

PHONE CALL WITH ORVAL BAIRD ON AUGUST 15, 2005 ¹

Participants: Rafael L. Rodriguez, M. Ellen Poteat

Orval called primarily to express his concerns about the memo discussing the new fee rule that will allow NRC to charge non-licensees for staff time, effective July 26, 2005. The information below was provided entirely by Mr. Orval Baird during the phone call. NRC staff does not agree or disagree with the information presented below:

Orval discussed the history of the property. According to him, the former Salmon River Uranium Development (SRUD) mill site operated during the 1940s and 1950s. The site was originally owned by six stockholders, one of them being a county commissioner. The mill was established with the sole idea of extracting uranium from the mine. The original SRUD owners drilled about 60 feet into the mine without finding any uranium. Apparently, only thorium was found during this activity. This thorium was of low-grade quality, meaning that it did not pose a threat to public health and safety. Orval was unable to specify a specific concentration to substantiate his definition of "low-grade." Around 400 lbs. of this low-grade thorium was taken outside the property during the late 1950s. However, no information was provided about its final destination. Because no uranium was found in the property, the original owners went bankrupt and sold the site to National Nuclear Reserve Corporation (NNRC).

NNRC hired Orval as a handyman and welder. He worked for NNRC for about 12 years (1970-1981). Orval stated that the waste generated during the milling operations was dumped into the tailings pond. However, this waste did not represent any hazard to public health and safety. Orval claimed that no concentrated thorium resulting from the milling operations was stored inside the property. Eventually, NNRC went bankrupt. NNRC owed money to Orval, but due to the financial hardship they experienced, NNRC offered him 43 acres of land in exchange for the salary. The property consists of two 21.5-acre pieces (the east half and the west half). NNRC gave the property to Orval, with the stipulation that Orval would be responsible for paying off the back taxes on the site, approximately (b)(6). After this, Orval would receive a quick claim deed on the property.

Before Orval obtained the property, NNRC brought two storage tanks into the site; one to store sulfuric acid, the other to store caustic soda. Originally, there were 750 gallons of sulfuric acid being stored in the tank. Due to weather conditions (especially the heat during the summer), the sulfuric acid storage tank failed and the acid start leaking into the ground. Orval does not know if the storage tank with the caustic soda also collapsed, or if the caustic soda is still there.

Several years ago, State of Idaho Department of Environmental Quality asked Orval to remediate the property, and Orval decided to ask for help through the Government. Orval visited the property for the last time during Spring 2004. He claimed he has not removed any material from the SRUD site.

¹ Reviewed and Discussed with Orval Baird via phone call on October 11, 2005 at 8:24 (EDT).

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Orval's long term plans are to build a house and to move in. In response to an NRC inquiry about his financial situation and ability to remediate the property, Orval stated that his (b)(6)

(b)(6) Boise, ID. He is currently (b)(6) and earns about (b)(6). Orval stated that the material in the property is not radioactive and that the only health hazard are the pack rats and the diseases they carry. Orval is still paying taxes on the property and he is (b)(6)

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Finally, Orval provided the phone number of his son in Las Vegas, NV. He stated that NRC could leave him a message and he would try to return the call within a few days. Orval was informed about NRC's previous attempts to reach him, and he thinks his wife never forwarded the messages to him because of (b)(6)