



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

March 23, 2016

Mr. Harry Barnes, Chairman
Blackfeet Tribe
P.O. Box 850
Browning, MT 59417

SUBJECT: UPDATE ON LICENSING ACTIONS RELATED TO CAMECO RESOURCES
SMITH RANCH URANIUM IN SITU RECOVERY OPERATIONS, LICENSE
SUA-1548, CONVERSE, FREMONT, NATRONA, JOHNSON, AND CAMPBELL
COUNTIES, WYOMING (TAC NO. L00783 and J00635)

Dear Mr. Barnes:

This letter is to provide you with an update on two licensing actions the U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission (NRC) is currently reviewing for Power Resources, Inc. (doing business as Cameco Resources [Cameco]) and one expected future licensing action. These licensing actions relate to Cameco's Smith Ranch uranium in situ recovery (ISR) facility, which is authorized to operate under NRC source and byproduct material license SUA-1548. This license was first issued for commercial operation in 1992. The Smith Ranch ISR facility is located in Converse County, Wyoming. Under its license, Cameco is also authorized to perform uranium ISR activities at the associated remote satellite facilities: (1) the Gas Hills ISR satellite facility in Fremont and Natrona Counties, Wyoming; (2) the North Butte ISR satellite facility in Campbell County, Wyoming; and (3) the Ruth ISR satellite facility in Johnson County, Wyoming. Enclosure 1 provides a map showing the general locations of the Smith Ranch ISR facility and each of the remote ISR satellite facilities.

Licensing Action 1 - On February 1, 2012, Cameco submitted a request to renew its NRC source and byproduct material license. If approved, this request would allow Cameco to continue ISR operations at the Smith Ranch facility and at the three remote satellite facilities. The NRC staff accepted the application for detailed review on July 5, 2012, and by letter dated December 20, 2012, the NRC invited the Blackfeet Tribe to be a consulting party under Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966, as amended (NHPA). On May 2, 2013, the NRC staff issued a request for additional information (RAI) to Cameco, and by letters dated November 18, 2014, and April 21, 2015, Cameco responded to the NRC's RAI. The NRC staff is proceeding with its detailed review and anticipates re-initiating the formal NHPA Section 106 consultation process in the next two months. The NRC staff will contact you once that occurs.

Licensing Action 2 - On April 10, 2015, Cameco submitted a license amendment request to increase the ground water processing flow rate at the North Butte ISR satellite facility from 4,000 gallons per minute to 6,000 gallons per minute. The license amendment request may be found in the Publicly Available Records component of NRC's Agencywide Documents Access and Management System (ADAMS) at ML15132A085. ADAMS is accessible from the NRC Web site at <http://www.nrc.gov/reading-rm/adams.html>. Cameco is proposing to operate

equipment within existing onsite buildings and within previously approved ISR well fields at the requested higher flow rate, and thus the proposal does not include additional earth disturbing activity. The NRC staff has accepted this request for review and is proceeding with its detailed safety and environmental reviews.

Expected Future Licensing Action - By letter dated May 6, 2015, Cameco informed the NRC staff of a future license amendment request that it intends to submit to expand the footprint of operations at its North Butte ISR satellite facility. Cameco refers to this expansion area as Brown Ranch Tract 1. The NRC staff understands that Cameco plans to submit this request in mid-2016. If the application is accepted for detailed review, the NRC staff would offer an opportunity to request a hearing and conduct safety and environmental reviews of the application. The NRC staff will also initiate a formal NHPA Section 106 consultation process for this action once the detailed review is in progress.

Should you have any questions about these actions, or wish to learn more about Cameco's Smith Ranch facility, please contact me at douglas.mandeville@nrc.gov or by phone at 301-415-0724.

In accordance with 10 CFR 2.390 of the NRC's "Agency Rules of Practice and Procedure," a copy of this letter will be available electronically for public inspection in the NRC Public Document Room or from the Publicly Available Records component of NRC's ADAMS. ADAMS is accessible from the NRC Web site at <http://www.nrc.gov/reading-rm/adams.html>.

