



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

October 6, 2021

MEMORANDUM TO: Jessie M. Quintero, Chief
Environmental Review Materials Branch
Division of Rulemaking, Environmental,
and Financial Support
Office of Nuclear Material Safety
and Safeguards

FROM: Ashley Waldron, Project Manager
Environmental Review Materials Branch
Division of Rulemaking, Environmental,
and Financial Support
Office of Nuclear Material Safety
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A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "awaldron".

Signed by Waldron, Ashley
on 10/06/21

SUBJECT: SUMMARY OF THE SEPTEMBER 1, 2021 MEETING WITH THE
PIPELINE ROAD COMMUNITY ON THE DRAFT ENVIRONMENTAL
IMPACT STATEMENT FOR UNITED NUCLEAR CORPORATION
CHURCH ROCK MILL SITE LICENSE AMENDMENT REQUEST
MCKINLEY COUNTY, NEW MEXICO (DOCKET NUMBER: 40-8907)

The U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission (NRC) staff conducted a meeting with the Pipeline Road Community on September 1, 2021, on the draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS) (NUREG-2243) for a license amendment request from United Nuclear Corporation/General Electric (UNC/GE), who proposes to amend its license to allow for 1 million cubic yards of mine waste from the adjacent Northeast Church Rock Mine site to be placed at the United Nuclear Corporation (UNC) Mill site in McKinley County, New Mexico.

The purpose of the meeting was to provide the community with an overview of the staff's analysis and findings in the DEIS and provide an opportunity for the community to ask questions prior to the end of comment period, which ends on November 1, 2021. The COVID-19 Public Health Emergency has impeded staff's ability to hold in-person meetings, so the meeting was held remotely, using Microsoft Teams. Pipeline Road community members were able to either join online through Teams or gather at the Gallup Community Center in Gallup, NM to participate.

NRC staff gave a presentation that addressed the NRC's role and responsibilities, the safety and environmental review process, and the environmental impacts of the proposed project as outlined in the DEIS. Enclosure 1 contains the NRC staff's presentation slides.

At frequent intervals following the staff's slides or discussion, a Navajo translator provided translation in Diné, the native Navajo language. The community asked questions throughout the presentation.

Approximately 30 people attended the meeting, with approximately 12 community members in attendance providing comments or asking questions. The remaining participants included staff from the NRC, U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), Department of Energy (DOE), and Navajo Nation Environmental Protection Agency (NNEPA). The community had many questions and comments, and a transcript of the comments provided is included as Enclosure 2. The comments and questions were primarily focused on:

- Opposition to the proposal;
- Disappointment that this meeting was remote and not in-person;
- Concerns that the community typically has not been included in discussions or outreach related to the Northeast Church Rock Mine site cleanup and is not adequately reflected in the DEIS; NRC staff committed to increasing community representation in the EIS.
- EPA's remedy selection process for the Mine Site;
- Status of the NRC's review of the proposed cleanup and other agencies' roles;
- Air quality concerns, particularly related to dust inhalation impacts on residents and livestock; questions about adding or changing air monitoring locations;
- Erosion around the Mill Site;
- Transportation and traffic, including safety of school children/buses at the crossing;
- Impacts on wildlife, natural areas and vegetation, sacred areas, areas used for ceremonial activities;
- Groundwater quality and sources of potable water; EPA described groundwater monitoring in the area and committed to sharing results with the community;
- Status of the neighboring Quivira Mine site and how cleanup plans for that site might coincide with cleanup for Church Rock; EPA provided clarification about Quivira cleanup plans;
- Identification of cultural sites and the NRC's programmatic agreement (PA) with other agencies under Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act concerning the protection of cultural resources; the NRC staff indicated the draft PA would be published for public comment; and
- Area roads in disrepair; requests for road improvements, a bridge, and a reliable water source for livestock.

After community members were finished making statements, staff from the NNEPA made a closing statement, including requests for several more such meetings, for the NRC to appoint a liaison to work onsite with communities for future meetings, and for the NRC to provide printed copies of the entire license application and references to the EIS. The NRC staff closed the meeting after approximately 4 hours and 15 minutes.

Docket No.: 40-8907

Enclosures:

1. Meeting presentation (ML21264A238)
2. Transcript of Comments (ML21271A163)