

40-3453
X61074

Joe Callan, Director
Division of Radiation Safety & Safeguards
Nuclear Regulatory Commission
Region 4
611 Ryan Plaza Drive
Suite 400
Arlington, TX 76011



93 OCT 25 P2:48
URFO RECEIVED

Dear Mr. Callan:

While recently in Moab, Utah, it came to my attention that the uranium tailing pile just outside of town is being decommissioned. I understand you held hearings on what to do about the tailing pond and at this point the option you prefer (as does the owner of the pond) is to cover the tailing pile and leave it in place.

Since looking at the tailing pond I have a few thoughts to share with you. The tailing pond is one of the worse sited and maintained ponds I have seen in my life. It is sited in a flood plain, appears to have or will impact wetlands, and is on the shoreline of the Colorado River. The pond appears to be unlined without water or any other barrier on top of the pond to reduce the release of radon gas. The pond is situated next to a population center in an area used by recreationists from around the world, many of whom can't read the "no stopping or parking" signs that are the only indication that radiation exposure is occurring.

All in all it appears that this facility is and has been out of compliance for some period of time. It further appears that the facility has and is continuing to leak into the groundwater and the Colorado River. I am appalled at your breach of duty in addressing the defects in this facility that represent a imminent threat to human health and the environment. Allowing this facility to remain in place while a very good deal for the company that owns it, is a loaded gun pointed at the head of everyone in the local area as well as anyone downstream on the Colorado River. While your agency would probably be quick to assure the public that the risk from the pond is low, I remember similar assurances given about the tailing pond at Church Rock, New Mexico, prior to it failing and contaminating the surrounding area, including the Colorado River. It should be noted

NRC FILE CENTER COPY

OFFICIAL DOCKET COPY

Add Info
94-0035

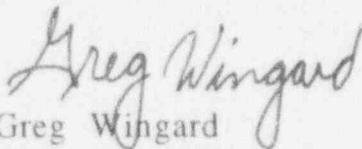
that the Curch Rock tailing pond was also much superior in design, construction and siting to the one at Moab.

If you have already done an Environmental Impact Statement on the options for cleanup of the facility, I would like the opportunity to review a copy. I am also interested in the air and groundwater monitoring data for the site as well as monitoring of water quality upstream and downstream of the Colorado River. The compliance record of the tailing pond and notices of violation issued is also of interest.

It is my opinion that the minimum required at this facility is an interim response to stabilize and minimize risk to health and the environment and a final remedial action that removes this material from the flood plain of the Colorado River. Anything less than this would be a gross dereliction of duty.

I look forward to your response.

Sincerely,



Greg Wingard
9720 - 1st NW
Seattle, WA 98117

cc: Ramone Hall, NRC
Milt Lammering, EPA
Bruce Babbit, DOI

Greg Wingard
9726 1st NW
Seattle, WA 98117



Ramona Hall, Director
Uranium Recovery, Field Office
730 Simons Street
Suite 100
Lake Wood, CO 80401

