



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

PDR

JAN 10 1979

MEMORANDUM FOR: Ross A. Scarano, Section Leader
Uranium Mill Licensing Section

FROM: Eugene A. Trager
Uranium Mill Licensing Section

SUBJECT: MEETING MINUTES

Purpose

To discuss the DES for the White Mesa Project with Energy Fuels Nuclear (EFN), Docket No. 40-8681.

Place and Date

USNRC, Willste Bldg., Silver Spring, Maryland, January 5, 1979.

Attendees

EFN - Bob Adams, Chairman
Don Sparling, Manager of Uranium Processing
Dave Markley, Environmental Coordinator
George Glasier, Counsel
Dale A. Kimball, Counsel
K. R. Porter, Consultant (Dames & Moore)

NRC - E. A. Trager, Uranium Mill Licensing Section

Discussion

EFN expressed concern about delays in the environmental review due to receipt of comments on the DES past the end of the 45 day comment period. EFN was given copies of the Sweetwater FES for use in trying to anticipate (and prepare responses to) the types of comments that might be received on the White Mesa DES. Copies of comments received on the DES will be periodically forwarded to EFN to expedite responses. In order to avoid redundancy EFN will refer to earlier responses when appropriate, i.e., for identical comments.

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EFN will be meeting with the Utah SHPO next week to discuss mitigation of the White Mesa archaeological sites. EFN was reminded that NRC action on the site archaeology could not begin until the letter from the Utah SHPO on significance and adverse effect was received.

EFN had the following major comments on the DES:

1. EFN would like the option of being able to use natural material liners in lieu of synthetic liners in impoundment cells following cell 1 (as initially proposed) and without having to request a license amendment to do so. They were informed that the license would commit EFN to a specific liner plan and that a license amendment would be required to change such a commitment. EFN is conducting experiments in hope of supporting the belief that a liner of natural materials would be as acceptable as a synthetic liner system and will try to submit the results of the experimentation in time to incorporate this information in the FES.
2. EFN disagreed with certain parameters used in the DES to develop sources terms for particulates from the tailings impoundment. Section 3.2.4.7 of the DES states that the staff conservatively assumed (for purposes of radiological impact analysis) that there would be a 5 year drying period for each cell and that there would be approximately 100 ha (250 acres) of tailings area available for dusting. EFN was particularly concerned because these figures are not those used in a PSD (Prevention of Significant Deterioration air quality standard) application recently filed with the EPA. For example, EFN feels that there will never be more than 25 acres of tailings available for dusting at any one time.
3. In Chapter 10 (Sect. 10.5 on Alternate Energy Sources, pp. 10-24 and 10-25) and Appendix B of the DES emphasis is placed on the value of produced U₃O₈ to the U. S. consumer through the electricity ultimately produced. EFN stated these sections should be reworded because under current plans the U₃O₈ produced in the White Mesa mill will not be consumed in the U. S.

4. EFN felt that mention could be made in Chapter 10 of the DES that the archaeology of the region around the White Mesa was similar. For example, the density of archaeological sites on nearby Black Mesa is similar to that found on the White Mesa. EFN will provide information to support this claim.
5. EFN disagrees with the statement in Sect. 6.3.2 that "the available groundwater data cannot be presumed to represent background conditions," and with requirements in Sect. 6.5.1 (daily monitoring of waterfowl during spring and fall migratory periods) and in Sect. 6.5.2 (to obtain baseline information on aquatic biota in ephemeral streams).
6. EFN would like to have as much information as possible on the procedures that would be followed in obtaining a bond for the White Mesa Project.
7. Dames and Moore (EFN's consultant) would like to obtain a copy of the version of UDAD used in assessing the radiological impacts of the proposed White Mesa Project.
8. The slurry transport of yellowcake was mentioned in Chapter 10 as a process alternative considered by the applicant. EFN expressed a desire to have the option of changing this part of the proposed milling operation at some later date. EFN was again informed (see 1 above) that such a process modification would require a license amendment.

EFN will document and provide supporting information for these and other minor comments as soon as possible.

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