



COGEMA

Mining, Inc.

**LICENSE SUA-1341
DOCKET NO. 40-8502**

November 10, 2000

Mr. Phillip Ting, Chief
Fuel Cycle Licensing Branch
Division of Fuel Cycle Safety and Safeguards, NMSS
U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission
Mail Stop 8A33
Washington, D.C. 20555

RE: Request to Amend License to Possession Only Status

Dear Mr. Ting:

As you and your staff are aware, COGEMA Mining, Inc. ceased uranium production activities at our Christensen ISL mine earlier this year and have been in full restoration since July (reference: COGEMA letter to Mr. Phillip Ting dated September 7, 2000). Continued development and production at the Christensen mine cannot be justified in such a severely depressed uranium market with no foreseeable hope for recovery. Our Irigaray mine has been in restoration since the completion of mining in 1994. As we noted in our September 7 letter to you, we expect the groundwater restoration operations at both sites to be completed by year 2005 with final decommissioning slated for 2005 and 2006.

Because of the change in status from production to reclamation, we feel that maintenance of an operational license is no longer necessary. Accordingly, we hereby request NRC to amend License SUA-1341 to allow restoration and reclamation related activities only. Because residual uranium is recovered and accumulated as a part of the groundwater treatment, we ask that the license allow possession of uranium as a byproduct of the restoration process.

As a consequence of our reclamation status, it is also requested that we be exempted from the Annual Fee requirements of 10 CFR Part 171 beginning with NRC's Fiscal Year 2001 (\$111,000). This is similar to our Pathfinder Mines Corporation reclamation sites (Licenses SUA-442 and SUA-672) that do not pay annual fees.

Your assistance with this license amendment request is appreciated, and please do not hesitate to call with any questions.

Sincerely,

Donna L. Wichers
General Manager