

August 24, 2004

Mr. Gary Robertson
Office of Radiation Protection
Washington State Department of Health
101 Israel Road SE,
P.O. Box 47890
Olympia, Washington 98504-7890

SUBJECT: MEETING WITH THE STATE OF WASHINGTON REGARDING
DECOMMISSIONING ACTIVITIES AT THE DAWN URANIUM MILL SITE NEAR
FORD, WASHINGTON

Dear Mr. Robertson:

For your information, I have enclosed a summary of the August 18, 2004, meeting with representatives from the State of Washington, Department of Health and the staff from the U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission (NRC). The purpose of the meeting was to discuss the decommissioning activities for the Dawn uranium mill site near Ford, Washington.

If you have any questions regarding this matter, please contact me at (301) 415-6699 or by e-mail to jsc1@nrc.gov.

In accordance with 10 CFR 2.390 of the NRC's Rules of Practice, a copy of this letter will be available electronically from the Publicly Available Records (PARS) component of NRC's document system (ADAMS). ADAMS is accessible from the NRC Web site at <http://www.nrc.gov/reading-rm/adams.html>.

Sincerely,

/RA/

Jill S. Caverly, Project Manager
Uranium Processing Section
Fuel Cycle Facilities Branch
Division of Fuel Cycle Safety
and Safeguards
Office of Nuclear Material Safety
and Safeguards

Enclosures:

1. Meeting Summary
2. DOH/NRC Presentation

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E.Brummett B.vonTill M. Schwartz,OGC FCFB r/f

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*see previous concurrence

OFFICE	FCFB		FCFB		FCFB	
NAME	J.Caverly*		B.Garrett*		B.vonTill	
DATE	8/24/04		8/24/04		8/24/04	

OFFICE RECORD COPY

MEETING SUMMARY

DATE: August 18, 2004

TIME 9:00 A. M.

PLACE: NRC Headquarters, Rockville, MD

PURPOSE: The State of Washington, Department of Health staff briefing for Nuclear Regulatory Commission (NRC) staff about closure activities at Dawn Mining Company's uranium mill site, Ford, Washington

ATTENDEES: Refer to Attachment

BACKGROUND:

Dawn Mining Company (DMC) constructed and has operated a uranium mill near Ford, Washington, since 1956. Most of the ore processed at the mill was obtained from the Midnite Mine, located about 25 miles northwest of the site, on the Spokane Tribe of Indians Reservation. The mill site is located adjacent to the Reservation with Chamokane Creek (on the Reservation), serving as the boundary of DMC's property. The mill operated until 1982, at which time operations were put on a "care and maintenance" basis. In 1989, DMC made the decision to submit a closure plan for final closure of the mill. The State of Washington, Department of Health (WDOH) finalized the Closure Plan in January 1995. From 1992 until 2000, limited mill operations were resumed for the purpose of processing water treatment plant sludge from the Midnite Mine for its uranium content. In 2000, WDOH amended DMC's license which allows the direct disposal of mine water treatment plant sludge into the lined tailings impoundment at the mill site. The mill was demolished and buried in the lined tailings impoundment during the summer/fall 2003.

DISCUSSION:

The purpose of this meeting was to provide information to staff of the NRC concerning the soil characterization and groundwater cleanup programs at the Dawn site. WDOH staff were following NRC procedures SA-900, recommending Agreement States consult with NRC early in the reclamation and decommissioning process.

The soil cleanup criteria will include the site being transferred to the U.S. Department of Energy and will not be for unrestricted use. In addition, the staff stated that the soil decommissioning plan will be based on ALARA (established Benchmark Dose and calculated uranium cleanup criteria).

A groundwater pilot program will test possible bio-remediation of the groundwater aquifer. Nutrients will be injected into the contaminated aquifer plume. These nutrients will biologically react with the contaminants in the groundwater and allow uranium to precipitate out, reducing the uranium concentration in the groundwater downgradient.

The NRC provided general feedback regarding these actions. The staff suggested that WDOH consider the following: 1) early agreement and verification with DOE of long-term boundary; 2) tightening gamma correlation for soil characterization and presentation in completion report; 3) characterization of groundwater to include monitoring at the opposite site of the Chamokane Creek; and 4) closely consider surface water standards at the creek if considering an Alternate Concentration Limit application.

ACTIONS:

No action items were identified.

ATTACHMENT:

List of Attendees



**UNITED STATES
NUCLEAR REGULATORY COMMISSION
HEADQUARTERS**

MEETING ATTENDANCE FORM

Subject: Decommissioning Activities at the Dawn Uranium Mill Site near Ford, Washington

Date: August 18, 2004 Location: NRC Headquarters, Rockville, MD

PLEASE PRINT ALL INFORMATION LEGIBLY

NAME (e.g. J.B. Doe)	COMPANY TITLE (V.P. Nuclear Operations)	PHONE NUMBER (Area code) XXX=XXXX
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Gary Janosko	NRC/ NMSS	(301) 415-7244
Mikel Elsen	WA State DOH	(301) 236-3241
Elaine Brummett	NRC/NMSS	(301) 415-6606
Maria E. Schwartz	NRC/OGC	(301) 415-1888
Bill von Till	NRC/NMSS	(301)415-6251
Dorothy Stoffel	WA State DOH	(509) 456-3166
Jill Caverly	NRC/NMSS	(301) 415-6699