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UNITED STATES OF AMERICA
NUCLEAR REGULATORY COMMISSION
OFFICE OF REGULATORY AND
ADJUDICATION STAFF
BEFORE THE COMMISSION

OFFICE OF SECURITY
RULEMAKING AND
ADJUDICATION STAFF

In the Matter of)
)
HYDRO RESOURCES, INC.)
2929 Coors Road)
Suite 101)
Albuquerque, NM 87120)

Docket No. 40-8968-ML

ASLBP No. 95-706-01-ML

**INTERVENORS' MOTION FOR LEAVE TO REPLY
TO HRI'S AND STAFF'S RESPONSES TO INTERVENORS'
PETITION FOR REVIEW OF LBP-99-1**

INTRODUCTION

Intervenors Eastern Navajo Diné Against Uranium Mining ("ENDAUM"), Southwest Research and Information Center ("SRIC"), Marilyn Morris and Grace Sam hereby move for leave to reply to Hydro Resources, Inc.'s Opposition to Intervenors' Petition for Review of Presiding Officer's February 3, 1999 Partial Initial Decision Regarding Liquid Waste Disposal Issues (March 2, 1999) ("HRI's Response") and the Nuclear Regulatory Commission Staff's Response to Petition for Review of LBP-99-1 (March 5, 1999) ("Staff's Response"). The opportunity for a reply is needed in order to respond to a new request from HRI to postpone briefing of this matter, and to correct the Staff's material errors in contesting the timeliness of Intervenors' filing.

HRI opposes this motion. Counsel for Intervenors was unable to reach counsel

U.S. NUCLEAR REGULATORY COMMISSION
RULEMAKINGS & ADJUDICATIONS STAFF
OFFICE OF THE SECRETARY
OF THE COMMISSION

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for the Staff for its position before filing this motion.

FACTS

LBP-99-1, the Presiding Officer's Partial Initial Decision (Waste Disposal Issues), was served via first class mail on February 3, 1999. On February 23, 1999, Intervenors filed their Petition for Review of that decision. Intervenors' Petition for Review of Presiding Officer's Partial Initial Decision (Waste Disposal Issues) ("Petition for Review"). On March 2, 1999, HRI filed HRI's Response, arguing that the Petition for Review lacks merit. HRI also contends that if review is granted, briefing should be deferred "until the Presiding Officer has issued decisions on each of the issues being addressed in the current hearing and the Commission has decided which of the issues, if any, will be granted review." HRI Response at 3-4. The Staff served its response on March 5, 1999, arguing that the Petition for Review was not timely filed, and review is not warranted. Staff Response at 2-3.

ARGUMENT

The Commission may exercise its discretion under 10 C.F.R. § 2.786(b)(3) to entertain a reply to an opposition to a petition for review. Intervenors submit that as a matter of fairness to the parties, Intervenors should be allowed to respond to HRI's new argument and to correct the Staff's error regarding the timeliness of their Petition for Review.

First, the Intervenors should be given a chance to respond to HRI's request for

deferred briefing, which is made for the first time in its Response. If permitted to reply, the Intervenors will demonstrate that deferred briefing is not only inconsistent with the NRC's regulations at 10 C.F.R. § 2.1253 (requiring the immediate filing of petitions for review following partial initial decisions), but directly contradicts the Commission's directive in this proceeding that the case be decided in manageable portions. *See* CLI-99-1 at 3-4 (January 29, 1999) ("A series of partial decisions, rather than one grand decision at the proceeding's end, would accommodate efficient appellate review by the Commission, if it is sought."). Moreover, the Intervenors will demonstrate that deferred briefing will not achieve the efficiency suggested by HRI. Just as separate written presentations for various issues has facilitated efficient review for the Presiding Officer, so will separate briefing of issues on appeal allow the Commission to review and decide matters on appeal, while the licensing board is completing its initial decisions.

Second, Intervenors should be given the opportunity to correct the Staff's error in challenging the timeliness of the Petition for Review. Contrary to the Staff's argument, the Presiding Officer did not make formal service of LBP-99-1 on the parties by electronic mail.¹ While the Presiding Officer did send an electronic copy of LBP-

¹ Moreover, contrary to the Staff's argument, the Presiding Officer has not adopted electronic service as the rule for every filing in this proceeding. The Presiding Officer has only directed that written presentations and responses be filed electronically, not that all pleadings must be filed electronically. *See* Staff Response at 2 note 3; Memorandum and Order (Scheduling and Partial Grant of Motion for Bifurcation) at 3-4 (September 22, 1998).

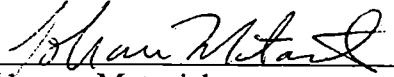
99-1 to the parties, his message clearly identified the copy as a "courtesy copy" to the parties, and he did not forward it electronically to the Commission. A copy of the Presiding Officer's electronic message is attached hereto as Exhibit 1. As shown on the certificate of service attached to LBP-99-1, formal service was carried out by first-class mail. Consistent with the regulations, the Intervenors timely filed their Petition for Review on February 23, 1999, which is within 20 days of service of LBP-99-1. See 10 C.F.R. §§ 2.786(b)(1) (allowing 15 days for a response) and 2.710 (allowing an additional five days where service has been effected by first class mail).

The Commission should exercise its discretion to allow Intervenors to respond to HRI's new argument and to correct the record regarding the timeliness of the Petition for Review. The limited reply will not prejudice any party, and it is necessary to ensure fairness to the Intervenors.

CONCLUSION

For the foregoing reasons, Intervenors respectfully request that the Commission grant their motion to file a reply to HRI's and the Staff's Responses.

Respectfully submitted,



Johanna Matanich

Douglas Meiklejohn

Lila Bird

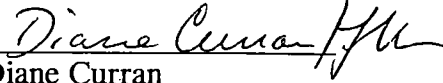
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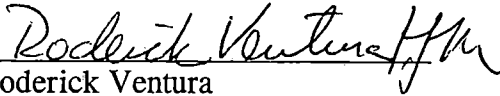
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UNITED STATES OF AMERICA
NUCLEAR REGULATORY COMMISSION
BEFORE THE COMMISSION

In the Matter of)
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HYDRO RESOURCES, INC.) Docket No. 40-8968-ML
2929 Coors Road)
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Albuquerque, NM 87120)
)

CERTIFICATE OF SERVICE

I hereby certify that:

On March 9, 1999, I caused to be served copies of the following:

**INTERVENORS' MOTION FOR LEAVE TO REPLY TO HRI'S AND STAFF'S
RESPONSES TO INTERVENORS' PETITION FOR REVIEW OF LBP 99-1**

upon the following persons by U.S. mail, first class, and in accordance with the requirements of 10 C.F.R. § 2.712. Service was also made via facsimile and e-mail to the parties marked below by an asterisk. The envelopes were addressed as follows:

Office of the Secretary
U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission*
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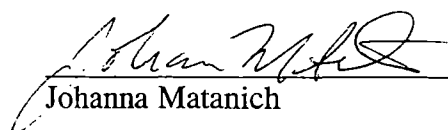
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Dated at Santa Fe, New Mexico,
March 9, 1999,



Johanna Matanich

Subject: Liquid Effluent Decision

Date: Wed, 03 Feb 1999 11:36:29 -0500

From: Peter Bloch <PBB@nrc.gov>

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CC: JSH@nrsmtp.nrc.gov, SFG@nrsmtp.nrc.gov, TDM@nrsmtp.nrc.gov

This is a courtesy copy. It will be delivered to the Secretary of the Commission this afternoon.

Peter Bloch
Presiding Officer

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