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 DIVISION OF OIL, GAS AND MINING

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July 25, 2002

TO: Internal File

FROM: Gregg A. Galecki, Sr. Reclamation Specialist; Hydrology, Team Lead *AA*

RE: Midterm Permit Review, Nevada Electric Investment Company (NEICO),  
 Wellington Prep Plant, C/007/012-MT02

**SUMMARY:**

Elements selected for review during the Midterm were outlined in the Division's letter to Nevada Electric Investment Company's resident agent, Patrick Collins on June 17, 2002. Item #3 is discussed in this memo. The elements reviewed in this memo include ensuring that the Plan contains commitments for application of the best technology currently available (BTCA) to prevent additional contributions of suspended solids to stream flows outside of the permit area. A review of the Plan was conducted independent of a field visit. Steven Demczak (Inspector) is on site on a monthly basis. The contribution of suspended solids to steam flow outside the permit area was the primary focus of a technical visit attended by Division and Permittee personnel on August 6, 2002. This review indicates the permit adequately addresses the requirements to prevent additional contributions of suspended solids to stream flow outside the permit area.

**TECHNICAL ANALYSIS:**

**OPERATION PLAN**

**HYDROLOGIC INFORMATION**

Regulatory Reference: 30 CFR Sec. 773.17, 774.13, 784.14, 784.16, 784.29, 817.41, 817.42, 817.43, 817.45, 817.49, 817.56, 817.57; R645-300-140, -300-141, -300-142, -300-143, -300-144, -300-145, -300-146, -300-147, -300-147, -300-148, -301-512, -301-514, -301-521, -301-531, -301-532, -301-533, -301-536, -301-542, -301-720, -301-731, -301-732, -301-733, -301-742, -301-743, -301-750, -301-761, -301-764.

TECHNICAL MEMO

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**Analysis:**

**Sediment control measures**

A total of seven Alternate Sediment Control Areas (ASCA's) regulate the amount of sediment leaving the Disturbed Area of the permit. The six sedimentation ponds on the site also help in controlling sediment runoff from the site. All seven ASCA's were evaluated during the Technical Visit conducted on August 6, 2002, and determined to be performing adequately.

A detailed inspection of the ASCA's and sediment controls was conducted during the regular monthly inspection conducted July 28, 2002, by Steven Demczak. Modifications outlined during that inspection were addressed during the current inspection.

**Sedimentation ponds.**

The sediment ponds, covered under UPDES permits UTG040011-003 through 008 have illustrated only one discharge on the Division database since 1991. Until late-May early-June 2002, the ponds east of the Price River were allowed to dry up through transevaporation. In an effort to reduce air-borne dust and demonstrate use of existing water rights, the Clearwater pond, Lower Refuse basin, and Upper Refuse basin were pumped with water and allowed to fill.

In a possibly related issue, a majority of the monitoring wells surrounding these ponds have shown a drop in water level over the past 2-years of 20-25 percent, while water level elevations in wells west of the river have remained constant or risen approximately 10-15 percent. The drop in water elevation could possibly be related to the drying of the ponds. While water levels have decrease, water quality has remained constant. If the operator continues to pump water into the ponds, it will be interesting to note if there is a corresponding rise in the water elevation in the wells.

The Siaperas ditch, located on the eastern border of the property is dry for the first time in many years. An inspection of the ditch immediately adjacent to the pond showed no indication of leakage from the pond into the ditch. Inspector Steven Demczak commits to checking this during September, and on a regular basis to look for signs of seepage from the pond.

**Finding:**

Information provided in the MRP adequately addresses the minimum requirements of the Hydrologic Information – Sedimentation pond section of the regulations.

**RECOMMENDATION:**

Proceed with the approval of the midterm review.

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