

Northwest Rural Public Power District

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January 25, 2018

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Office of Administration
Mail Stop: OWFN-2-A13
U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission
Washington, DC 20555-0001

RE: Docket No. 40-8943; NRC-2012-0281

U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission:

In regard to the Crow Butte Resources, Inc.; Marsland Expansion Area for the In Situ Leach Facility, Crawford, Nebraska I would like to submit written comments on behalf of Northwest Rural Public Power District (NRPPD).

My name is Chance Briscoe. I am the General Manager of NRPPD. NRPPD is the local "non-profit" rural electric utility company that serves Cameco Resources (Crow Butte), along with the surrounding area in Dawes County, Nebraska. NRPPD has served Crow Butte for over 25 years. I have been with NRPPD since February, 2014 and in the rural electric utility business since 2003.

Shortly after starting at NRPPD I had an opportunity to visit with the management staff at Crow Butte. After the visit I was provided an opportunity for a tour of the facility. I was immediately impressed with the cleanliness of the operation and the culture of safety displayed. At no time did I feel uncomfortable or unsafe during the tour, which is a statement I cannot make for all industrial facilities I've been in. Russ Reichenberg, District Line Superintendent, states, "Our crews are educated and very comfortable working on new services and system maintenance within the complex. Safety issues have never been a problem." Crow Butte has always been receptive to hosting tours of Board members or staff when requested by NRPPD. This is a testament to the care shown by employees and management operating the facility. Recently our outpost line crew serving that portion of our territory completed joint safety training with Crow Butte employees.

Crow Butte is the largest individual customer of NRPPD. Crow Butte is approximately 15% of our entire electric load. Without an expansion of operations my understanding is that Crow Butte would complete the reclamation efforts and shut down. Under this scenario all the remaining rural customers of the District in northwest Nebraska would be negatively impacted having to cover the lost margin contributed by Crow Butte. In addition to the direct margin contributed through their electric consumption the State of Nebraska would lose a significant contribution to state taxes.



NRPPD is a supporter of rural economic development. I believe the closing of Crow Butte operations would be devastating to the town of Crawford, Nebraska and would hurt the rest of the surrounding area. The loss of quality jobs, housing effects, school enrollment, and tax revenue would be significant.

Thus, I support, with approval of the locally elected Board of Directors of NRPPD at their January 25, 2018 meeting, for Crow Butte Resources to expand, construct and operate in situ uranium recovery in the Marsland Expansion Area in northwestern Nebraska.

Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'C. Briscoe', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Chance Briscoe
General Manager