

December 4, 2002

Ms. Suzi Pengilly Neitzel
Deputy State Historic Preservation Officer
Idaho State Historical Society
210 Main Street
Boise, ID 83702-5642

SUBJECT: INITIATION OF THE NATIONAL HISTORIC PRESERVATION ACT SECTION
106 PROCESS FOR THE PROPOSED IDAHO SPENT FUEL FACILITY

Dear Ms. Pengilly Neitzel:

Foster Wheeler Environmental Corporation (FWENC) has submitted a license application to the Nuclear Regulatory Commission (NRC) to receive, transfer, package, and possess spent nuclear fuel (SNF) at the proposed Idaho Spent Fuel Facility. The NRC is in the initial stages of developing an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) for the proposed facility to be located at the U.S. Department of Energy's (DOE) Idaho National Engineering and Environmental Laboratory (INEEL), located near Idaho Falls. The proposed facility will receive SNF from DOE, repackage the SNF into NRC licensed canisters, and place these canisters into interim dry storage pending its final removal from the State of Idaho. This proposed facility, as well as all associated construction activities and impacts, will be within the boundaries of INEEL. The forthcoming EIS will document the impacts associated with the construction and operation of the facility.

A "Cultural Resource Investigations for the Idaho Spent Fuel Facility at the INEEL" was prepared for DOE in March, 2001, by the INEEL Cultural Resource Management Office (attachment). This report describes the areas that will be affected by the construction of the proposed facility and the cultural resources that are in or near these areas. The proposed location of the Idaho Spent Fuel Facility would be on previously disturbed land adjacent to the Idaho Nuclear Technology and Engineering Center (INTEC) in the south-central portion of the INEEL. The area includes a small complex of existing office buildings, warehouses, and trailers immediately to the east of the INTEC perimeter fence and north of a coal-fired power plant. There are two areas of potential effect for the proposed project. The first is the facility construction site, which is an 8-acre parcel located near a large ash pit associated with INTEC's coal-fired power plant. The second area is a 4-acre construction laydown area, which would be used to facilitate construction activities. This area is located a short distance to the northeast of the proposed facility location. Ground disturbance associated with construction of the facility and other temporary support facilities will be localized, but extensive in both areas. There will not be any modifications or removal of existing structures or buildings within the INTEC facility. Both areas of potential effect have been investigated for cultural resources. Intensive archeological surveys from the 1980s, subsequent archeological reconnaissance by the INEEL Cultural Resource Management Office, historic building inventories and lists of other structures, and previous and ongoing consultation with the Shoshone-Bannock Tribes have been combined to identify any significant cultural resources with visible surface remains in the affected areas. Based on this research, few cultural resources have been identified in the

vicinity of INTEC. On the eastern side of the INTEC, where the proposed facility will be constructed, three archeological resources have been identified. However, these resources are located outside of the areas of potential effect for the proposed project and would not be impacted. Nonetheless, these areas would be monitored to avoid any impacts to these or any other resources that are discovered during construction activities.

As required by 36 CFR 800.4(a), the NRC is requesting the views of the State Historical Preservation Officer on further actions to identify historic properties that may be affected by the NRC's undertaking (i.e. licensing the proposed Idaho Spent Fuel Facility). As part of the EIS preparation, the NRC conducted a public scoping process to solicit information on environmental issues. This scoping information, along with the "Cultural Resource Investigations for the Idaho Spent Fuel Facility at the INEEL" (attachment), and any information you provide will be used to document affects in accordance with 36 CFR 800.4(d).

My staff will be in contact with your office throughout the EIS process. We will contact your office after we have completed the draft EIS in the Spring of 2003. In the meantime, if you have any questions or comments, or need any additional information, please contact Matt Blevins of the Nuclear Regulatory Commission at 301-415-7684

Sincerely,

/RA/

Lawrence E. Kokajko, Chief
Environmental and Performance
Assessment Branch
Division of Waste Management
Office of Nuclear Material Safety
and Safeguards

Attachment: Cultural Resource Investigations for the Idaho Spent Fuel Facility at the Idaho National Engineering and Environmental Laboratory

cc: See attached list

cc:

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Senior Health Physicist/NRC Liason
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vicinity of INTEC. On the eastern side of the INTEC, where the proposed facility will be constructed, three archeological resources have been identified. However, these resources are located outside of the areas of potential effect for the proposed project and would not be impacted. Nonetheless, these areas would be monitored to avoid any impacts to these or any other resources that are discovered during construction activities.

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Enclosure: Cultural Resource Investigations for the Idaho Spent Fuel Facility at the Idaho National Engineering and Environmental Laboratory

cc: See attached list

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