

April 1, 1994



City of Grand Junction, Colorado
250 North Fifth Street
81501-2668
FAX: (303) 244-1599

Elaine Brummett, Health Physicist
U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission
Division of Low-Level Waste Management and Decommissioning
One White Flint North Building
11555 Rockville Pike
Rockville, MD 20852

Dear Ms. Brummett: *Elaine*

Thank you for taking the time with us regarding the Department of Energy's Uranium Mill Tailings Remedial Action (UMTRA) program in Grand Junction.

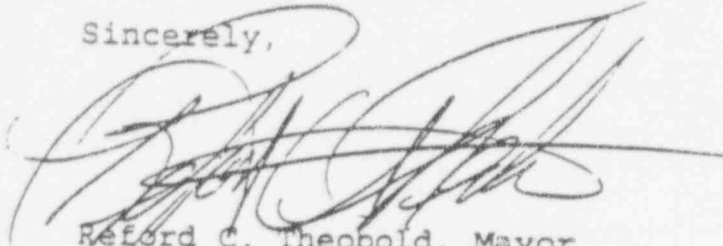
The current planned end to the UMTRA program is 1996 but we understand that DOE will be asking for an extension until 1998. The DOE has asked for NRC concurrence to leave approximately 800,000 cubic yards of mill tailings in the City of Grand Junction through the application of Supplemental Standards. The City of Grand Junction has for many years expressed great concern with leaving these materials in place without a plan to deal with their eventual disturbance.

We understand that the NRC has not approved a generic supplemental standards application until the DOE has a post-UMTRA plan in place. The City of Grand Junction whole-heartedly agrees with the need to have a post-UMTRA plan. The 800,000 cubic yards of mill tailings that are located under streets, sidewalks and around utility lines are routinely encountered during normal maintenance and construction activity. Within the last 2 weeks there have been several instances of disturbing mill tailings with construction work. One of these locations was a previously unknown deposit of mill tailings.

It has been estimated that the cost of excavating, hauling and disposing of the 800,000 cubic yards of material at a disposal site in Utah is \$640 million. We are concerned that if the current UMTRA project ends without a plan for these materials the financial burden would be transferred to the 32,000 taxpayers in the City of Grand Junction.

We will keep you informed of any DOE efforts to develop a post-UMTRA plan. We applaud your foresight in requiring such a plan as a part of any supplemental standards application.

Sincerely,

A large, stylized handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Reford C. Theobald'.

Reford C. Theobald, Mayor
City of Grand Junction

xc: Dan Guillen, NRC
Robert Fonner, NRC

file: umtra14

The Honorable Hank Brown
United States Senate
Washington, D.C. 20510-0604

May 17, 1994

Dear Senator Brown:

I am responding to your letter of April 6, 1994, in which you requested assistance in replying to a letter from Reford C. Theobald, Mayor of Grand Junction, Colorado. The U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission staff is aware of the situation regarding uranium mill tailings that will remain in Grand Junction at the completion of the Uranium Mill Tailings Remedial Action (UMTRA) Project. As Mayor Theobald points out, some of the vicinity property tailings that are in unexposed, difficult-to-excavate areas, such as under streets and around utilities, would be left by the U.S. Department of Energy (DOE).

The NRC staff met with Mayor Theobald to discuss this subject on March 14, 1994. During that meeting, we informed the Mayor and his staff that we are working with DOE, through our review and concurrence process, to ensure development of a post-UMTRA plan, to handle these and other tailings remaining after the project ends. Furthermore, DOE has informed us that it has plans to complete a draft post-UMTRA position paper by July 1, 1994. This paper will consider the results of the recent value engineering session sponsored by the Colorado Department of Health, to address this issue.

Please convey this status to the Mayor in your response. I trust that this reply responds to your request.

Sincerely,

Original signed by
Hugh L. Thompson, Jr.

for James M. Taylor
Executive Director
for Operations

Distribution: See attachment

SUBJECT ABSTRACT: EDO-9988: URANIUM MILL TAILINGS REMEDIAL ACTION 9UMTRA0 PROGRAM

* See previous concurrence

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