

Mr. James E. Gilchrist
Vice President
Environmental Affairs
American Mining Congress
1920 N-Street NW, Suite 300
Washington, DC 20036-1662

JUL 12 1993

Dear Mr. Gilchrist:

Thank you for your letter to Chairman Selin dated May 28, 1993, regarding closure of the Uranium Recovery Field Office (URFO) in Denver, Colorado. As you are aware, the President directed all Federal agencies to reduce staffing and as a result the Nuclear Regulatory Commission decided to close URFO in 1994.

The Commission recognizes and is sensitive to the substantive concerns of industry and states that are involved in the uranium recovery program, particularly with respect to the need to ensure continued constructive and effective communication and interaction with the NRC. These concerns and related issues have been addressed in a detailed URFO closure plan that was approved by the Commission on June 28, 1993. The plan indicates that the final closure of URFO will occur August 1, 1994. An NRC Transition Oversight Team has been formed to ensure as smooth a transition as possible. Interaction with this group will allow continued input by both industry and state officials, as the plan is implemented. One responsibility of the Transition Oversight Team is to assure that licensing reviews and the conduct of inspections will not be disrupted during the transition period.

The Transition Oversight Team is currently planning to meet with uranium recovery industry representatives and interested state officials early this fall to discuss transition planning issues. Thank you for identifying Mr. Ferdinand and Mr. Alberts as industry points of contact. Richard Bangart, Director of the Division of Low-Level Waste Management and Decommissioning, heads the NRC's Transition Oversight Team and can be reached at (301) 504-3340.

The decision to close URFO was primarily driven by projected resource limitations. However, be assured that NRC's interest in the areas covered by URFO will not be diminished by the closing.

Sincerely, Original signed by
Robert M. Bernero
Robert M. Bernero, Director
Office of Nuclear Material Safety
and Safeguards

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