



August 8, 2008

ATTN: Document Control Desk
 Director
 Office of Nuclear Material Safety and Safeguards
 U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission
 Washington, DC 20555-0001

EREF-08-001

Subject: Eagle Rock Enrichment Facility
 Request for Acceptance Review of an Early Environmental Report

AREVA NC Inc. conducted a meeting with the NRC on January 31, 2008 to discuss its proposed approach to licensing a gas centrifuge uranium enrichment plant. As part of that presentation, AREVA stated that it was planning to submit the Environmental Report (ER) earlier than the remainder of the application. To support this approach, AREVA explained that it would prepare a complete, stand-alone ER that would be submitted to the NRC in the third quarter of 2008. As AREVA is now planning to submit the stand-alone ER portion of its application for a uranium enrichment plant in October 2008, we are requesting that the NRC initiate its acceptance review upon submittal of the ER and, if acceptable, docket the ER. The basis for this request is provided below:

Approving this request is authorized by law. 10 CFR 51, subpart A, "National Environmental Policy Act - Regulations Implementing Section 102(2)," specifically 10 CFR 51.60, "Environmental Reports - materials licenses," paragraph (b)(1)(vii), requires that an environmental report be prepared as part of the licensing action associated with the construction and operation of a uranium enrichment facility. As described above, AREVA intends to submit a stand-alone ER as part of an application for a uranium enrichment plant. Moreover, NRC regulations authorize docketing of a complete, stand-alone ER. Specifically, 10 CFR 2.101, "Filing of Applications," paragraph (a)(3), states in relevant part that, "If the Director, Office of Nuclear Material Safety and Safeguards ... determines that ... any environmental report required pursuant to subpart A of part 51 of this chapter ... [is] complete and acceptable for docketing, a docket number will be assigned..."

Approving this request will not endanger life or property or the common defense and security. Approving this request will only result in the NRC beginning its review of an ER. An extensive process of reviews and hearings on safety and environmental issues must be successfully completed before any activity which could endanger life or property, such as construction or operation of the facility, commences. Therefore, since no actual

AREVA NC INC.

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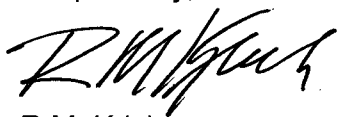
construction or operation of a facility is being requested, approval of this request will not endanger life or property. Since the ER does not contain any classified information, approval of this request to allow the NRC to begin its review will also not endanger the common defense and security.

Approving this request is otherwise in the public interest. The proposed facility will provide enriched uranium to fuel nuclear power reactors. The U.S. currently obtains approximately 20% of its electricity from the existing 104 nuclear power plants. In addition, the NRC has received 11 Combined License (i.e., COL) applications for new nuclear power plants to date. Therefore, not only will there be an ongoing need to fuel the existing nuclear power plants, but there exists a strong potential for this need to increase significantly if the new plants represented by these COL applications are put in to service. In addition, there is a clear national policy in support of developing additional domestic enrichment capacity. Maintaining a reliable and economical U.S. uranium enrichment industry is an important U.S. energy security objective. Indeed, Congress has characterized uranium enrichment as a strategically important domestic industry of vital national interest, essential to the national security and energy security of the United States and necessary to avoid dependence on imports. Clearly, it is in the public interest for the NRC to initiate review of AREVA's stand-alone ER as soon as possible so that an overall decision on licensing the uranium enrichment facility can be reached efficiently.

AREVA is currently planning to submit the early ER before the end of October 2008. AREVA respectfully asks that the NRC grant this request so that the NRC's acceptance review can begin as soon as the ER is submitted.

If you have any questions or need additional information, please contact me at 301-841-1701.

Respectfully,



R.M. Krich

CC: Breeda Reilly, U.S. NRC Project Manager,
Eagle Rock Enrichment Facility