



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

APR 11 1980

PDR-DCS
8005060035
C

WMUR:LSP
Docket No. 40-8698

Plateau Resources Limited
ATTN: Mr. R. B. Sewell
Manager of Operations
772 Horizon Drive
Grand Junction, Colorado 81501

Gentlemen:

This letter is to confirm the telephone conversation of April 7, 1980, between P. Newman of your staff and R. Person of my staff concerning the radiological fauna sampling program which was proposed by Plateau Resources Limited (letter of May 4, 1979) as part of their overall environmental monitoring program for the Shootering Canyon Mill (Docket No. 40-8698).

It is our understanding that you will begin this sampling program as soon as the Shootering Canyon tailings pond becomes operational. We also understand that you will send carbon copies of all reports and data gathered from this program to Mr. Thomas Bond at the U.S. Department of Interior, 18th and C Streets, N.W., Washington, D.C.

If there are any questions or misunderstandings regarding this matter, please do not hesitate to let us know.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "John J. Linehan".

John J. Linehan, Section Leader
Uranium Recovery Licensing Branch
Division of Waste Management

cc: Mr. Thomas Bond

Enclosure:
Ltr to J. E. Rothfleisch fm R. B. Sewell
dtd May 4, 1979



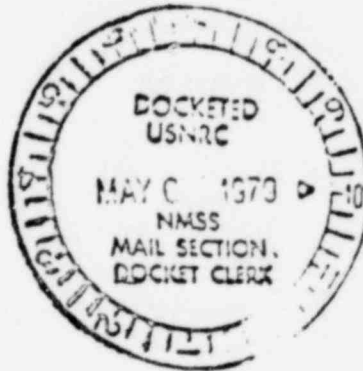
PDR 40-8698

ENCLOSURE

General Office: 772 Horizon Drive, Grand Junction, CO 81501 (303) 245 5460
Corporate Office: 212 West Michigan Avenue, Jackson, MI 49201 (517) 787 8415
Registered Office: 141 East First South, Salt Lake City, UT 84111 (801) 534 0734

R. B. Sewell
Manager of Operations

May 4, 1979



Mr. J. E. Rothfleisch
Uranium Recovery Licensing Branch
Division of Waste Management
U. S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission
Washington, D.C. 20555

Re: Docket 40-8698

Dear Mr. Rothfleisch:

Attached are our responses to comments submitted to the NRC by the U.S. Department of Interior (DOI) on the Shootering Project Draft Environmental Statement, which you forwarded to us by letter of April 18, 1979. The NRC assigned serial number 16 to the DOI comments letter. A copy of the DOI comments is appended to our responses for convenience of reference. Our responses include suggested changes to the DES as seem appropriate.

Please advise us if you need additional information.

Sincerely,
for R B Sewell
by M B Tennison
R.B. Sewell
Manager of Operations

cc: Mr. Minton J. Kelly
ORNL

Enclosure

2234 213

12771

Dupe of

7906010155

c

Comment 039 (page 4-7, 4.6.1 Terrestrial)

The tailings pond will attract birds and mammals and could severely impact wildlife. Also, there could be cumulative effects on carnivorous birds and animals that prey on species that have consumed contaminants.

Response

We agree that some birds and mammals may come into contact with the tailings impoundment since only a few animals can be excluded by fencing the pond. However, we feel that the tailings impoundment would not attract animals from long distances and that the water quality, if there is any ponding, would further reduce the number of animals that would actually consume or contact any of the liquid. Therefore, only the animals in the immediate vicinity are likely to face this danger. Since there is a possibility that contaminated prey species could introduce radiological contaminants to higher trophic levels (such as carnivorous birds and mammals), the monitoring program is being expanded to include radiological analyses of small mammals. These mammals would be collected annually from the area in the vicinity of the tailings pond. The deer mouse should be used for analyses since this rodent eats vegetation as well as insects. Also, they should be common in the area since they are generally a major species around most disturbed habitats.

Suggested Changes to DES

Table 6.2 should be modified by adding the following to the bottom of the table after "vegetation or forage" on page 6-10.

2234 252

<u>Type of Sample</u>	<u>Number</u>	<u>Location</u>	<u>Method</u>	<u>Frequency</u>	<u>Type of Measurement</u>
Fauna	3	Near tail- ing pond	Trap	Annually	Natural uranium, Ra-226, Th-230, Pb-210, and Po-210

Comment #40 ((draft 8, sec. 4.6.2 Aquatic)

Regarding contamination of Lake Powell.

Response

The mine waste accumulated in the canyons is the result of some 40 years of activity in the area, only a small portion of which has been contributed by Plateau's exploration and development. Even so "contamination" of the stream waters from Shitamarring Canyon is actually less (based on streamflow samples taken in 1977) for most chemical and radiological components than that of Hansen Creek where there is no mining going on. However, current plans for future mine development call for mine waste from the northeast ore body only to be dumped in controlled areas well above the 500-year floodplain and runoff into these areas controlled and treated if necessary to meet the requirements of the proposed RCRA regulation on "hazardous" solid wastes.

Further evaluation of what can be done, if anything, to protect or contain the existing mine wastes in the canyons under Plateau's jurisdiction has begun. Finalization of such waste disposition must inherently await the stipulation of the legal regulation in final form.

Suggested Changes to DES - None.

