

From: Summerlin, Joe <summerlin.joe@epa.gov>
Sent: Wednesday, September 21, 2022 9:12 AM
To: Jean Trefethen
Cc: CrowButte-LicRenSEA.Resource@nrc.gov
Subject: [External_Sender] Draft Environmental Assessment Supplement for the Crow Butte Resources, Inc. License Renewal

Dear Ms. Trefethen:

The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency has reviewed the August 2022, draft supplement to the environmental assessment request for the License Renewal of U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission License Number SUA-1534 for the Crow Butte Resources Inc. in situ Uranium Recovery Facility in Dawes County, Nebraska, prepared by the U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission (NRC), Office of Nuclear Materials Safety and Safeguards Division of Rulemaking, Environmental and Financial Support. The following comments were prepared in accordance with our responsibilities under Section 102(2)(C) of the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) and Section 309 of the Clean Air Act.

The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency recognizes that this is a supplement to the August 2014 license renewal that was followed by an EA and accompanying finding of no significant impact (FONSI) in October of 2014. Furthermore, EPA recognizes that the NRC issued the renewal license authorizing continued in-situ uranium recovery (ISR) operations for an additional ten years. The purpose of the supplemental EA was to address deficiencies identified by an NRC Atomic Safety and Licensing Board which related to historic and cultural resources which included failure to meet its identification obligations under the NHPA, and failure to take a hard look at potential traditional cultural properties within the Crow Butte license area.

Licensed activities, include in situ uranium recovery, waste management and disposal, aquifer restoration, and wellfield decommissioning. All mine units have been developed and no further development is anticipated during the current licensing renewal period. In February 2018, CBR announced plans to cease operations in Crow Butte ISR facility. None of the mine units at the site are currently in active production.

EPA recommends that the NRC continue to correspond and communicate with Tribes and the state SHPO during the aquifer restoration and wellfield decommissioning to ensure that the community's needs are met. EPA does have an Office of Tribal Affairs and would be happy to provide any assistance in the future if needed. Please contact Joshua Tapp at (913) 551-7606 or Tapp.joshua@epa.gov.

If you have any questions or comments about the NEPA process, please contact me at (913) 551-7029 or at summerlin.joe@epa.gov.

Sincerely,

Joe Summerlin
NEPA Project Manager
Office of Intergovernmental Affairs
EPA Region 7

Federal Register Notice: 87FR52597
Comment Number: 2

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