

MCMORAN EXPLORATION CO /DE/  
 Form 3  
 January 07, 2011

**FORM 3 UNITED STATES SECURITIES AND EXCHANGE COMMISSION**  
**Washington, D.C. 20549**

OMB APPROVAL

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**INITIAL STATEMENT OF BENEFICIAL OWNERSHIP OF SECURITIES**

Filed pursuant to Section 16(a) of the Securities Exchange Act of 1934,  
 Section 17(a) of the Public Utility Holding Company Act of 1935 or Section  
 30(h) of the Investment Company Act of 1940

(Print or Type Responses)

|   |         |          |  |  |  |  |
|---|---------|----------|--|--|--|--|
| 1. Name and Address of Reporting Person * |         |          | 2. Date of Event Requiring Statement                     |  | 3. Issuer Name <b>and</b> Ticker or Trading Symbol         |  |
| ^ FREEPORT MCMORAN COPPER & GOLD INC      |         |          | (Month/Day/Year)   |  | MCMORAN EXPLORATION CO /DE/ [MMR]                          |  |
| (Last)                                    | (First) | (Middle) | 4. Relationship of Reporting Person(s) to Issuer         |  | 5. If Amendment, Date Original Filed(Month/Day/Year)       |  |
| 333 N. CENTRAL AVENUE                     |         |          | (Check all applicable)                                   |  | 6. Individual or Joint/Group Filing(Check Applicable Line) |  |
| PHOENIX,^ AZ^ 85004                       |         |          | ___ Director ___X___ 10% Owner                           |  | ___ Form filed by One Reporting Person                     |  |
| (City)                                    | (State) | (Zip)    | ___ Officer ___ Other (give title below) (specify below) |  | _X_ Form filed by More than One Reporting Person           |  |

**Table I - Non-Derivative Securities Beneficially Owned**

|                                 |   |  |   |
|---------------------------------|---|--|---|
| 1. Title of Security (Instr. 4) | 2. Amount of Securities Beneficially Owned (Instr. 4) | 3. Ownership Form: Direct (D) or Indirect (I) (Instr. 5) | 4. Nature of Indirect Beneficial Ownership (Instr. 5) |
|---------------------------------|---|--|---|

Reminder: Report on a separate line for each class of securities beneficially owned directly or indirectly. SEC 1473 (7-02)

**Persons who respond to the collection of information contained in this form are not required to respond unless the form displays a currently valid OMB control number.**

**Table II - Derivative Securities Beneficially Owned (e.g., puts, calls, warrants, options, convertible securities)**

|  |  |   |  |  |   |
|--|--|---|--|--|---|
| 1. Title of Derivative Security (Instr. 4) | 2. Date Exercisable and Expiration Date (Month/Day/Year) | 3. Title and Amount of Securities Underlying Derivative Security (Instr. 4) | 4. Conversion or Exercise Price of Derivative Security | 5. Ownership Form of Derivative Security: Direct (D) or Indirect (I) | 6. Nature of Indirect Beneficial Ownership (Instr. 5) |
|  | Date Exercisable      Expiration Date                    | Title      Amount or Number of Shares                                       |  |  |   |

(Instr. 5)

5 3/4% Convertible  
 Perpetual Preferred Stock, Series 2  (1)  (1) Common Stock 31,250,000 \$ 16 D

## Reporting Owners

| Reporting Owner Name / Address  | Relationships            |                                     |                          |                          |
|---|--------------------------|-------------------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|
|   | Director                 | 10% Owner                           | Officer                  | Other                    |
| FREEMPORT MCMORAN COPPER & GOLD INC<br>333 N. CENTRAL AVENUE<br>PHOENIX, AZ 85004 | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Freeport-McMoRan Preferred LLC<br>333 N. CENTRAL AVENUE<br>PHOENIX, AZ 85004      | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |

## Signatures

Douglas N. Currault II, Authorized  
Officer

01/07/2011

Signature of Reporting Person

Date

## Explanation of Responses:

- \* If the form is filed by more than one reporting person, *see* Instruction 5(b)(v).
- \*\* Intentional misstatements or omissions of facts constitute Federal Criminal Violations. *See* 18 U.S.C. 1001 and 15 U.S.C. 78ff(a).

(1) On December 30, 2010, Freeport-McMoRan Copper & Gold Inc., through its wholly owned subsidiary Freeport-McMoRan Preferred LLC, purchased 500,000 shares of the Issuer's 5 3/4% Convertible Perpetual Preferred Stock, Series 2 (the "Preferred Stock"). The Preferred Stock is convertible at any time, at the holder's election, into 31,250,000 shares of the Issuer's common stock, subject to applicable anti-dilution adjustments, and has no expiration date.

Note: File three copies of this Form, one of which must be manually signed. If space is insufficient, *See* Instruction 6 for procedure. Potential persons who are to respond to the collection of information contained in this form are not required to respond unless the form displays a currently valid OMB number.