

40-3453/RFB/87/01/27/0

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FEB 25 1987

Docket File 40-3453
PDR/DCS
DBangart, RIV
RBrich
HPettengill
LAnderson, RCPD, UT
LLW Branch, WMLU
URFO r/f

URFO:RFB
Docket No. 40-3453

Atlas Minerals
ATTN: Richard Blubaugh
743 Horizon Court
Suite 202
Grand Junction, Colorado 81506

Dear Mr. Blubaugh:

We have completed our initial staff review of your submittal dated January 23, 1987, which provides the results of your windblown tailings delineation survey, a determination of the background radium-226 concentration, areas proposed for cleanup, and a schedule for performing the cleanup. We understand that you wish to commence on or before February 16, 1987, and that a final report will be submitted no later than 30 days after completion of the final verification survey, which will be completed within 60 days of the final cleanup. We also understand that a sufficient number of soil samples will be collected to provide direct evidence of the success of cleanup efforts.

As I indicated during our telephone conversation of February 2, 1987, we have no reason to request that you postpone commencing cleanup activities at this time. However, you should note that based on our staff review of your January 23, 1987 submittal, we have determined that the background radium-226 level for cleanup should more appropriately be on the order of 5.5 pCi/g, not 9.0 pCi/g as proposed. The reason for this is that one "background" sample (Bkgrd #4) used in your study clearly indicates that windblown tailings were present at that location. We understand your difficulty in establishing a delta gamma level considering the sensitivity of your instrumentation and the proximity of the intense shine contribution caused by the pile. For that reason we recommend that Atlas clean up all surface areas on the western side of your tailings pond out to the edge of State Highway No. 279. It appears that more extensive soil samplings and analyses of areas west of State Highway No. 279 are warranted to establish the extent of cleanup, if any, required in that area also.

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We also request that you submit your conclusions and recommended actions with regard to your evaluation of contamination on the southeastern portion of your pond by June 30, 1987. That area apparently will require some remedial actions but the evidence provided to date does not allow us to conclude whether that contamination resulted from windblown tailings as has occurred on the western perimeter of the pond or was a result of overflow from the old BaCl treatment ponds. You may proceed to treat this area of concern separate from your cleanup of windblown tailings.

In addition, we request that you provide any supplemental information that you may have regarding your proposed program for stabilization of exposed tailings beaches to assure against future losses of tailings in a similar manner. Specifically, we need additional information on the method of documentation of your periodic inspections with special emphasis on the course of corrective actions and remediation that would occur if tailings were to be transported outside of the impoundment proper if your enhanced stabilization program were to fail. This information should be submitted by March 15, 1987.

Finally, we also require that you contact us at least two weeks prior to discing any cleaned areas in order to allow us adequate time to plan a followup inspection of the cleaned areas. Should you have any questions or comments on this determination please contact Randy Brich of my staff on (303) 236-2811.

Sincerely,

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Harry J. Pettengill, Chief
Licensing Branch 2
Uranium Recovery Field Office
Region IV

OFC	: URFO <i>RFB</i>	: URFO <i>ppp</i>	: URFO <i>ppp</i>	:	:	:	:
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