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Natural Resources Trustee, Silver City announce agreement to protect groundwater

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The state Office of the National Resources Trustee and Silver City have announced an agreement that will provide \$1.3 million to extend sewer service and end the threat of potential groundwater contamination to neighborhoods in the Southwest New Mexico town.

The project will be the eighth restoration effort using funding from a \$13 million settlement from a lawsuit with Freeport McMoRan Inc., a mining company that operated in that area for decades.

A 2011 consent decree compensates area residents for groundwater issues caused by the copper mines near Silver City.

The Indian Hills Sewer Line Extension Project will protect groundwater by extending municipal sewer lines and decommission existing septic systems. It also will eliminate threats to homes with faulty on-site septic systems, according to a news release from the Office of the National Resources Trustee.

"This project builds on ongoing efforts to protect the Silver City region's precious groundwater resources for current users and for future generations," said Natural Resources trustee Maggie Hart Stebbins. "Once complete, the new infrastructure will reduce contamination and provide immediate and long-lasting benefits to area residents."

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Editor