



MICHELLE LUJAN GRISHAM
GOVERNOR

JAMES C. KENNEY
CABINET SECRETARY

Certified Mail - Return Receipt Requested

September 20, 2022

Colonel Terence G. Taylor
Commander, 27th Special Operations Wing
100 Air Commando Way, Suite 100
Cannon Air Force Base
New Mexico 88103-5214

**RE: APPROVAL WITH MODIFICATIONS
SWMU 109 RFI WORK PLAN-REVISION 1
CANNON AIR FORCE BASE, NEW MEXICO
EPA ID #NM7572124454
HWB-CAFB-19-002**

Dear Colonel Taylor:

The New Mexico Environment Department (NMED) has received the Cannon Air Force Base (Permittee) *SWMU [Solid Waste Management Unit] 109 RFI Work Plan-Revision 1* (Work Plan), dated June 18, 2020. NMED has reviewed the Report and hereby issues this Approval with the following modifications.

MODIFICATIONS

1. Title Page

NMED Comment: Remove "RCRA Facility Assessment" from the Work Plan title page and provide a replacement title page.

2. Section 1.2, Purpose and Scope, Page 1-1

Permittee Statement: "The purpose of the RFI [RCRA Facility Investigation] is to address the data gaps identified, delineate the nature and extent of contamination at SWMU 109 and identify the area requiring corrective action to achieve Corrective Action Complete (CAC) without Controls."

NMED Comment: The lack of complete information for the delineation of per- and polyfluoroalkyl substances (PFAS) contamination in the vadose zone and groundwater at SWMU 109 is a significant data gap and must be investigated under the December 2018 *Cannon Air Force Base Resource Conservation and Recovery Act Permit* (Permit). PFAS is an

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emerging contaminant that meets the statutory definition for hazardous waste defined in New Mexico Hazardous Waste Act Section 74-4-3.K, Section 1004(5) of the Solid Waste Disposal Act, and Section 6903(5) of the Resource Conservation and Recovery Act and are defined as such in the Permit as required by 40 Code of Federal Regulations 270.32(b)(2) for protection of human health and the environment.

NMED's June 2022 *Risk Assessment Guidance for Site Investigations and Remediation* (RA Guidance) requires that PFAS be addressed in risk assessments quantitatively (see RA Guidance Summary of Changes table) and respective screening levels are provided in RA Guidance Table A-1, NMED Screening Levels. A current list of PFAS constituents that must be evaluated when sampling environmental media for site investigations is outlined in RA Guidance Section 5.4, PFAS (See Table 5-2, PFAS Analyte List), including four additional replacement chemicals GenX, Adona, and F35b major and minor. RA Guidance Table A-1 currently includes applicable screening levels for the evaluation of soil, the soil-to-groundwater pathway, and tap water for twelve of twenty-four PFAS listed on RA Guidance Table 5-2, and it is expected that regulatory screening levels and guidance will be updated as additional toxicity data becomes available.

The Permittee's intent to continue PFAS investigation at Cannon Air Force Base (CAFB) under a "Comprehensive Environmental Response Compensation and Liability Act (CERCLA)-like process" will likely not result in the collection of data adequate for use in the risk assessment required for corrective action status determinations for SWMUs and Areas of Concern that are regulated by the Permit.

However, with consideration for the current regulatory circumstance for PFAS, the Permittee may proceed with the scope of work proposed in the Work Plan. NMED continues to require comprehensive investigation and assessment of PFAS contamination at SWMU 109, a likely source area for these contaminants.

Based on the outstanding and significant data gap concerning PFAS, SWMU 109 (Fire Department Training Area No. 4) is not eligible for a corrective action status review and will remain on Table 1, List of Solid Waste Management Units and Areas of Concern Requiring Corrective Action of the Permit until it has been determined that all contaminants of concern have been addressed.

The Work Plan must be revised to remove reference to any prospective corrective action status determination for SWMU 109 and to address the outstanding site assessment issues pertaining to PFAS. The Work Plan must be revised accordingly, and respective replacement pages must be provided. Failure to revise the Work Plan accordingly may result in disapproval of the subsequent investigation report and the potential for enforcement action.

3. Section 1.6, Project Schedule, Page 1-8

NMED Comment: Revise the Work Plan to update the project schedule and provide a replacement page.

4. Section 5.3.3, Surface Soil Analytical Sample Collection, Page 5-6

NMED Comment: The following section issues must be addressed:

- a. For surface soil samples, the Work Plan must be revised to specify the use of United States Environment Protection Agency (USEPA) Method 8270 with selected ion monitoring (SIM) or an equivalent method for evaluation of polycyclic aromatic hydrocarbons (PAHs) to ensure that the analytical data is acceptable for comparison to their regulatory screening levels. Ensure that this issue is also addressed in Work Plan Section 5.4.3, Subsurface Soil Analytical Sample Collection, for subsurface soil. Revise the Work Plan accordingly and provide replacement pages and tables.
- b. The Permittee stated that “[b]ased on the contaminants identified by prior investigations, site specific analytical parameters will be selected from the following: VOCs [volatile organic compounds], SVOCs [semi-volatile organic compounds], TAL [total analyte list] metals, TPH [total petroleum hydrocarbon]-DRO [diesel range organics], and/or TPH-ORO [oil range organics].” All surface soil samples collected for TPH analysis must be analyzed for DRO, ORO, and gasoline range organics (GRO) in addition to the proposed analyses for VOCs, SVOCs, and TAL metals. Ensure that this issue is also addressed in Work Plan Section 5.4.3, Subsurface Soil Analytical Sample Collection, for subsurface soil. Any reduction in analytical suites must be supported by data and approved by NMED prior to any changes. Revise the section discussion to specify this requirement and provide replacement pages.

Failure to revise the Work Plan as required by NMED will likely result in disapproval of the subsequent investigation report, the potential for enforcement action, and the requirement to conduct an appropriate investigation as directed.

5. Appendix B, Analytical Laboratory Information: Reference Limits and Evaluation Tables and Containers, Preservation, and Hold Times, Pages 1 through 10

NMED Comment: The following issues must be addressed as follows:

- a. Reference to the Quality Assurance Project Plan (QAPP) must be removed from all Appendix B tables and the tables revised to reference the scope of work proposed in the Work Plan. Include any applicable updates as required by this response letter. The tables must be revised accordingly, and replacement tables provided.

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- b. Include an up-to-date laboratory accreditation certificate for the sample analysis laboratory analytical contractor and provide replacement pages.

The Permittee must provide replacement pages that address NMED's modifications to the Work Plan. In addition, a response letter that addresses the modifications must be provided. The response letter must indicate where each of the modifications was addressed in the revised Work Plan. The response letter must also be provided as an electronic copy. Electronic copies of the redline-strikeout version of the Work Plan and the revised Work Plan must be submitted to NMED no later than **November 30, 2022**.

The RFI report documenting the proposed investigation must be submitted to NMED for review no later than **August 31, 2023**.

This approval is based on the information presented in the document as it relates to the objectives of the work identified by NMED at the time of review. Approval of this document does not constitute agreement with all information, or every statement presented in the document.

If you have any questions regarding this letter, please contact Gabriel Acevedo at (505) 690-5760.

Sincerely,

Rick Shean

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Shean
Date: 2022.09.20 14:43:16
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Rick Shean
Chief
Hazardous Waste Bureau

cc: D. Cobrain, NMED HWB
B. Wear, NMED HWB
G. Acevedo, NMED HWB
L. King, EPA Region 6 (6LCRRC)
L. Dunahee, CAFB
C. Gierke, CAFB
C. Soto-Lorenzo
J. Burgoon

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