

From: Rosetta Virgilio
To: Internet:rcook@Oneida-Nation.org
Date: Thu, May 11, 2000 6:46 PM
Subject: Indian Country Today - Followup

Dear Ray,

It was good to talk with you this afternoon about your work with Indian Country Today - I look forward to receiving a copy. In followup to our telecon, I am providing a few links to NRC's website which I think may be of interest to you and your readership.

As we discussed, Tribal government interest has increased in recent years in areas where NRC regulates. Our name change to Office of State and Tribal Programs (STP) was announced April 12, 2000 and sent to the 250 Federally-recognized Tribes, among others (see the Press Release at <http://www.nrc.gov/OPA/gmo/nrarcv/00-067.html>).

Again, the new name is not intended to affect existing relationships and communications between NRC program offices and States and Tribes on specific technical issues. Our plan is to continue to communicate with Tribes on a government-to-government and case-by-case basis. STP will serve as the first point of contact for State and Tribal governments and national State and Tribal organizations, as well as have responsibility for the development and implementation of policies on cooperation with State and Tribal governments. We will also add the Tribes to our email list server to receive information of interest. Paul Lohaus is the STP Director, Fred Combs is the Deputy Director and I am the primary staff contact within STP. My backup here in NRC's headquarters office in Rockville, Maryland is Spiros Droggitis. We also have 5 Regional Liaison Officers located throughout the country. You can pick up our contact information (phone and e-mail) from our STP Website (do note that we are in the midst of updating our home page - more to come!): <http://www.hsrdo.ornl.gov/nrc/home.html>.

It seems that transportation is of great interest to Tribes. NRC does not approve transportation routes. We do, however, approve the shipping containers in which large quantities of nuclear waste is packaged. You may be interested in browsing the NRC Home Page for further info on NRC's mission and areas of responsibility: <http://www.nrc.gov/>. Within the home page, you will find other links to Commission news and activities, including rulemaking plans, and information on nuclear waste transportation, storage, disposal, and emergency response. (<http://www.nrc.gov/NRC/radwaste.html>; <http://www.nrc.gov/NRC/radprotect.html>).

You will find of particular interest the following undertakings:

NRC published for public comment an advanced notice of proposed rulemaking (ANPR) on December 21, 1999 (64 FR 71331), that would require licensees to notify Federall recognized Native American Tribes of shipments of certain types of high-level radioactive waste, including spent nuclear fuel, before the shipments are transported to or across the boundary of Tribal lands. In a letter to the Secretary of the Commission, dated March 1, 2000, the National Congress of American Indians requested a 90-day extension of the comment period (which expired March 22, 2000). In view of the importance of the issues described in the ANPR and the information needed to resolve these issues, the comment period was extended and will expire July 5, 2000. See the following site for more information: http://ruleforum.llnl.gov/cgi-bin/rulemake?source=NAT_ANPR

The Package Performance Study (Modal Study II) will take a look at spent fuel shipping container response to severe highway and railway accidents. See <http://ttd.sandia.gov/nrc/modal.htm>. Over the next few years, NRC will seek public input as we revisit the conclusions of the 1987 Modal Study, which examined the robustness of spent nuclear fuel transportation casks in severe accidents. Two meetings have been held thus far (11/1/799 in Bethesda, MD and 12/8/99 in Henderson, NV). Ongoing public interactions will help ensure that public concerns are effectively identified, understood and considered. The next series of meetings will be announced in the Federal Register; we will notify States and Tribes of the details.

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In parallel with the package performance study, NRC is also planning an update to 10 CFR Part 71, Packaging and Transportation of Radioactive Material. A series of public meetings will be scheduled to discuss this rulemaking. Again, we will notify States and Tribes when the information is published in the Federal Register. In the interim, you may want to visit the following site, which contains Part 10 of the Code of Federal Regulations pertaining to NRC: <http://www.nrc.gov/NRC/CFR/index.html>.

Please contact me if you have any further questions. I look forward to hearing from you.

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CC: Cameron, Francis, Combs, Frederick, Droggitis, S...