2234 253



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

DCS

APR 11 1980

WMUR:LSP
Docket No. 40-8698

Plateau Resources Limited
ATTN: Mr. R. B. Sewell
Manager of Operations
772 Horizon Drive
Grand Junction, Colorado 81501

Gentlemen:

This letter is to confirm the telephone conversation of April 7, 1980, between P. Newman of your staff and R. Person of my staff concerning the radiological fauna sampling program which was proposed by Plateau Resources Limited (letter of May 4, 1979) as part of their overall environmental monitoring program for the Shootering Canyon Mill (Docket No. 40-8698).

It is our understanding that you will begin this sampling program as soon as the Shootering Canyon tailings pond becomes operational. We also understand that you will send carbon copies of all reports and data gathered from this program to Mr. Thomas Bond at the U.S. Department of Interior, 18th and C Streets, N.W., Washington, D.C.

If there are any questions or misunderstandings regarding this matter, please do not hesitate to let us know.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "John J. Linehan".

John J. Linehan, Section Leader
Uranium Recovery Licensing Branch
Division of Waste Management

cc: Mr. Thomas Bond

Enclosure:
Ltr to J. E. Rothfleisch fm R. B. Sewell
dtd May 4, 1979



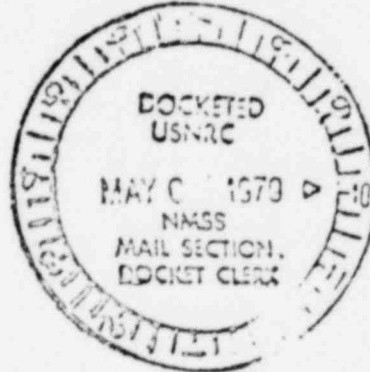
ENCLOSURE

General Office: 772 Horizon Drive, Grand Junction, CO 81501
Corporate Office: 212 West Michigan Avenue, Jackson, MI 49201
Registered Office: 141 East First South, Salt Lake City, UT 84111

(303) 245 5460
(517) 727 2415
(801) 534 6734

R. B. Sewell
Manager of Operations

May 4, 1979



Mr. J. E. Rothfleisch
Uranium Recovery Licensing Branch
Division of Waste Management
U. S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission
Washington, D.C. 20555

Re: Docket 40-8698

Dear Mr. Rothfleisch:

Attached are our responses to comments submitted to the NRC by the U.S. Department of Interior (DOI) on the Shootering Project Draft Environmental Statement, which you forwarded to us by letter of April 18, 1979. The NRC assigned serial number 16 to the DOI comments letter. A copy of the DOI comments is appended to our responses for convenience of reference. Our responses include suggested changes to the DES as seem appropriate.

Please advise us if you need additional information.

Sincerely,
for R B Sewell
by M B [Signature]
R.B. Sewell
Manager of Operations

2234 213

cc: Mr. Minton J. Kelly
ORNL

Enclosure

POOR ORIGINAL

12771

Dupe of 790301015 *c*

Comment 039 (page 4-7, 4.6.1 Terrestrial)

The tailings pond will attract birds and mammals and could severely impact wildlife. Also, there could be cumulative effects on carnivorous birds and animals that prey on species that have consumed contaminants.

Response

We agree that some birds and mammals may come into contact with the tailings impoundment since only a few animals can be excluded by fencing the pond. However, we feel that the tailings impoundment would not attract animals from long distances and that the water quality, if there is any ponding, would further reduce the number of animals that would actually consume or contact any of the liquid. Therefore, only the animals in the immediate vicinity are likely to face this danger. Since there is a possibility that contaminated prey species could introduce radiological contaminants to higher trophic levels (such as carnivorous birds and mammals), the monitoring program is being expanded to include radiological analyses of small mammals. These mammals would be collected annually from the area in the vicinity of the tailings pond. The deer mouse should be used for analyses since this rodent eats vegetation as well as insects. Also, they should be common in the area since they are generally a major species around most disturbed habitats.

Suggested Changes to DES

Table 6.2 should be modified by adding the following to the bottom of the table after "vegetation or forage" on page 6-10.

2234 252

<u>Type of</u>	<u>Sample</u>	<u>Number</u>	<u>Location</u>	<u>Method</u>	<u>Frequency</u>	<u>Type of</u> <u>Measurement</u>
	Fauna	3	Near tail- ing pond	Trap	Annually	Natural ura- nium, Ra-226, Th-230, Pb-210, and Po-210

Comment #40 ((draft 8, sec. 4.6.2 Aquatic)

Regarding contamination of Lake Powell.

Response

The mine waste accumulated in the canyons is the result of some 40 years of activity in the area, only a small portion of which has been contributed by Plateau's exploration and development. Even so "contamination" of the stream waters from Shitsmarring Canyon is actually less (based on streamflow samples taken in 1977) for most chemical and radiological components than that of Hansen Creek where there is no mining going on. However, current plans for future mine development call for mine waste from the northeast ore body only to be dumped in controlled areas well above the 500-year floodplain and runoff into these areas controlled and treated if necessary to meet the requirements of the proposed RCRA regulation on "hazardous" solid wastes.

Further evaluation of what can be done, if anything, to protect or contain the existing mine wastes in the canyons under Plateau's jurisdiction has begun. Finalization of such waste disposition must inherently await the stipulation of the legal regulation in final form.

Suggested Changes to DES - None.

2234 253