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Chief, Rules Review and Directives Branch
Mail Stop T-6D59
U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission
Washington, DC 20556-001

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RULES AND DIRECTIVES
BRANCH
USNRC

Dear Sir,

I strongly oppose a "generic environmental impact statement" on *in situ* leach uranium mining. The specific geology and other environmental factors in each mining site in question should be examined in full detail before any mining permit is issued.

This is particularly important when the mineral in question is as dangerous to public health as is uranium.. Depending on the specific conditions of a given site, uranium mining can pose severe harm to whole communities and ecosystems, for example, by contaminating the aquifers or sources of surface water essential to their health. These conditions can change completely from one site to another site only a few miles distant from each other.

Given the tremendous complexity and diversity of environments in the American West, basing mining policy decisions on some imagined "generic environment" would be not only utterly absurd, but also criminally negligent in my opinion.

I also protest the hasty and poorly publicized manner in which public response to this proposed policy change has been solicited. It is patently clear that the Nuclear Regulatory Commission really hoped no one would notice, so that the policy could be instituted without public opposition. With that in mind, I am sending copies of this letter to each member of New Mexico's congressional delegation.

Yours truly,

Patricia L. Kutzner

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Cc.: Senator Pete Domenici, Senator Jeff Bingaman, Hon. Tom Udall, Hon. Heather Wilson, and Hon. Steve Pearce.

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