November 15, 2006

Mr. Robert E. Link, Manager
Environmental, Health, Safety and Licensing
AREVA NP, Inc.
2101 Horn Rapids Road
Richland, WA 99352-0130

SUBJECT: APPROVAL OF AREVA NP, INC'S - (RICHLAND) - ALTERNATE SCHEDULE FOR DECOMMISSIONING AT THE FORMER SURFACE IMPOUNDMENT AREA (TAC L31973)

Dear Mr. Link:

This letter is in response to your October 5, 2006, letter describing the operating status of the former Surface Impoundment Area (SIA) at the AREVA NP, Inc.'s (AREVA) Richland, Washington site. We consider this a request for an alternate decommissioning schedule pursuant to the criteria in 10 CFR 70.38(f).

Based on the information in the submittal, we have concluded that SIA activities have not been revoked, and there has been no decision to permanently cease activities in the site. AREVA has removed contamination in excess of Washington Department of Ecology's approved soil cleanup limits. In addition, the impoundment is located within the restricted area of an active site, and there is potential for future usage of this area for future licensed activities. As a result, the U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission (NRC) staff has determined that postponement of the decommissioning process is not detrimental to public health and safety and is in the public interest.

Therefore, the SIA may be decommissioned with other areas of the site at termination of licensed activities.

Note that if you decide to permanently cease activities in this area, the NRC should be notified and the issue re-examined.

Upon receipt of the subject submittal, we assigned the action Technical Assignment Control (TAC) number L31973. This letter of approval of your request closed TAC L31973.

If you have any questions, please contact me by phone at (301) 415-6155, or via e-mail to mnb@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 for public inspection in the NRC Public Document Room or from the Publicly Available Records (PARS) component of NRC's Agencywide Documents Access and Management 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/

Merritt N. Baker, Project Manager
Fuel Manufacturing Branch
Fuel Facilities Licensing Directorate
Division of Fuel Cycle Safety
and Safeguards
Office of Nuclear Material Safety
and Safeguards

Docket No.: 70-1257
License No.: SNM-1227

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(Closes TAC L31973)

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