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DOE Announces Transfer of Depleted Uranium to Advance the U.S. National Security Interests, Extend Operations at Paducah Gaseous Diffusion Plant

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NEWS MEDIA
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WASHINGTON – The Department of Energy – in collaboration with Energy Northwest, Tennessee Valley Authority (TVA), and USEC Inc. – today announced the finalized detailed transfer of depleted uranium to EN that will be enriched at the Paducah Gaseous Diffusion Plant during the next year and ultimately result in fuel for EN and TVA. The transfer will deliver benefits to U.S. national security and the Department's cleanup missions, as well as provide commercial benefits to each of the collaborating organizations and continuing operations at the Paducah site, which USEC estimates will employ over a thousand workers.

"After much hard work, the Energy Department, in cooperation with the other organizations, identified a creative path forward to utilize a portion of our depleted uranium inventory that brings together the public and private sector to advance America's national security interests at a reduced cost to taxpayers," said Secretary Chu. "This effort will also provide benefits to ratepayers in two areas of the country and maintain operations at the Paducah enrichment plant, thereby avoiding costs to the Department's cleanup program and keeping jobs in the local community."

The Department's transfer is the initial step in an arrangement between the collaborating organizations that includes: the transfer of a portion of the Department's high-assay depleted uranium tails to EN; commercial contracts between EN and USEC for about a year's worth of enrichment services; the sale of low-enriched uranium (LEU) from EN to the TVA; and the signing of an agreement between TVA and the National Nuclear Security Administration (NNSA) for tritium for the nation's nuclear deterrent. A more detailed description of the project is available [HERE](#).

The project will ensure a supply of U.S.-origin unobligated uranium to support the NNSA's production for up to 15 years. In addition, continuing operations of the Paducah plant will provide an extra year for the Department's Office of Environmental Management to plan for the eventual decommissioning and cleanup of the Paducah Gaseous Diffusion Plant and, based on current

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Before agreeing to enter into the project, the Energy Department undertook an analysis of the domestic uranium market to ensure that the transactions under the project would not have an adverse material impact on the domestic uranium mining, enrichment, or conversion industry. The completed analysis, conducted by Energy Resources International (ERI), which concludes that there is no adverse material impact, is available [HERE](#).

The analysis took a comprehensive view of the Department's uranium sales and transfers, including additional transfers to support the cleanup at the Department's Portsmouth site in New Hampshire and transfers of low-enriched uranium related to NNSA's programs for down-blending spent nuclear fuel and highly enriched uranium. Based on this analysis, Secretary Chu made a determination that the above transfers will not have an adverse material impact on the domestic uranium mining, conversion or enrichment industry. The Determination is available [HERE](#). The concluding market analysis will form the basis for an updated DOE Uranium Management Plan expected to be released later this summer.

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