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DENR orders strict monitoring of mining activities in Quirino, Nueva Vizcaya

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The Department of Environment and Natural Resources in Region 2 (DENR-Cagayan Valley) has ordered environment officials in Quirino and Nueva Vizcaya provinces to conduct regular assessment of the mining companies under their jurisdiction if they are actually complying with the terms and conditions of the tree-cutting and earth-balling permits issued them.

DENR-Cagayan Valley Regional Executive Director Gwendolyn Bambalan issued the order after she herself visited the mining project sites of OceanaGold Philippines Inc. and FCF Minerals last August 18-19.

Both mining firms presented to Bambalan certificate of their compliance with the terms stipulated on their tree-cutting permits that include the replacement of each tree cut with 100 seedlings of indigenous species and to rehabilitate two hectares for every hectare mined as contribution to the National Greening Program (NGP) and climate change initiatives of the government.

The seedlings will be planted by the permittee within non-mineable areas, mined out areas or other areas jointly identified by the mining companies and the DENR.

“To ensure better results, we proposed that instead of seedlings only, the DENR and mining companies can enter into agreement for the adoption of NGP areas without funding from our agency for maintenance and protection,” Bambalan said in a statement.

She added that the community environment and natural officers will identify the sites and the cost of seedlings, plantation establishment, and maintenance and protection to be borne by the mining companies.

“The planted seedlings will be maintained by the permittee for a period of three years with a survival rate of at least 80 percent,” she said.

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