

Albert R. Chernoff, Project Manager  
 Uranium Mill Tailings Remedial Action  
 Project Office  
 U.S. Department of Energy  
 Albuquerque Operations Office  
 P.O. Box 5400  
 Albuquerque, New Mexico 87115

FEB 25 1993

Dear Mr. Chernoff:

The U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission staff is currently finalizing our Technical Evaluation Report (TER) for the Gunnison, Colorado, Uranium Mill Tailings Remedial Action Project site. This work is being done in anticipation of the Department of Energy's (DOE) response to our letter of December 17, 1992, which listed open issues and comments on the final Remedial Action Plan (RAP). In preparing the ground water section of the TER, we have identified two additional revisions that need to be included in the RAP page changes that DOE will submit.

First, DOE should include nitrate and silver in the list of constituents with Maximum Concentration Limits (MCLs) in Table 5.1 of the Remedial Action Selection Report (RAS) (page 70) and in Table 3.1 of RAP Attachment 4 (page 13). Both are mentioned in the text with the other inorganic hazardous constituents that meet or exceed the MCLs in the tailings pore fluid samples.

Second, the hydraulic conductivity value for the radon barrier is stated as  $1 \times 10^{-8}$  cm/s in the RAS (page 30) and in Section 2.2.1 of Attachment 4 (page 10). The response to Open Issue 5 for the preliminary final RAP acceptably indicated that a value of  $1 \times 10^{-7}$  cm/s will still ensure that the design meets the requirements of the ground water compliance strategy. However, since site-specific data was not provided to support the stringently-low  $1 \times 10^{-8}$  value for hydraulic conductivity, the RAP should be revised to consistently indicate a hydraulic conductivity of  $1 \times 10^{-7}$  cm/s.

If you have any questions, please contact me at FTS 8-301-504-3439, or the NRC Project Manager, Elaine Brummett at FTS 8-301-504-2533.

Sincerely,

John J. Surmeier, Chief  
 Uranium Recovery Branch  
 Division of Low-level Waste Management  
 and Decommissioning  
 Office of Nuclear Material Safety  
 and Safeguards

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