

March 12, 2008

The Honorable Gregg Lynch, Mayor
County of Unicoi
P.O. Box 169
Erwin, TN 37650

SUBJECT: RESPONSE TO CONCERNS REGARDING THE DEPARTMENT OF ENERGY
SUPPLEMENT TO THE ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT STATEMENT FOR THE
DISPOSITION OF SURPLUS HIGHLY ENRICHED URANIUM
(DOE/EIS-0240-SA1)

Dear Mayor Lynch:

We wish to thank you for bringing the concerns of your constituents to our attention during our meeting at Nuclear Fuel Services (NFS) on February 28, 2008. As promised during the public meeting, we contacted the U.S. Department of Energy (DOE) to clarify statements in the "Supplement Analysis for the Disposition of Highly Enriched Uranium" (DOE/EIS-0240-SA1) dated October 2007.

DOE has informed us that the "1 chance in 71" estimate refers to the risk of a single latent cancer fatality in the entire population living within 50 miles of NFS based on one year of operation. This meaning could have been explained better. We regret the concerns the estimate has caused. NRC staff has reviewed the report and believes that the risk may be clearer when expressed as follows: The exposure of the entire population within 50 miles of NFS, to the annual doses estimated by DOE, for a period of 71 years, would be expected to result in no more than 1 cancer death in the entire population. Please note that the actual releases from NFS are much less than those used in the calculation.

In terms of individual risk, the population risk of 1 chance in 71 translates to an individual risk of 1 chance in 85 million of developing cancer as a result of downblending operations at NFS. This risk is consistent with an environmental assessment conducted by NRC in 2002. It is less than the risk of a person being struck by lightning which is about 1 in a million.

Should you have any questions concerning this letter, please contact Kevin M. Ramsey of my staff at 301-492-3123. We intend to schedule a public meeting in the near future to address this matter and any additional questions.

Sincerely

/RA/

Robert C. Pierson, Director
Division of Fuel Cycle Safety and Safeguards
Office of Nuclear Material Safety and Safeguards

Docket No. 70-143
License No. SNM-124

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*see previous concurrence

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DATE	3/10/2008	3/10/2008	3/11/2008	3/11/2008	3/12/2008

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