



UNITED STATES
NUCLEAR REGULATORY COMMISSION

REGION IV
URANIUM RECOVERY FIELD OFFICE
BOX 25325
DENVER, COLORADO 80225

MAY 13 1993

Docket No. 40-8914
SUA-1482

MEMORANDUM FOR: David Meyer, Branch Chief
Rules Review and Directives Branch
Office of Administration

FROM: Ramon E. Hall, Director
Uranium Recovery Field Office

SUBJECT: PUBLICATION OF A FINAL FINDING OF NO SIGNIFICANT IMPACT

In accordance with 10 CFR 51.35, attached is a final finding of no significant impact (FONSI) regarding termination of Source Material License SUA-1492. This FONSI is for publication in the Federal Register as soon as possible.

Please contact Dawn L. Jacoby of my staff on (303) 231-5815 when the date of publication is known or if there are any questions concerning this request.

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Ramon E. Hall".

Ramon E. Hall
Director

Attachment:
As stated

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U. S. NUCLEAR REGULATORY COMMISSION

DOCKET NO. 40-8914

HECLA MINING COMPANY

FINAL FINDING OF NO SIGNIFICANT IMPACT REGARDING THE TERMINATION OF A SOURCE MATERIAL LICENSE FOR HECLA MINING COMPANY, JOHNNY M MINE SITE, MC KINLEY COUNTY, NEW MEXICO.

AGENCY: U. S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission

ACTION: Notice of Final Finding of No Significant Impact

1. Proposed Action

The proposed administrative action is to terminate the source material license authorizing Hecla Mining Company (Hecla) to possess byproduct material at the Johnny M Mine, McKinley County, New Mexico.

2. Reasons for the Final Finding of No Significant Impact

The Johnny M Mine located near San Mateo, New Mexico, was operated by Ranchers Exploration and Development (predecessor to Hecla Mining Company) from early 1972 to late 1982. The mining operation included backfilling of mined-out areas with mill tailings. The tailings were returned to the site from the mill which processed the ore. An estimated 286,000 tons of tailings were injected into the mine. Disposal depths ranged from 1134 feet to 1148 feet and from 1162 feet to 1183 feet below the surface (using the shaft for datum) or about 1100 to 1300 feet underground, depending on the terrain.

Reclamation of the mine property began in early 1982. The mine shaft was sealed with a 4-foot thick water ring reinforced concrete plug set between the Dakota formation and the Westwater Canyon member of the Morrison formation. The portal was sealed with a 12-inch thick reinforced concrete plug, and a 26-inch diameter capped steel pipe was set in the concrete.

The radiological reclamation plan for the site consisted of removing the remaining surface contamination until appropriate standards were met. The underground tailings were to be left undisturbed. The contaminated material was transported to and disposed of at the Quivira Mining Company's Pond 2 disposal area.

The NRC staff evaluated an Environmental Report, submitted by the licensee on February 26, 1993, addressing the effect of the proposed action on the environment.

In accordance with Title 10, Code of Federal Regulations, Part 51, Section 51.21, NRC prepared an environmental assessment addressing the proposed termination of the license. As a result of that assessment, the NRC

has determined that an environmental impact statement is not required for this proposed licensing action. The following statements support the Finding of No Significant Impact and summarize the environmental assessment:

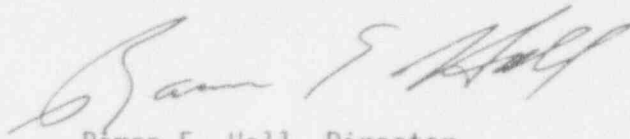
- A. In accordance with 10 CFR Part 51.60(b)(3), the licensee submitted an Environmental Report documenting the potential environmental effects of the proposed change.
- B. The closure of site meets all the criteria of 10 CFR 40, Appendix A. It was determined that the ground water has not been significantly affected by the tailings. Surface reclamation has been verified by soil sampling. The deed to the land has been annotated to indicate that the tailings are present and that they are subject to an NRC general license under Title 10, Part 40, Code of Federal Regulations, prohibiting the disruption and disturbance of the tailings.
- C. The site has been reclaimed to the requirements of 10 CFR 40, Paragraph 40.42, and is suitable for release for unrestricted use.
- D. There is no need for long-term surveillance of the site due to the location of the tailings in the mine.

In accordance with 10 CFR Part 51.34(a), the Director, Uranium Recovery Field Office (URFO), made the determination to issue a final finding of no significant impact in the Federal Register. Source Material License SUA-1482 for the Johnny M Mine will be terminated upon publication in the Federal Register.

The environmental evaluations setting forth the basis for the finding are available for public inspection and copying at the Commission's Uranium Recovery Field Office at 730 Simms Street, Golden, Colorado, and at the Commission's Public Document Room at 2120 L Street, N.W., Washington, D.C.

Dated at Denver, Colorado,
this 13th day of May 1993

FOR THE NUCLEAR REGULATORY COMMISSION



Ramon E. Hall, Director
Uranium Recovery Field Office

MAY 13 1993

bcc:
Docket No. 40-8914
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