Sincerely,

/RA/

Douglas T. Mandeville, Project Manager
Uranium Recovery Licensing Branch
Division of Decommissioning, Uranium Recovery
and Waste Programs
Office of Nuclear Material Safety
and Safeguards

Docket No. 40-8964
License No. SUA-1548

Enclosure:
Map of Smith Ranch and Associated Satellites

Letters sent to:
Tribal/THPO list for Smith Ranch License Renewal

cc: Robin Jones and Luke McMahan (WDEQ)
Larry Reimann (Cameco)

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Sincerely,

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Douglas T. Mandeville, Project Manager
Uranium Recovery Licensing Branch
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Larry Reimann (Cameco)

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OFFICE	DUWP/URLB	DUWP/URLB	FCSE	FSTLB	DUWP/URLB	OGC (NLO)	DUWP/URLB
NAME	DMandeville	SAchten	JPark	STalley	BVonTill	JOlmstead	DMandeville
DATE	1/13/16	1/13/16	1/21/16	2/18/16	2/8/16	2/26/16	3/23/16

OFFICIAL RECORD COPY



LEGEND

★ SMITH RANCH PROJECT AREA AND ASSOCIATED SATELLITES

— PRIMARY CAMCO TRANSPORTATION ROUTES

— INTERSTATE, STATE AND COUNTY ROADS

REVISIONS		
NO.	DATE	BY

Cameco Resources
NRC SOURCE MATERIAL
LICENSE SUA-1548

SMITH RANCH AND REMOTE SATELLITES

FIGURE 1.1
GENERAL SUA-1548 LOCATION MAP

SIZE	SCALE	DEPARTMENT	CURRENT
11x17	SEE GRAPHIC SCALE		0

CUWCR02-01-148-NRC License Renewal/PPS Renewal/GENERAL LOCATION Map

List of Tribal/THPO Addresses – Smith Ranch License Renewal

Blackfeet Tribe

Mr. Harry Barnes, Chairman
Blackfeet Tribe
P.O. Box 850
Browning, MT 59417

THPO

Mr. John Murray
Blackfeet Tribe
Tribal Historic Preservation Office
P.O. Box 850
Browning, MT 59417

Cheyenne and Arapaho Tribes of Oklahoma

Mr. Eddie Hamilton, Governor
Cheyenne/Arapaho Tribes of Oklahoma
100 Red Moon Circle
P.O. Box 38
Concho, OK 73022-0038

THPO

Mr. Max Bear
Tribal Historic Preservation Officer
Cheyenne/Arapaho Tribes of Oklahoma
P.O. Box 38
Concho, OK 73022

Cheyenne River Sioux Tribe

Mr. Harold C. Frazier, Chairman
Cheyenne River Sioux Tribe
P.O. Box 590
Eagle Butte, SD 57625-0590

THPO

Mr. Steve Vance
Cheyenne River Sioux Tribe
Tribal Historic Preservation Office
P.O. Box 590
Eagle Butte, SD 57625-0590

Cultural Program

Ms. Donna Rae Peterson, Administrator
Cheyenne River Sioux Tribe
P.O. Box 590
Eagle Butte, SD 57625-0590

Mr. David Nelson, Director
Environmental Protection Department
Cheyenne River Sioux Tribe
P.O. Box 590
Eagle Butte, SD 57625-0590

Chippewa Cree Tribe

Mr. Richard (Rick) Morsette, Chairman
Chippewa Cree Tribe
RR 1, Box 544
Box Elder, MT 59521

THPO

Alvin Windy Boy, Sr.
Cultural Resource Preservation Office
Chippewa Cree Tribe
RR 1, Box 544
Box Elder, MT 59521

Confederated Salish & Kootenai Tribe

Mr. Vernon Finley, Chairman
Confederated Salish & Kootenai Tribe
P.O. Box 278
Pablo, MT 59855

THPO

Mr. Francis Auld
Confederated Salish & Kootenai Tribe
P.O. Box 278
Pablo, MT 59855

Tribal Preservation Specialist

Ms. Arlene Caye
Confederated Salish & Kootenai Tribe
P.O. Box 278
Pablo, MT 59855

Crow Tribe

Mr. Darrin Old Coyote, Chairman
 Apsaalooke (Crow) Nation
 Baacheeitche Avenue
 P.O. Box 169
 Crow Agency, MT 59022

THPO

Mr. Emerson Bullchief
 Apsaalooke (Crow) Nation
 Baacheeitche Avenue
 P.O. Box 169
 Crow Agency, MT 59022

Burial Preservation Director

Ms. Roberta Other Medicine
 Apsaalooke (Crow) Nation
 Baacheeitche Avenue
 P.O. Box 169
 Crow Agency, MT 59022

