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

FEB 7 1991

Mark L. Matthews
Project Manager
Uranium Mill Tailings Remedial
Action Project Office
Department of Energy
Albuquerque Operations Office
P. O. Box 5400
Albuquerque, NM 87115

Dear Mr. Matthews:

On February 6, 1991, we received, under a cover letter dated February 5, 1991, your submittal of a Draft Comment and Response Document for NRC staff review in preparation for a meeting prior to the Falls City, Texas site visit. This submittal presented DOE's responses to the open issues identified in NRC's draft Technical Evaluation Report for the Lowman, Idaho uranium mill site. In addition, your cover letter indicated that DOE was seeking a conditional concurrence in order to begin remedial action on April 1 and that you expected the NRC staff at the meeting to provide a determination as to whether the information provided in the response document was sufficient to satisfy the open issues. Upon an evaluation of your cover letter and the response document by my staff, as stated during our telephone conversation on February 6, 1991, I must inform you that the NRC staff finds it necessary to postpone the Lowman meeting we had scheduled on February 12, 1991.

The staff's agreement, during the January 29, 1991 conference call, to meet on Lowman prior to the Falls City site visit was predicated on an understanding that NRC would meet to discuss their review of the DOE document, to be submitted by February 5, 1991, which outlined how DOE proposed to resolve the Lowman open issues. Upon receipt of your submittal, the staff had to reevaluate their ability to review the document in the time frame prior to the meeting and in light of DOE's expectations regarding the results of the meeting. As a result, the staff concluded that the length of the document to be reviewed, the absence of the TAC supporting calculations, and Mark Thaggard's inability to work on Lowman on Friday or Monday precluded our detailed review of your submittal in time for the scheduled meeting. Therefore, I would like to reschedule this meeting for February 21, 1991 at NRC headquarters. If at all possible, however, the NRC staff would like DOE to be available informally on the afternoon of February 12, 1991 to answer any questions that may have arisen in our on-going review of your response document.

In addition to rescheduling the meeting, I would like to comment directly on your expectations regarding the result of a meeting on Lowman (i.e. DOE's request for conditional concurrence). If the NRC staff reviews the response document and determines that the information provided is sufficient to resolve the open issues, then NRC will indicate, in writing, its willingness to concur in the Final RAP for the Lowman site. However, our formal concurrence can not

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be given until the Final RAP is received and has been reviewed to assure that the information from the response document on the open issues has been incorporated into the RAP.

I assure you that my staff is making every effort to be responsive to your needs on both the Grand Junction and Lowman sites. If you have any questions regarding the information provided above, please contact me at FTS 492-3439.

Sincerely,

ORIGINAL SIGNED BY

John J. Surmeier, Chief
Uranium Recovery Branch
Division of Low-Level Waste Management
and Decommissioning, NMSS

cc: P. Mann, DOE/AL
R. Donovan, Idaho

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JSurmeier JAustin PLohaus JGreeves RBangart
MFliegel SWastler DGillen EHawkins TJohnson
WBeach,RIV RHall,RIV,URFO
PDR YES X ACNW YES X

SUBJECT ABSTRACT: LOWMAN MEETING AND CONDITIONAL CONCURRENCE

OFC	:LLUR	:LLUR	:LLUR	:LLWD	:NMSS	:NMSS	:
NAME	:SWastler	:MFliegel	:JSurmeier:	:	:	:	
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