



Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection

Rachel Carson State Office Building

P.O. Box 8469

Harrisburg, PA 17105-8469

January 30, 2007

Bureau of Radiation Protection

717-787-2480

Fax: 717-783-8965

Mr. Daniel Freeburg, Chairperson
Elk County Commission
300 Center Street, Box 300
Ridgway, PA 15853

RECEIVED
REGION 1
2007 FEB - 5 PM 1:34

Re: Decommissioning of Quehanna Facility in Karthaus, Pennsylvania

Dear Mr. Freeburg:

The Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) has been actively involved in the ongoing work to finalize the decommissioning and ultimate U. S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission (NRC) license termination at the Quehanna Facility in Karthaus, Pennsylvania. DEP holds the NRC license for the Quehanna facility and the Pennsylvania Department of Conservation and Natural Resources (DCNR) manages the property. The goal of this decommissioning project is to return the Quehanna site to its intended purpose – a wilderness area that can be enjoyed by outdoor enthusiasts in our Commonwealth.

Over the past ten plus years, contractors for the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania have characterized and decontaminated the Quehanna facility to levels that support “unrestricted use” as stipulated in the decommissioning plans (DPs) approved by the NRC. Final status surveys performed in the fall of 2006 document both the conditions at the facility and that the required clean up levels have been achieved. In fact, these surveys document that the current radiological conditions are significantly lower than those required for unrestricted use. The NRC independently confirmed these surveys to be accurate in December of 2006.

Due to complexities that were encountered during this project, the decommissioning has taken longer than expected and cost far more than was originally estimated. Over \$33 Million has been expended for the decontamination and disposal of radioactive waste from the Quehanna project. It is important to note that all low-level radioactive waste generated during this project was disposed of at out-of-state facilities in Utah, South Carolina, and Nevada that are licensed for this type of waste. The remaining work that must be done prior to returning the Quehanna site to a wilderness area is to demolish and dispose of the above grade structures, fill in pits, use local soil to regrade the site, and finally reseed the affected areas. It is the current plan that the remaining work can be completed by fall of this year.

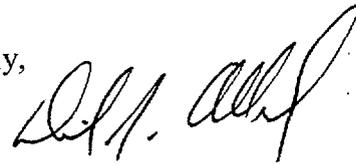


The DP stipulates that demolition debris from the above-grade structures will be disposed of at the Greentree Landfill located in Kersey, Pennsylvania. The NRC has granted the Greentree Landfill an exemption in accordance with Federal and State regulations to accept this solid waste and that upon its receipt would no longer be NRC licensed material. The NRC has documented this in an Environmental Assessment (EA) that was published in the Federal Register for comment on May 26, 2006. No comments from the public were received and the EA was finalized on September 29, 2006. It is also documented that DEP agrees with the NRC in its Finding of No Significant Impact (FONSI). We would also note that the disposal of this demolition debris is in full compliance with our solid waste regulations in Title 25 pertaining to municipal and residual solid waste.

A copy of the current DP and the supporting EA by the NRC are included with this letter for your review and records. In addition, DEP would be pleased to meet with the Elk County Commissioners to answer any questions you may have regarding completion of the Quehanna decommissioning project. The NRC has also indicated their willingness to participate in this meeting, if you so desire.

If you would like to arrange a meeting to discuss any concerns you may have in the completion of the Quehanna decommissioning project, please contact Robert Maiers, PE, Chief of Decommissioning and Environmental Surveillance by e-mail at rmaiers@state.pa.us or by telephone at 717-783-8979.

Sincerely,



David J. Allard, CHP
Director
Bureau of Radiation Protection

cc: Kathleen A. McGinty, Secretary, DEP
Michael DiBerardinis, Secretary, DCNR
Kelly Burch, DEP, NWRO
Robert Maiers, DEP, BRP
James R. Grace, DCNR, State Forester
Albert Thomas, DCNR
James Kotten, NRC
Anthony LaBenne, Veolia ES Greentree Landfill, LLC
Mike Keller, Fox Township Supervisor (Chairperson)
Bekky Titchner, Elk County Solid Waste Authority