Crow Creek Sioux Tribe

Ms. Roxanne Sazue, Chairwoman
 Crow Creek Sioux Tribe
 P.O. Box 50
 Ft. Thompson, SD 57339-0050

THPO

Mr. Darrell Zephier
 Crow Creek Sioux Tribe
 P.O. Box 50
 Ft. Thompson, SD 57339-0050

Eastern Shoshone Tribe

Mr. Darwin St. Clair, Jr., Chairman
 Eastern Shoshone Tribe
 P.O. Box 538
 14 North Fork Road
 Fort Washakie, WY 82514

THPO

Mr. Wilfred Ferris
 Eastern Shoshone Tribe
 Tribal Historic Preservation Office
 P.O. Box 538
 14 North Fork Road
 Fort Washakie, WY 82514

Flandreau-Santee Sioux Tribe

Mr. Anthony Reider, President
 Flandreau-Santee Sioux Tribe
 603 West Broad Avenue
 P.O. Box 283
 Flandreau, SD 57028-0283

THPO:

Mr. J.B. Weston
 Flandreau-Santee Sioux Tribe
 Tribal Historic Preservation Officer
 P.O. Box 283
 Flandreau, SD 57028-0283

Fort Belknap Community

Mr. Mark L. Azure, President
 Fort Belknap Tribe
 RR1 Box 66
 Harlem, MT 59526-9455

THPO

Mr. Michael Black Wolf
 Fort Belknap Tribe
 RR1 Box 66
 Harlem, MT 59526-9455

Environmental Protection Manager:

Ms. Ina Nez Perce
 Fort Belknap Indian Community
 RR1 Box 66
 Harlem, MT 59526

Fort Peck Assiniboine/Sioux

Mr. Rusty Stafne, Chairman
 Fort Peck Tribes
 501 Medicine Bear Road
 P.O. Box 1027
 Poplar, MT 59255-1027

THPO

Mr. Darrell "Curley" Youpee
 Fort Peck Tribes
 Tribal Historic Preservation Office
 P.O. Box 1027
 Poplar, MT 59255-1027

Kiowa Indian Tribe of Oklahoma

Ms. Amber Toppah, Chairwoman
 Kiowa Indian Tribe of Oklahoma
 P.O. Box 369
 Carnegie, OK 73015-0369

THPO

Ms. Jamie Eskew
 Tribal Historic Preservation Officer
 Kiowa Indian Tribe of Oklahoma
 P.O. Box 369
 Carnegie, OK 73015-0369

NAGPRA Representative:

Ms. Amie Tah-bone
 Kiowa Indian Tribe of Oklahoma
 P.O. Box 369
 Carnegie, OK 73015-0369

Lower Brule Sioux Tribe

Mr. Kevin Wright, Vice Chairman
 Lower Brule Sioux Tribe
 187 Oyate Circle
 Lower Brule, SD 57548

THPO

Ms. Clair Green
 Tribal Historic Preservation Officer
 Lower Brule Sioux Tribe
 187 Oyate Circle
 Lower Brule, SD 57548-0187

Lower Sioux Tribe

Mr. Robert Larsen, President
 Lower Sioux Tribe
 39527 Res. Hwy 1
 P.O. Box 308
 Morton, MN 56270-0308

THPO

Ms. Grace Goldtooth Campos
 Lower Sioux Tribe
 Tribal Historic Preservation Office
 P.O. Box 308
 Morton, MN 56270

Northern Arapaho Tribe

Mr. Dean Goggles, Chairman
 Northern Arapaho Tribe
 P.O. Box 396
 Fort Washakie, WY 82514-0396

THPO

Mr. Yufna Soldier Wolf
 Tribal Historic Preservation Office
 Northern Arapaho Tribe
 P.O. Box 396
 Fort Washakie, WY 82514

Northern Cheyenne

Mr. Llevando Fisher, President
 Northern Cheyenne Tribe
 P.O. Box 25
 Lame Deer, MT 59043-0128

THPO

Mr. James Walksalong
 Northern Cheyenne Tribe
 Tribal Historic Preservation Office
 P.O. Box 25
 Lame Deer, MT 59043-0128

EPA Director

Ms. Charlene Alden
 Northern Cheyenne Tribe
 P.O. Box 25
 Lame Deer, MT 59043

Oglala Sioux Tribe

Mr. John Yellow Bird Steele, President
 Oglala Sioux Tribe
 P.O. Box 2070
 Pine Ridge, SD 57770-2070

