October 31, 2005

Mr. Kak Slick
New Mexico State Historic Preservation Officer
Historic Preservation Division
Room 320, La Villa Rivera
228 East Palace Avenue
Santa Fe, New Mexico 87501

SUBJECT: REQUEST FOR INFORMATION REGARDING HISTORIC AND CULTURAL RESOURCES AT THE AMBROSIA LAKE URANIUM MILL FACILITY

Dear Mr. Slick:

The U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission's (NRC's) staff requests that you provide your comments regarding impacts to historic and cultural resources at Rio Algom's Ambrosia Lake uranium mill facility near Grants, New Mexico. The NRC is considering Rio Algom's (the licensee's) request for approval of a document entitled, *Soil Decommissioning Plan*. The Rio Algom site was used by the licensee from the late 1950s until the mid 1980s for milling ore for uranium. Conventional milling operations were stopped in 1985 pending more favorable market conditions. The licensee decided to remove the mill and begin full decommissioning of the site. The site is located approximately 25 miles from the town of Grants, New Mexico, in the Ambrosia Lake basin.

The licensee, in accordance with NRC Source Materials License SUA-1473, has submitted the soil decommissioning plan (ML050400566) for NRC approval. The plan documents the actions that the licensee proposes to demonstrate compliance with 10 CFR 40, Appendix A, Criterion 6. In addition to the overall soil cleanup plan, the licensee proposes alternate release criteria for areas on the site with potential deep contamination attributable to licensed activities.

In order to assure compliance with the NRC's environmental health and safety regulations, the licensee's soil decommissioning plan is currently being reviewed by the NRC staff. As part of the review, and to comply with the requirements of Title 10 U.S. Code of Federal Regulations, Part 40, the NRC is required to complete an Environmental Assessment (EA). The NRC requests your assistance in completing this EA.

The NRC requests both your review, and comments on any historic and cultural resource impacts that may occur as a result of the implementation of the soil decommissioning plan. This information will be incorporated into the EA. If impacts are identified, please provide acceptable measures to avoid or mitigate those impacts.

If you have any comments regarding the NRC review for the Rio Algom site soil decommissioning plan, please provide them within 30 days so they may be fully considered. If you require additional information, please contact the NRC project manager, Michael Raddatz at 301-415-6334 or by email at mgr@nrc.gov.

In accordance with 10 CFR 2.390 of NRC's "Rules of Practice for Domestic Licensing Proceedings and Issuance of Orders," a copy of this letter will be available electronically for public inspection in the NRC Public Document Room or 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 (the Public Electronic Reading Room).

Sincerely,

\RA\

Gary S. Janosko, Chief
Fuel Cycle Facilities Branch
Division of Fuel Cycle Safety
and Safeguards
Office of Nuclear Material Safety
and Safeguards

Docket No. 40-8905
SUA-1473

cc: Tom Pauling, DOE-GJ
Peter Luthiger, Rio Algom LLC

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Sincerely,

\RA\

Gary S. Janosko, Chief
Fuel Cycle Facilities Branch
Division of Fuel Cycle Safety
and Safeguards
Office of Nuclear Material Safety
and Safeguards

Docket No. 40-8905
SUA-1473

cc: Art Kleinrath, DOE-GJ
Paul Goranson, Rio Algom LLC

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DATE	10/27/05		10/28/05		10/31/05		10/31/05	

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