

December 15, 2015

Mr. Richard Bush, Program Manager
U.S. Department of Energy
Office of Legacy Management
2597 Legacy Way
Grand Junction, CO 81503

SUBJECT: U.S. NUCLEAR REGULATORY COMMISSION STAFF REVIEW OF
NOVEMBER 2014 WATER SAMPLING AT THE OLD AND NEW RIFLE,
COLORADO, PROCESSING SITES (WM-00062)

Dear Mr. Bush:

I am writing in response to U.S. Department of Energy (DOE) report entitled "November 2014 Water Sampling at the Old and New Rifle, Colorado, Processing Sites" dated January 2015 (Agencywide Documents Access and Management System (ADAMS) Accession Number ML15083A272). The U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission (NRC) staff has reviewed the report and has the following comments:

1. The October 2014 report for the June and August 2014 sampling at the sites indicated that DOE was going to determine if seven wells in the center of the mill site should be retained. Has the DOE made a determination as to the status of these wells?
2. Wells 322 and 635 (New Rifle) were not sampled and an explanation was not provided. Suggest the DOE provide an explanation in the report when wells listed in the Groundwater Corrective Action Plan are not sampled;
3. One equipment blank was analyzed and the results indicate that no contamination from the sampling collection process occurred. However, only one equipment blank was analyzed for 35 samples while the Water Sampling Field Activity Verification Checklist states that one equipment blank will be collected per 20 samples. This may not be an issue if the Old Rifle samples were collected with dedicated equipment;
4. The potassium level at sample location 0395 appears to be elevated, and is identified as a potential outlier, but no explanation is provided as to the possible reason for the increased potassium level (note that the increased uranium level in sample for location 656 was explained in the report); and,
5. The report states (on page 24 – "Equipment Blank Assessment") that magnesium, sodium, uranium and vanadium were detected in the equipment blank but were qualified during data validation as "not detected." It is not clear why these analytes were qualified as not detected when they were detected in the sample at over 10 times the detection limit for sodium and uranium.

R. Bush

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In accordance with 10 CFR 2.390 of the NRC's "Agency Rules of Practice and Procedure," a copy of this letter will be available electronically for public inspection in the NRC Public Document Room or from the Publicly Available Records component of NRC's ADAMS. ADAMS is accessible from the NRC Web site at <http://www.nrc.gov/reading-rm/adams.html>.

If you have any questions concerning the NRC staff comments, please contact me at 301-415-6749 or by email at Dominick.Orlando@nrc.gov.

Sincerely,

/RA/

Dominick A. Orlando, Senior Project Manager
Materials Decommissioning Branch
Division of Decommissioning, Uranium Recovery
and Waste Programs
Office of Nuclear Material Safety
and Safeguards

Docket No.: WM-00062

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