



UNITED STATES  
NUCLEAR REGULATORY COMMISSION  
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20555-0001

September 29, 1999

Reed E. Harris, Utah Field Supervisor  
Fish and Wildlife Service  
Lincoln Plaza  
145 East 1300 South, Suite 404  
Salt Lake City, Utah 84115

SUBJECT: SHOOTARING CANYON MILL - WILDLIFE MONITORING PROGRAM

Dear Mr. Harris:

This letter is a followup to your June 30, 1999, letter to us on the Shootaring Canyon uranium mill site. The Fish and Wildlife Service (Service) determined that reclamation activities will not affect threatened or endangered species, except possibly the Jones Cycladenia plant. The Service requested that the licensee (Plateau Resources Limited (Plateau)) conduct site-clearance surveys for Jones Cycladenia prior to any new ground disturbing activities and avoid disturbance to identified plant locations. In the enclosed September 17, 1999, letter, Plateau commits that site-clearance surveys for Jones Cycladenia will be conducted prior to new ground disturbing activities, and areas where the plant is found will not be disturbed.

The Service also recommended that Plateau implement a monitoring plan to determine the extent of wildlife mortality (with emphasis on migratory birds) during mill operations and to develop appropriate mitigation plans to avoid or minimize documented wildlife mortality. In the enclosed letter, Plateau has committed to monitor the tailings pond for one year after mill operations resume to determine the species of wildlife that use the impoundment and the extent of wildlife mortality. A monitoring plan is included in the letter. At the end of one year of monitoring, PRL will develop a mitigation plan, if needed, to avoid or minimize wildlife mortality.

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R. Harris

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If you have any questions concerning this letter, please contact the NRC Project Manager for the Shootaring Canyon site, Phyllis Sobel, at (301) 415-6714.

Sincerely,

Original Signed By

John Surmeier, Chief  
Uranium Recovery and  
Low-Level Waste Branch  
Division of Waste Management  
Office of Nuclear Material Safety  
and Safeguards

Enclosure: As stated

Docket No: 40-8698  
License No: SUA-1371  
Case Closed: L51847

F. Craft, PRL

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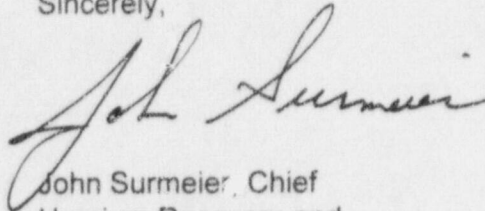
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R. Harris

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If you have any questions concerning this letter, please contact the NRC Project Manager for the Shootaring Canyon site, Phyllis Sobel, at (301) 415-6714.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "John Surmeier".

John Surmeier, Chief  
Uranium Recovery and  
Low-Level Waste Branch  
Division of Waste Management  
Office of Nuclear Material Safety  
and Safeguards

Enclosure: As stated

Docket No: 40-8698  
License No: SUA-1371

cc: F. Craft, PRL





**Corporate Offices:**  
**877 North 8th West, Riverton, WY 82501**

Tel: (307) 856-9271  
Fax: (307) 857-3050

**Shootaring Operations:**  
**Box 2111, Ticaboo, Lake Powell, UT 84533**

Tel: (801) 788-2120  
Fax: (801) 788-2118

September 17, 1999

U. S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission  
Division of Waste Management, MST7J9  
Attn. Mr. John Surmeier, Chief  
Uranium Recovery Branch and Low Level Branch  
11555 Rockville Pike  
Rockville, MD 20852

Re: Docket No. 40-8698 Shootaring Canyon Mill  
License No. SUA- 1371  
Biological Assessment

Dear Mr. Surmeier:

This letter is in response to your August 16, 1999 letter requesting a biological assessment for Shootaring Canyon uranium mill site. Enclosed is the wildlife monitoring and mitigation plan for the Shootaring Canyon mill site. You will notice that Plateau Resources Ltd. will monitor for one year then develop a mitigation plan should a mitigation plan be required.

Also, Plateau Resources Ltd. will conduct site-clearance surveys for Jones Cycladenia prior to any new ground disturbing activities and avoid disturbance to identified plant locations.

As per this letter Plateau Resources Ltd. will not be required to complete a biological assessment. Should you have any questions please contact me at (307) 856-9271.

Sincerely,  
Plateau Resources Ltd.

F. R. Craft

Enclosure

xc: C. Johnson  
File

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**Wildlife Monitoring Plan for  
the Tailings Facility of the  
Shootaring Canyon Uranium Mill  
Garfield County, Utah**

**Overview**

1. After the mill begins to operate, a one-year monitoring program will be commenced for the purpose of determining what species of wildlife use the impoundment and the extent of mortalities.
2. Following the completion of the one year of monitoring, a mitigation plan that addresses the specific issues identified during monitoring would be developed.

**Monitoring Plan**

The one-year monitoring plan would involve a daily visual inspection of the tailing impoundment by plant personnel. During this inspection all wildlife observed proximal to the impoundment will be documented and the surface and edges of the impoundment will be searched for dead birds or animals. Carcasses will be classified into the following general categories and documented on the daily-inspection form:

<u>Birds</u>	<u>Birds</u>	<u>Mammals</u>	<u>Herptiles</u>
Seagull	Small waders	Rodent	Lizard
Pelican	Dove/Pigeon	Rabbit	Snake
Duck	Nighthawk	Coyote	Salamander
Goose	Kingfisher	Fox	Toad
Heron	Woodpecker	Badger	Frog
Bird of prey	Perching birds	Deer	
Quail	Swan	Pronghorn	

Plant personnel would be formally trained in the identification of these classes of wildlife by a qualified biologist and instructor and be given identification guides for use on the site. All mortalities will be photographed for the record and for future reference and verification of identifications. Annual refresher sessions on wildlife identification will be conducted by one of the plant foremen or supervisors. The identification of wildlife to the species level will be done where feasible. Colored identification guides of the federally-listed Threatened and Endangered species that could potentially occur in the Shootaring Canyon Mill area will be provided to plant personnel and be reviewed during the instruction sessions.

If, during the initial monitoring phase, it becomes apparent that significant offsite impacts may be occurring, immediate action to avoid such impacts will be taken and an action plan that is approved by the FWS and NRC will be implemented.

Site-clearance surveys for Jones Cycladenia will be conducted prior to new ground disturbing activities. Areas where the plant is found will not be disturbed.