



UNITED STATES  
NUCLEAR REGULATORY COMMISSION  
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20555-0001

March 23, 2016

Mr. Steve Vance  
Cheyenne River Sioux Tribe  
Tribal Historic Preservation Office  
P.O. Box 590  
Eagle Butte, SD 57625-0590

SUBJECT: UPDATE ON LICENSING ACTIONS RELATED TO CAMECO RESOURCES SMITH RANCH URANIUM IN SITU RECOVERY OPERATIONS, LICENSE SUA-1548, CONVERSE, FREMONT, NATRONA, JOHNSON, AND CAMPBELL COUNTIES, WYOMING (TAC NO. L00783 and J00635)

Dear Mr. Vance:

This letter is to provide you with an update on two licensing actions the U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission (NRC) is currently reviewing for Power Resources, Inc. (doing business as Cameco Resources [Cameco]) and one expected future licensing action. These licensing actions relate to Cameco's Smith Ranch uranium in situ recovery (ISR) facility, which is authorized to operate under NRC source and byproduct material license SUA-1548. This license was first issued for commercial operation in 1992. The Smith Ranch ISR facility is located in Converse County, Wyoming. Under its license, Cameco is also authorized to perform uranium ISR activities at the associated remote satellite facilities: (1) the Gas Hills ISR satellite facility in Fremont and Natrona Counties, Wyoming; (2) the North Butte ISR satellite facility in Campbell County, Wyoming; and (3) the Ruth ISR satellite facility in Johnson County, Wyoming. Enclosure 1 provides a map showing the general locations of the Smith Ranch ISR facility and each of the remote ISR satellite facilities.

Licensing Action 1 - On February 1, 2012, Cameco submitted a request to renew its NRC source and byproduct material license. If approved, this request would allow Cameco to continue ISR operations at the Smith Ranch facility and at the three remote satellite facilities. The NRC staff accepted the application for detailed review on July 5, 2012, and by letter dated December 20, 2012, the NRC invited the Cheyenne River Sioux Tribe to be a consulting party under Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966, as amended (NHPA). On May 2, 2013, the NRC staff issued a request for additional information (RAI) to Cameco, and by letters dated November 18, 2014, and April 21, 2015, Cameco responded to the NRC's RAI. The NRC staff is proceeding with its detailed review and anticipates re-initiating the formal NHPA Section 106 consultation process in the next two months. The NRC staff will contact you once that occurs.

Licensing Action 2 - On April 10, 2015, Cameco submitted a license amendment request to increase the ground water processing flow rate at the North Butte ISR satellite facility from 4,000 gallons per minute to 6,000 gallons per minute. The license amendment request may be found in the Publicly Available Records component of NRC's Agencywide Documents Access and Management System (ADAMS) at ML15132A085. ADAMS is accessible from the NRC Web site at <http://www.nrc.gov/reading-rm/adams.html>. Cameco is proposing to operate

S. Vance

- 2 -

equipment within existing onsite buildings and within previously approved ISR well fields at the requested higher flow rate, and thus the proposal does not include additional earth disturbing activity. The NRC staff has accepted this request for review and is proceeding with its detailed safety and environmental reviews.

Expected Future Licensing Action - By letter dated May 6, 2015, Cameco informed the NRC staff of a future license amendment request that it intends to submit to expand the footprint of operations at its North Butte ISR satellite facility. Cameco refers to this expansion area as Brown Ranch Tract 1. The NRC staff understands that Cameco plans to submit this request in mid-2016. If the application is accepted for detailed review, the NRC staff would offer an opportunity to request a hearing and conduct safety and environmental reviews of the application. The NRC staff will also initiate a formal NHPA Section 106 consultation process for this action once the detailed review is in progress.

Should you have any questions about these actions, or wish to learn more about Cameco's Smith Ranch facility, please contact me at [douglas.mandeville@nrc.gov](mailto:douglas.mandeville@nrc.gov) or by phone at 301-415-0724.

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>.

Sincerely,

*/RA/*

Douglas T. Mandeville, Project Manager  
Uranium Recovery Licensing Branch  
Division of Decommissioning, Uranium Recovery  
and Waste Programs  
Office of Nuclear Material Safety  
and Safeguards

Docket No. 40-8964  
License No. SUA-1548

Enclosure:  
Map of Smith Ranch and Associated Satellites

Letters sent to:  
Tribal/THPO list for Smith Ranch License Renewal

cc: Robin Jones and Luke McMahan (WDEQ)  
Larry Reimann (Cameco)

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Sincerely,  
**/RA/**  
 Douglas T. Mandeville, Project Manager  
 Uranium Recovery Licensing Branch  
 Division of Decommissioning, Uranium Recovery  
 and Waste Programs  
 Office of Nuclear Material Safety  
 and Safeguards

Docket No. 40-8964  
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 Tribal/THPO list for Smith Ranch License Renewal

cc: Robin Jones and Luke McMahan (WDEQ)  
 Larry Reimann (Cameco)

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**ML16076A337 (pkg.)**

| OFFICE | DUWP/URLB   | DUWP/URLB | FCSE    | FSTLB   | DUWP/URLB | OGC (NLO) | DUWP/URLB   |
|--------|-------------|-----------|---------|---------|-----------|-----------|-------------|
| NAME   | DMandeville | SAchten   | JPark   | STalley | BVonTill  | JOlmstead | DMandeville |
| DATE   | 1/13/16     | 1/13/16   | 1/21/16 | 2/18/16 | 2/8/16    | 2/26/16   | 3/23/16     |

**OFFICIAL RECORD COPY**



**LEGEND**

★ SMITH RANCH PROJECT AND ASSOCIATED SATELLITES

— PRIMARY CAMECO TRANSPORTATION ROUTES

— INTERSTATE, STATE AND COUNTY ROADS

| REVISIONS |      |    |
|-----------|------|----|
| NO.       | DATE | BY |
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**Cameco Resources**  
**NRC SOURCE MATERIAL**  
**LICENSE SUA-1548**

**SMITH RANCH AND REMOTE SATELLITES**

**FIGURE 1.1**  
**GENERAL SUA-1548 LOCATION MAP**

|       |                   |            |             |
|-------|-------------------|------------|-------------|
| SIZE  | SCALE             | DEPARTMENT | CURRENT NO. |
| 11x17 | SEC GRAPHIC SCALE |            | 0           |

CUWCR02 08-148 NRC License Renewal/PP Worksheet/GENERAL LOCATION Map

## List of Tribal/THPO Addresses – Smith Ranch License Renewal

### Blackfeet Tribe

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### THPO

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**THPO**

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**THPO**

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**Eastern Shoshone Tribe**

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**THPO**

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**Flandreau-Santee Sioux Tribe**

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**Fort Belknap Community**

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**Kiowa Indian Tribe of Oklahoma**

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THPO

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THPO

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