within the release extent including PH03, PH04, and SB06. WPX acknowledges that the terminal sample collected from SB02 (at the location of PH01) exceeds NMOCD's background concentration. As such, WPX collected additional samples the week of October 5, 2020. Investigative core drilling was conducted utilizing a Shaw Portable Core Drill near PH01/SB02 to supplement vertical delineation within the release source and northeast of PH07 (see attached map). Coreholes were advanced to a total depth of 14 feet below ground surface at CH01 and CH02. Samples were collected for laboratory analysis from the bottom of those coreholes. The laboratory analytical results for chloride indicates the vertical extent of impact at PH01/SB02 is just below 11 feet, similar to the previous findings in SB01. No saturated soil was identified in any borehole except the borehole drilled to investigate groundwater. Saturated soil appeared at 19 feet bgs in that borehole and groundwater was measured at approximately 19.7 feet bgs. Those results suggest there is greater than 7 feet of soil between the deepest observed impacted soil and groundwater. Similarly, the laboratory analytical results from CH02 indicate impacted soil near PH07 does not extend to the depth of groundwater. Migration of residual chloride concentrations is likely restricted by the noted conglomerate layer. Vertical delineation to 1,300 mg/kg chloride or below has been achieved within the release extent.**

Based on this information, WPX requests to proceed as soon as possible with the original remediation work plan under the condition that background chloride is 1,300 mg/kg for chloride. Additional areas exceeding this value will be addressed simultaneously with remediation activities.

**Jim Raley** | Environmental Specialist - Permian Basin  
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**From:** Hamlet, Robert, EMNRD <[Robert.Hamlet@state.nm.us](mailto:Robert.Hamlet@state.nm.us)>  
**Sent:** Monday, September 28, 2020 3:29 PM  
**To:** Raley, Jim <[james.ralej@wpxenergy.com](mailto:james.ralej@wpxenergy.com)>; Ashley Ager <[aager@ltenv.com](mailto:aager@ltenv.com)>  
**Cc:** Bratcher, Mike, EMNRD <[mike.bratcher@state.nm.us](mailto:mike.bratcher@state.nm.us)>; Venegas, Victoria, EMNRD <[Victoria.Venegas@state.nm.us](mailto:Victoria.Venegas@state.nm.us)>; Eads, Cristina, EMNRD <[Cristina.Eads@state.nm.us](mailto:Cristina.Eads@state.nm.us)>; Billings, Bradford, EMNRD <[Bradford.Billings@state.nm.us](mailto:Bradford.Billings@state.nm.us)>  
**Subject:** [EXTERNAL] Remediation Denied - WPX - Swearingen #1 - (Incident #NAB1927155176) (ZRP-5628)

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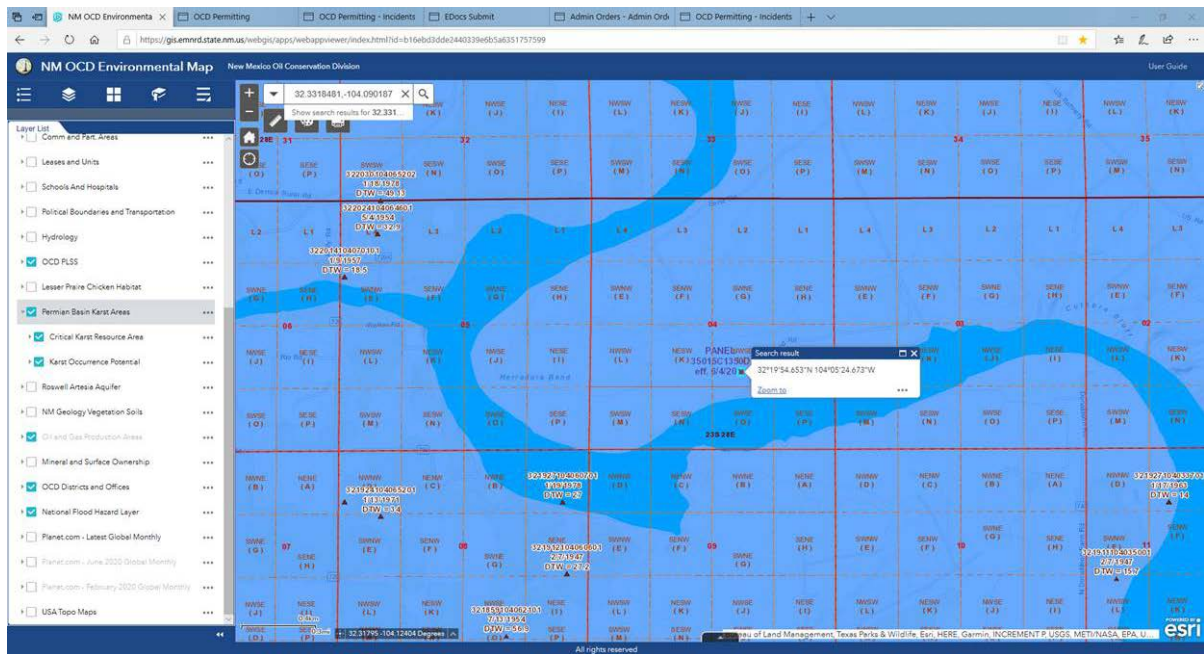
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James and Ashley,

We have received your Workplan/Remediation Proposal for **Incident #NAB1927155176 Swearingen #1**, thank you. This Workplan/Remediation proposal is denied. Sometime in the near future we will all need to get on a call and discuss this release. With high chloride levels on potholes PH01 and PH02 at 8' and 8.5' and the groundwater table measured at 19.8', it's likely groundwater has been impacted. I will try to get Brad Billings to join the call and assist in answering any questions.

- A variance for each composite sample not exceeding 500 ft2 is denied.
- The only background sample that follows current protocol is BG01. The other boreholes are on an active well pad or sandwiched between roads and the well pad. The clarification states, "A grab, not composite, sample(s) should be gathered in areas undisturbed by oil and gas activities, nominally uphill from the release area, and no closer than 50 feet but no farther than 100 feet from the lateral and horizontal extents of a release's impact. The Chloride value of 1,300 mg/kg will be the background value that the release should be horizontally/vertically delineated too.
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- Please apply for the permits on the 3 monitoring wells with the OSE Office as quickly as possible. A 90 extension will be granted to apply for the permits and to move forward on drilling the monitoring wells. Samples will need to be taken as quickly as possible after the monitoring wells are installed. This will give us insight into the groundwater impact and whether additional steps need to be taken.

Please let me know if you have any further questions.

Regards,

Robert J Hamlet  
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Energy, Minerals, and Natural Resources  
Oil Conservation Division  
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