

Mr. George Rael, Acting Director April 21, 1997
Environmental Restoration Division
Uranium Mill Tailings Remedial
Action Project
Albuquerque Operations Office
U.S. Department of Energy
P.O. Box 5400
Albuquerque, NM 87185-5400

SUBJECT: FINAL TECHNICAL EVALUATION REPORT FOR THE MAYBELL, COLORADO, URANIUM
MILL TAILINGS SITE

Dear Mr. Rael:

The U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission staff has completed its review of the final Remedial Action Plan and Site Design (RAP) and the Remedial Action Inspection Plan (RAIP), Revision 0, for the inactive uranium mill tailings sites at Maybell, Colorado. The staff's review is documented in the enclosed final Technical Evaluation Report (TER).

Based on this review, the NRC staff concurs in the Maybell RAP and RAIP. The Department of Energy (DOE) has proposed no groundwater cleanup at the Maybell site. This proposal is based on the following: DOE's characterization of the uppermost aquifer as "limited use," containing wide-spread ambient contamination not related to uranium milling activities; no current or projected future water use of the aquifer within a 4.8 km (3 mile) radius of the site; no apparent discharge of tailings contaminated groundwater to surface-water bodies or deeper aquifers in the vicinity; and continued groundwater monitoring of the existing contamination to assure conditions remain unchanged. Based on its review of DOE's proposal, the NRC staff agrees with DOE's findings and concludes that DOE has demonstrated compliance with all groundwater protection provisions of 40 CFR 192, Subparts A through C. As a result of the staff's concurrence, NRC is prepared to sign the signature pages for the Maybell RAP, following their submittal by DOE.

If you have any questions concerning this subject, please contact the NRC Project Manager, Robert Carlson, at (301) 415-8165.

Sincerely,

(Original signed by Daniel M. Gillen for)
Joseph J. Holonich, Chief
Uranium Recovery Branch
Division of Waste Management
Office of Nuclear Material Safety
and Safeguards

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PDR WASTE
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Enclosure: As stated

cc: W. Woodworth, DOE Alb
S. Hamp, DOE Alb
E. Artiglia, TAC Alb

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