

August 11, 2006

Ms. Deb Mignogno
Supervisor
Eastern Idaho Suboffice
U.S. Fish and Wildlife Services
4425 Burley Drive, Suite A
Chubbuck, ID 83202

SUBJECT: REQUEST FOR INFORMATION ABOUT CRITICAL HABITATS, ENDANGERED
AND THREATENED SPECIES AT THE FORMER SALMON RIVER URANIUM
DEVELOPMENT MILL SITE

Dear Ms. Mignogno:

The U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission (NRC) is working with the State of Idaho, the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) Forest Services, and the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) on the future decommissioning of the former Salmon River Uranium Development, Inc. (SRUD) mill site located near North Fork, Idaho. The property is located in Section 26, Township 24 North, Range 20 East, on the north side of the Salmon River. The mill consists of one main building and two adjacent buildings. The site's exterior property has two above-ground corrosive material storage tanks, two dilapidated camper trailers, an ore inlet chute structure, an underground storage tank, and a 0.8-acre dry tailing pond. Based on previous site visits and historical information, the site has radiological contamination levels that do not meet the criteria for unrestricted release in Title 10 of the Code of Federal Regulations (CFR), Part 20, Subpart E. Radiological contamination is located inside the buildings, the dry tailing pond, and is believed to extend to an area of 2 acres around the mill. In addition, the site contains hazardous chemical material that does not fall under NRC's jurisdiction.

The future decommissioning of the SRUD site may include the following activities:

1. Radiological characterization of the property to determine the actual levels of contamination on the property.
2. Removal and off-site disposal of contaminated material in the soil and on wall surfaces inside the buildings, the tailing pond, and around the mill within a 2-acre area. Heavy equipment may be needed to accomplish this.
3. Removal and off-site disposal of contaminated equipment inside of the buildings. Heavy equipment may be needed to accomplish this.
4. Backfilling of excavated soil inside of the buildings and around the mill.
5. Final radiological survey to confirm that contamination levels in the property meet the unrestricted release regulatory requirements of 10 CFR Part 20, Subpart E.

In order to evaluate any possible adverse environmental impacts during the future decommissioning of the SRUD site, the NRC requests your assistance to obtain information about any existing critical habitats, endangered and threatened species in or around the property. Please be aware that the activities mentioned in this letter do not represent the actual decommissioning work at the facility, but rather a projection of the tasks that are expected to be conducted during the decommissioning project. Final project scope and tasks will be determined after EPA has completed an assessment of the existing contamination of the property, an environmental review of the site has been finalized, and coordination with the State of Idaho and USDA Forest Services has been completed. In accordance with Section 7 of the Endangered Species Act, and as part of our review under the National Environmental Policy Act, the NRC will consult with you before commencing any decommissioning activities in or around the SRUD site.

In summary, the NRC requests your comments regarding the presence of any existing critical habitats, endangered and threatened species in the vicinity of the former SRUD mill site. If you have any questions regarding this letter or the decommissioning of the SRUD site, please feel free to reach me at (301) 415-0193. You can mail the information to the following address:

Rafael L. Rodriguez, Project Manager
U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission
Mail Stop T7E18
Washington, DC 20555-0001

In accordance with 10 CFR 2.390 of the NRC's "Rules of Practice," a copy of this letter and your response will be made available electronically for public inspection in the NRC Public Document Room (PDR) or from the Publicly Available Records (PARS) component of NRC's document system (ADAMS). ADAMS is accessible from the NRC's public website at the following address: <http://www.nrc.gov/reading-rm/adams.html> (the Public Electronic Reading Room).

Sincerely,

/RA/

Rafael L. Rodriguez, Project Manager
Decommissioning Directorate
Division of Waste Management
And Environmental Protection
Office of Nuclear Material Safety
And Safeguards

Docket No: 040-03400
License Nos.: R-0230 (expired), P-4001 (expired)
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