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MEMORANDUM FOR: Ross A. Scarano, Chief
Low-Level Waste Licensing Branch

FROM: Kathleen J. Hamill, Project Manager
Uranium Recovery Licensing Section
Low-Level Waste Licensing Branch

SUBJECT: TRIP REPORT - URANIUM MILL TAILINGS MANAGEMENT SYMPOSIUM

Place and Date

October 26-27, 1981; Colorado State University - Fort Collins, Colorado

Participants

Participants in the symposium included a broad spectrum of individuals involved with uranium mill tailings management and reclamation. This included personnel from: the uranium mining and milling industry; federal and state licensing and regulatory agencies; environmental and engineering consultants; and research organizations.

Purpose and Summary

The purpose of the trip was to attend the fourth annual symposium held on the subject of uranium mill tailings management. The primary objective of all of the symposia has been to enhance dialogue between all of those persons concerned with uranium mill tailings management and to present the state-of-the-art in the related technical areas. During the period from 1978 to 1980, that period in which the first three symposia were held, considerable effort was devoted to advancement of the state-of-the-art and development of innovations in uranium mill tailings management. Regulations and standards were developed and promulgated during this period as the science and engineering of mill tailings management matured. Present economic conditions have caused a shift in emphasis from design of new impoundments to operation and reclamation of existing sites. Activity in the UMTRA program with regard to remedial action at the inactive sites is moving toward

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development of site specific designs and implementation. The papers presented at this fourth symposium reflected this shift.

The major topics addressed in papers presented at the symposium included: the Department of Energy's Remedial Action Program; health effects; long term tailings management; radon control and covers; groundwater and geochemistry; seepage control; and, tailings pond liner stability. The complete proceedings of the symposium have been published and are available through the NRC librarian.

Following the symposium, I attended the opening session of the NEA/OECD geomorphological processes workshop, also held at Colorado State University. The introduction to the meeting involved discussions of the mill tailings regulatory approach being pursued in Canada, Austrailia, and the United States. Presentations on the U.S. situation were made by NRC, DOE, and EPA. The geomorphological workshop was organized in order to provide an opportunity to exchange information necessary to assess the long term stability of a uranium tailings disposal site. Those processes which affect landforms, e.g. climate change, tectonic activity, etc. may create geomorphic hazards as a result of their influence on runoff, sediment yields, river behavior, and slope erosion. A summary report of the workshop prepared by a panel of geomorphologists is attached.

Original Signed by:
K. Hamill

Kathleen J. Hamill, Project Manager
Uranium Recovery Licensing Section
Low-Level Waste Licensing Branch

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