

Yilma, Haimanot

From: Jonathan Block (b)(6)
Sent: Tuesday, December 29, 2009 11:22 PM
To: Yilma, Haimanot
Cc: Kock, Andrea; VonTill, Bill
Subject: Re: Dewey Burdock project

EX-16

ADAMSAccessionNumber:ML093640070

Hello, Mr. Haimanot:
Thank for getting back to me on this and your kind offer of answering additional questions.

Jon

On Tue, Dec 29, 2009 at 11:58 AM, Yilma, Haimanot <Haimanot.Yilma@nrc.gov> wrote:

Dear Mr. Jon Block

My name is Haimanot Yilma. I am the environmental project manager for the Dewey-Burdock license application. Below please find the responses to your questions sent December 9, 2009, by e-mail to Mr. Bill von Till and Mr. Stephen Cohen of the NRC staff:

1) Is Southwest Research Institute under contract to the NRC to collect information for the SEIS? Yes, the use of contractors to help NRC staff perform environmental review work is a common practice here at the NRC.

(2) Is Mr. Prikryl speaking for the NRC, as its contractor? As the contractor for the NRC, Mr. Prikryl was responding to questions raised by one of the Chamber of Commerce members, and his answers were based on information provided by the applicant in the license application for this proposed facility.

(3) Is the purpose of Mr. Prikryl's statement to emphasize a benefit to the community that will follow upon granting a license in this case? No, the NRC is currently at the early stage of our review process, and therefore has not yet reached any conclusions about the impact of the proposed licensing action. During our information gathering meeting, a member of the Edgemont Chamber of Commerce inquired about the number and type of jobs the proposed facility might bring to Edgemont County. Mr. Prikryl responded to this question based on our current information. Socioeconomics impacts will be analyzed as part of the environmental review. To support this analysis and assess economic and social impact, the NRC staff and its contractors will collect information on availability of resources from neighboring towns (including but not limited to the number of jobs and level of education required of potential employees).

If you have any additional questions, please feel free to call or email me.

Sincerely,

Haimanot Yilma

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Project Manager

FSME/DWMEP/EPPAD/ERB

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From: Jonathan Block (b)(6)
Sent: Wednesday, December 09, 2009 3:32 PM
To: VonTill, Bill
Cc: Cohen, Stephen
Subject: Some questions about recent press coverage of a meeting on the Dewey-Burdock application

EX. 6

Hello Bill and Stephen:

I came across an article about the proposed Dewey-Burdock license. The reporter states that a company out of San Antonio, Southwest Research Institute, is collecting the information that will go into the draft SEIS process. Towards the end of the article -- see below, underlined --the reporter quoted a representative of that company, Jim Prikryl, about the large number of technically trained people who would be employed at the facility.

My questions are:

- (1) Is Southwest Research Institute under contract to the NRC to collect information for the SEIS?
- (2) Is Mr. Prikryl speaking for the NRC, as its contractor?
- (3) Is the purpose of Mr. Prikryl's statement to emphasize a benefit to the community that will follow upon granting a license in this case?

Thanks for getting back to me on this.

Jon Block

http://www.hotspringsstar.com/articles/2009/12/08/hot_springs/news/doc4b1d449dc1b06575805718.txt

NRC holds Edgemont meeting

By Curt Nettinga

EDGEMONT - The next step in PowerTech, USA's quest for a license to mine uranium in the Dewey-Burdock area north of Edgemont was taken Wednesday afternoon, when representatives of the Nuclear Regulatory Commission, and the Southwest Research Institute met with business, community and governmental representatives.

"I can tell you that we are reviewing the paperwork submitted with the license application submitted by PowerTech," said Bill Ford, an official with NRC.

"The application is in the process of being scanned into our system, at which time it will be available for review, electronically through our web site."

Much of the meeting was to let people from the area know the status of the application and for the NRC officials to begin the task of gathering data that will go into a Supplemental Draft Environmental Impact Statement or SDEIS.

"The NRC has a Generic Environmental Impact Statement that we use as a starting point," said SDEIS project manager Haimnot Yilma. "As each mining site is specific, we look at the GEIS, determine that the project fits into the profile, then proceed to gather data for the SDEIS."

The gathering of information and the writing of the supplemental statement will be done by Southwest Research Institute of San Antonio, Texas.

Ford said the formal acceptance of the application will take place in the next few weeks, and that process of gathering data, publishing the SDEIS and taking comments could take up to two years to complete before a license would be issued.

PowerTech, USA, is applying for an in situ uranium mining license for a 10,000 acre parcel of land in the Dewey-Burdock area. The site had been used as an open-pit uranium mine in the 1960s and 70s.

The in situ process injects treated water, through a well, into the ground. The solution dissolves and captures the uranium, before being pumped out of a different well, where the uranium is recaptured.

Ford noted that the NRC is generally viewed as the lead organization in the permitting and licensing process. "There are several other agencies that will have a say in the licensing, through the comment period after the SDEIS is published," he said. "Often, other agencies kind of wait to see what we do before proceeding."

The NRC is the oversight agency for in situ mining applications or operations in New Mexico, Wyoming, Nebraska and South Dakota. Including the Dewey-Burdock project, they have six applications under review at this time.

Ford said that the first in situ uranium mining operation was near Buffalo, Wyo., and has been in operation since the mid-1970s.

While the townspeople were interested in the process, the panel was equally interested in local resources, including housing for construction and operations workers, schools for what would be an influx of people, healthcare possibilities in the area and transportation.

Edgemont mayor Jim Turner said that Edgemont's water and sewer system was serving more than 2,000 people at the height of the uranium mining. "Most of the infrastructure is in place and housing in the area is just waiting for some type of sign that this is going to happen, to get started," he said.

Linda Tidball, representing the Edgemont School District, said that the school currently has approximately 150 students K-12, "but could accommodate twice that many with little problem."

Tidball also said that the technology advances at the school could make it a good location for the training that workers in the mining field may require.

An estimated 200 construction employees would be expected if the mining license is granted and PowerTech works to begin operations. Southwest Research Institute's Jim Prikryl said an equal number of operational jobs

would probably be in the works, after mining begins. "About 20-25 percent of those would be advanced education positions," he said, "engineers, geologists and such, with the rest being more labor type positions."

Ford said that a mine license remains in effect for up to 10 years, and can be renewed.

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"Years ago I recognized my kinship with all living things,
and I made up my mind that I was not one bit better than
the meanest on the earth. I said then, and I say now that
while there is a lower class, I am in it, where there is a
criminal element, I am of it, while there is a soul in prison,
I am not free." - Eugene V. Debs
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