THPO

Mr. Dennis Yellow Thunder
Tribal Historic Preservation Officer
Oglala Sioux Tribe
P.O. Box 2070
Pine Ridge, SD 57770-2070

Rosebud Sioux

Mr. William Kindle, Chairman
Rosebud Sioux Tribe
11 Legion Avenue
P.O. Box 430
Rosebud, SD 57570-0430

THPO

Mr. Russell Eagle Bear
Rosebud Sioux Tribe
Tribal Historic Preservation Office
P.O. Box 430
Rosebud, SD 57570-0809

Santee Sioux Nation

Mr. Roger Trudell, Chairman
Santee Sioux Tribe of Nebraska
108 Spirit Lake Avenue
Niobrara, NE 68768

THPO

Mr. Richard Thomas
Santee Sioux Tribe of Nebraska
Tribal Historic Preservation Office
108 Spirit Lake Avenue
Niobrara, NE 68768

Shoshone-Bannock Tribes

Mr. Nathan Small, Chairman
Shoshone-Bannock Tribes
P.O. Box 306
Fort Hall, ID 83203

Environmental Program Manager

Ms. Yvette Tuell
Shoshone-Bannock Tribes
P.O. Box 306
Fort Hall, ID 83203

Cultural Resource Coordinator

Ms. Carolyn Boyer Smith
Shoshone-Bannock Tribes
P.O. Box 306
Fort Hall, ID 83203

Sisseton-Wahpeton Oyate

Mr. Bruce Renville, Chairman
Sisseton-Wahpeton Oyate Tribes
P.O. Box 509
Agency Village, SD 57262-0509

THPO

Ms. Dianne Desrosiers
Sisseton-Wahpeton Oyate Tribes
Tribal Historic Preservation Office
P.O. Box 509
Agency Village, SD 57262-0509

Spirit Lake Tribe

Ms. Myra Pearson, Chairperson
Spirit Lake Tribe
P.O. Box 359
Fort Totten, ND 58335-0359

THPO

Mr. Eric Longie
Spirit Lake Tribe
Tribal Historic Preservation Office
P.O. Box 359
Fort Totten, ND 58335

Standing Rock Sioux

Mr. Dave Archambault II, Chairman
Standing Rock Sioux Tribe
Administrative Services Center
P.O. Box D
Fort Yates, ND 58538-0522

THPO

Ms. Kelly Morgan
Tribal Historic Preservation Officer
Standing Rock Sioux Tribe
P.O. Box D
Fort Yates, ND 58538-0522

Three Affiliated Tribes

Mr. Mark N. Fox, Chairman
Mandan, Hidatsa & Arikara Nation
Three Affiliated Tribes
404 Frontage Road
New Town, ND 58763

THPO

Mr. Elgin Crows Breast
Mandan, Hidatsa & Arikara Nation
Tribal Historic Preservation Office
Three Affiliated Tribes
404 Frontage Road
New Town, ND 58763-9404

Compliance Officer

Mr. Pete Coffey, Jr.
Tribal Historic Preservation Office
Mandan, Hidatsa & Arikara Nation
404 Frontage Road
New Town, ND 58763

Turtle Mountain Band of Chippewa

Mr. Richard McCloud, Chairman
Turtle Mountain Band of Chippewa
P.O. Box 900
Belcourt, ND 58316

THPO

Mr. Bruce F. Nadeau
Tribal Historic Preservation Officer
Turtle Mountain Band of Chippewa
P.O. Box 900
Belcourt, ND 58316

Ute Tribe

Mr. Shaun Chapoose, Chairman
The Ute Tribe of the Uintah and Ouray
Reservation
Tribal Business Committee
P.O. Box 190
Fort Duchesne, UT 84026-0190

Cultural Rights/THPO

Ms. Betsy Chapoose
Tribal Historic Preservation Office
The Ute Tribe of the Uintah and Ouray
Reservation
P.O. Box 190
Fort Duchesne, UT 84012-0190

Yankton Sioux Tribe

Mr. Robert Flying Hawk, Chairman
Yankton Sioux Tribe
P.O. Box 248
Marty, SD 57361-0248

THPO

Mr. Perry Little
Yankton Sioux Tribe
Tribal Historic Preservation Officer
P.O. Box 248
Marty, SD 57361-0248