

Rock Energy asks DENR chief anew to lift suspension order

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BY JAMES KONSTANTIN GALVEZ, TMT ON FEBRUARY 21, 2017 COMPANIES

THE operator of a coal stockpile in Vitas, Tondo, Manila has appealed anew to Environment Secretary Regina “Gina” Lopez to lift the suspension of their Environmental Compliance Certificate (ECC).

In a letter to Lopez, Rock Energy International Corp. managing director Carl Fontanilla reiterated that they have already complied with the conditions imposed by the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR).

Fontanilla pointed out that the DENR’s Environmental Management Bureau-National Capital Region (EMB-NCR) headed by Director Visminda Osorio has inspected their coal facility several times, together with the EMB-Central’s Quick Response Team (EQRT) and other multi-sector groups.

“Both technical teams of EMB-NCR and the EQRT recommended for the lifting of the suspension of our ECC. However, to date, our request is not being acted [upon] accordingly by Director Osorio of EMB-NCR,” Fontanilla told Lopez.

“It is in view of the above that we are appealing to your office for immediate favorable action for the lifting of the suspension of Rock Energy ECC,” Fontanilla said.

He also requested for a meeting with Lopez, preferably at the Vitas Industrial Estate where their coal storage is located, so that the DENR chief can “personally appreciate that the temporary coal storage area is not adverse but is rather an essential part of an efficient logistics supply chain to essential industries in nation building.”

This is the second time that Fontanilla sent a letter to Lopez. In an earlier letter on December 15, he said the company has fully complied with the specific conditions set forth in the Notice of Violation issued to them by the DENR-EMB.

Located at Lot 3-G Earnville, Vitas Industrial Estate in Vitas, Tondo, Rock Energy’s mineral products storage and handling facility had been the subject of complaints by residents of Barangay 105, who claimed that coal dust from the facility exposed them to serious health risks such as respiratory diseases.

In response, the DENR on June 24, 2015 suspended the firm’s ECC (NCR-1405-0199), effectively shutting down the stockyard.

Rock Energy pointed out that it has already installed various pollution control systems at the facility —more than what was required by the EMB—and that the inspection teams have recommended their reopening.

Rock Energy, a trading and logistics firm based in Port Area, Manila, is involved in coal and mineral distribution, supplying mineral resources to leading manufacturers such as cement and glass companies.

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