

WM-9
PDR
Return to
wm
623-55

DISTRIBUTION
NMSS r/f
WM r/f
WMLL r/f
WMLL s/f ✓
GPangburn
EFHawkins
RDSmith
REBrowning
JBMartin

JUL 8 1982

3201.6/GP/82/06/30/0

- 1 -

WMLL: 3201.6

MEMORANDUM FOR: R. Dale Smith, Chief
Low-Level Waste Licensing Branch
Division of Waste Management

FROM: G.C. Pangburn
Project Manager
Low-Level Waste Licensing Branch

SUBJECT: MEETING REPORT ON PRESENTATION BY LOUISE DRESSEN OF
CHEM-NUCLEAR SYSTEMS, INC. ON COLORADO SITE.

Attached is a meeting report on the presentation made by Louise Dressen of CNSI on June 18 to NRC staff regarding a proposed waste management facility in western Montrose County, Colorado. Ms. Dressen also left a copy of various fact sheets prepared by CNSI which are being reproduced for distribution to staff members. I suggest that in anticipation of receiving considerable additional materials on this project, we assign a file number to it, possibly under file code 3201, "Low-Level Waste Site Information."

Original Signed By

G.C. Pangburn
Project Manager
Low-Level Waste Licensing Branch

DFC	: WMLL <i>GP</i>	: WMLL <i>EFH</i>	:	:	:	:	:
NAME	: GCPangburn	: EFHawkins	:	:	:	:	:
	: /cb		:	:	:	:	:
DATE	: 82/06/30	: 82/07/8	:	:	:	:	:

NRC-Chem-Nuclear Systems, Inc., Meeting
June 18, 1982
9:00 AM
Willste Building

Subject: Presentation by Chem-Nuclear Systems, Inc. (CNSI) on the Status of Investigations into a Radioactive Waste Disposal Site in Montrose County, Colorado

Persons Present:

Louise Dressen,	CNSI, Site Development
Ed Hawkins,	NRC, WMLL
Kitty Dragonette,	NRC, WMLL
Ken Jackson,	NRC, WMLL
Derek Widmayer,	NRC, WMLL
Paul Lohaus,	NRC, WMLL
Jim Thomas,	NRC, WMLL
LeRoy Person,	NRC, WMLL
George Pangburn,	NRC, WMLL
Kathleen Hamill,	NRC, WMUR
Kathleen Schneider,	NRC, OSP
Jerry Saltzman,	NRC, OSP
Frank Young,	NRC, OSP
Craig Gordon,	NRC, OSP
Elizabeth Jordan,	DOE, Waste Management

Major Points:

- (1) Chem-Nuclear was contacted by a group of Montrose County, Colorado citizens about the possibility of locating a radioactive waste disposal facility in their county. (Under the implementing legislation for Colorado's participation in the Rocky Mountain Compact, a county has the option of coming forward as a potential host area for a disposal site and thereby foregoing some aspects of site screening. The legislation gives counties this prerogative until July, 1983. If no county has a program underway at that time, the state would take over the process of site selection).
- (2) CNSI has conducted two studies in response to the Montrose proposition: a market survey and a siting analysis. The market survey provided them with information about the waste disposal needs in The Rocky

Mountain Compact area which has conditioned the type of site they are proposing (See Item 4 below). The siting study identified four sites in the western portion of Montrose County and selected a preferred site two miles southwest of the town of Naturita, CO.

(3) CNSI has an option to purchase 160 acres of land at this preferred site and has acquired a temporary use permit from the Bureau of Land Management (BLM) for another 560 acres. Should site investigations prove the site to be feasible, CNSI would propose to acquire approximately 800 acres of land from BLM. This acquisition would take place through one of three mechanisms: public sale, exchange or in-lieu-of selection. Regardless of which mechanism is employed, the acquisition would trigger an environmental impact statement (EIS) to be prepared by BLM. At the present time, BLM is holding discussions with The Colorado State Health Department (the Agreement State licensing agency) and beginning scoping work on the EIS. It is envisioned that the Montrose BLM office would have responsibility for preparation of the EIS. (In later discussions, Ms. Dressen suggested that it might be useful for NRC to offer support to Bruce Flynn of BLM's Montrose District Office for EIS preparation. It is her understanding that BLM could most use help in dealing with radiological considerations.)

(4) The facility CNSI is considering for Montrose County would be for disposal of three types of radioactive wastes: uranium mill tailings from both active and inactive sites, commercial LLW from the Rocky Mountain Compact states and radium wastes from the Denver area (very small in volume). The market survey alluded to earlier led them to the conclusion that a facility limited to disposal of LLW from the Rocky Mountain Compact would not be economically feasible. As presently envisioned, disposal of all three waste types at the Montrose-West facility would be below grade.

(5) CNSI has begun a preliminary drilling program which is to be completed in August, 1982. The results of this drilling program are intended to provide CNSI with

sufficient information to determine whether full-scale site characterization activities will be undertaken.

(6) Should CNSI decide to proceed with the facility, site investigations and licensing are being planned on an accelerated basis: i.e., licensing of facility by end of calendar year 83 and site operations commencing in June, 1984. Factors leading to this accelerated schedule include:

- ° Strong county support to get the project going as a partial means of alleviating depressed economic conditions in Montrose County.
- ° Potential shortage of tailings disposal space as area milling operations reach their site capacity.
- ° Need by DOE to dispose of historic AEC tailings piles at a consolidated site.

(7) As a means of realizing this accelerated schedule, CNSI has reached agreement with the Colorado State Health Department (CSHD) to review parts of the application as CNSI has them available. For example, non-site specific portions of the application to CSHD may be submitted as they are developed.

(8) The preferred site has been previously investigated for similar purposes and rated high in those investigations. (Ms. Dressen used the term "Dry Creek Site" in this regard). Some general characteristics of the site which were mentioned:

- ° Located in the Uravan mineral belt;
- ° Underlain by Mancos shale formations;
- ° Relatively flat topography; and
- ° Low (@ 12 in/yr) rainfall.

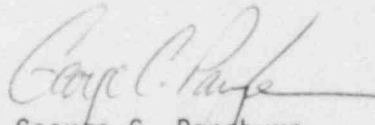
(9) CNSI has held public meetings in Montrose County over the past few months and characterized public feeling as generally supportive of the project. Two groups opposed to the project were identified:

- ° SEARCH - local group formed expressly in response to this project
- ° Western Colorado Congress - a coalition of environmental groups.

CNSI estimates that the project would employ approximately 100 workers and would result in local purchases of 3-4 million dollars per year.

(10) Ms. Dressen was questioned about the prospect of a chemical waste disposal facility co-located with the proposed radioactive waste disposal facility. She indicated that although this prospect was considered initially, it was discarded by CNSI because: (1) there is not a sufficiently large market in the area producing such waste to make it economical; and (2) the permitting process for such a facility would be totally different from that of the proposed facility.

(11) Ms. Dressen also suggested that in addition to discussing possible assistance to the Montrose District Office of BLM, NRC might make inquiries of the Colorado State Health Department regarding technical assistance in reviewing material submitted by Chem-Nuclear.


George C. Pangburn
Project Manager, WMLL