

## **Griswold, Jim, EMNRD**

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**From:** Natalie Gordon <nataliengordon@hotmail.com>  
**Sent:** Tuesday, February 25, 2020 11:38 AM  
**To:** Griswold, Jim, EMNRD; Bratcher, Mike, EMNRD  
**Subject:** [EXT] Notification of Potential Release - 24-hour  
**Attachments:** Simple Location Figure.pdf

Mike and Jim,

Please accept this email as official 24-hour notification of a potential release of bentonite-based drilling mud into the Black River, approximately 1/2 mile due west of Hwy 285, equidistant between Loving and Malaga, New Mexico. Matador Production Company, who has been boring in this area for roughly 8 weeks, was first notified of an issue by a landowner late Monday morning, February 24, 2020. The landowner had noticed some cloudiness in the river downstream of the boring site. Matador identified an anomaly in the Black River approximately 30 yards upstream of their boring location, where it looked like river sand or silt was being released from the stream floor. They commenced casing the borehole immediately with piping and notified Vertex Resource Group of the issue. Vertex dispatched an environmental technician to the site on Monday afternoon to collect water samples both upstream of the anomaly as well as at the anomaly for lab analyses. Lab data should be available in approximately 24-36 hours. The only material being used within the borehole is a 23:1 mix of Wyoming Bentonite Drilling clay to soda ash so there is minimal concern for hydrocarbons or other contaminants to be present in the surface water. Based on a visit and observation by a New Mexico Game Warden, the main impact may be on the fish from the turbidity resulting from this anomaly. Whether this is a release of the drilling mud from a fissure or the disturbance of river bottom by pressure resulting from the nearby boring activities has yet to be determined.

I have included a rough map showing the borehole location and the location of the river anomaly along with their respective coordinates, with this email. A full C-141 Release notification will be submitted as soon as feasible. Verbal notifications have been made to the New Mexico Environmental Department and will be made to the National Response Center.

If you have any questions regarding this matter, please call me at 505-506-0040.

Thank you,  
Natalie

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