

usually obtained from the local water supply.

Radioactive gaseous effluents during normal operations are limited to argon-41, and the release of radioactive liquid effluents can be carefully monitored and controlled. Liquid wastes are collected in storage tanks to allow for decay and monitoring before dilution and release to the sanitary sewer system or the environment. This liquid waste may also be solidified and disposed of as solid waste. Solid radioactive wastes are packed and shipped offsite for disposal or storage at NRC-approved sites. The transportation of such waste is done in accordance with existing NRC and Department of Transportation regulations in approved shipping containers.

Chemical and sanitary waste systems are similar to those at other similar laboratories and buildings.

Environmental Effects of Site Preparation and Facility Construction

Construction of such facilities invariably occurs in areas that have already been disturbed by other building construction and, in some cases, solely within an already existing building. Therefore, construction would not be expected to have any significant effect on the terrain, vegetation, wildlife, or nearby waters or aquatic life. The societal, economic, and aesthetic impacts of construction would be no greater than those associated with the construction of an office building or a similar research facility.

Environmental Effects of Facility Operation

Release of thermal effluents from a reactor of less than 2 Mw(t) will not have a significant effect on the environment. This small amount of waste heat is generally rejected to the atmosphere by means of small cooling towers. Extensive drift and/or fog will not occur at this low power level. The small amount of waste heat released to sewers, in the case of heat exchanger secondary flow directly to the sewer, will not raise average water temperatures in the environment.

Release of routine gaseous effluents can be limited to argon-41, which is generated by neutron activation of air. In most cases, this release will be kept as low as practicable by using gases other than air for supporting experiments. Experiments that are supported by air are designed to minimize production of argon-41. Yearly doses to unrestricted areas will be at or below established 10 CFR Part 20 limits. Routine releases of radioactive liquid effluents can be carefully

monitored and controlled in a manner that will ensure compliance with current standards. Solid radioactive wastes will be shipped to an authorized disposal site in approved containers. These wastes should not require more than a few shipping containers a year.

On the basis of experience with other research reactors, specifically TRIGA reactors operating in the 1-to-2-Mw(t) range, the annual release of gaseous and liquid effluents to unrestricted areas should be less than 30 curies and 0.01 curie, respectively.

No release of potentially harmful chemical substances will occur during normal operation. Small amounts of chemicals and/or high-solid-content water may be released from the facility through the sanitary sewer during periodic blowdown of the cooling tower or from laboratory experiments.

Other potential effects of the facility, such as aesthetics, noise, or societal effects or impact on local flora and fauna are expected to be too small to measure.

Environmental Effects of Accidents

Accidents ranging from the failure of experiments up to the largest core damage and fission product release considered possible result in doses that are less than 10 CFR Part 20 limits and are considered negligible with respect to the environment.

Unavoidable Effects of Facility Construction and Operation

The unavoidable effects of construction and operation involve the materials used in construction that cannot be recovered and the fissionable material used in the reactor. No adverse impact on the environment is expected from either of these unavoidable effects.

Alternatives to Construction and Operation of the Facility

To accomplish the objectives associated with research reactors, there are no suitable alternatives. Some of these objectives are training of students in the operation of reactors, production of radioisotopes, and use of neutron and gamma ray beams to conduct experiments.

Long-Term Effects of Facility Construction and Operation

The long-term effects of research facilities are considered to be beneficial as a result of their contribution to scientific knowledge and training. Because of the relatively small amount of capital resources involved and the small impact on the environment, very little irreversible or irretrievable

commitment is associated with such facilities.

Costs and Benefits of Facility Alternatives

The costs of facility alternatives are on the order of several millions of dollars and have very little environmental impact. The benefits include, but are not limited to, some combination of the following: conduct of activation analyses, conduct of neutron radiography, training of operating personnel, and education of students. Some of these activities could be conducted using particle accelerators or radioactive sources, which would be more costly and less efficient. There is no reasonable alternative to a nuclear research reactor for conducting this spectrum of activities.

Conclusion

The staff concludes that there will be no significant environmental impact associated with the licensing of research reactors or critical facilities designed to operate at a power level of 2 Mw(t) or lower and that no environmental impact statements must be written for the issuance of construction permits, operating licenses, or license renewals for such facilities.

Dated: December 3, 1996.

[FR Doc. 97-10973 Filed 4-28-97; 8:45 am]
BILLING CODE 7590-01-P

NUCLEAR REGULATORY COMMISSION

[Docket No. 40-8905]

Quivira Mining Company; Final Finding of No Significant Impact; Notice of Opportunity for Hearing

AGENCY: Nuclear Regulatory Commission.

ACTION: Notice.

SUMMARY: The U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission (NRC) proposes to amend NRC Source Material License SUA-1473 to authorize the licensee, Quivira Mining Company (QMC), to accept 11e.(2) material for disposal at its Ambrosia Lake uranium mill and tailings site, located near Grants, New Mexico. An Environmental Assessment was performed by the NRC staff in accordance with the requirements of 10 CFR Part 51. The conclusion of the Environmental Assessment is a Finding of No Significant Impact (FONSI) for the proposed licensing action.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Mr. Kenneth R. Hooks, Uranium Recovery Branch, Mail Stop TWFN 7-J9, Division

of Waste Management, Office of Nuclear Material Safety and Safeguards, U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission, Washington, D.C. 20555. Telephone 301/415-7777.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

Background

Source Material License SUA-1473 was originally issued by NRC on September 2, 1986, pursuant to Title 10, Code of Federal Regulations (10 CFR), Part 40, Domestic Licensing of Source Material. This license currently authorizes QMC to (1) receive, acquire, possess, and transfer uranium at the Ambrosia Lake facility, (2) possess byproduct material in the form of uranium waste tailings and other uranium byproduct waste generated by operations at the mill, and (3) accept, for disposal, limited amounts of byproduct material from in situ leach (ISL) uranium mining facilities. The mill was operated on a continual basis from May 1958 until January 1985, when the mill was placed on standby.

Identification of the Proposed Action

On November 20, 1995, Quivira Mining Company (Quivira) requested a license amendment for the Ambrosia Lake facility to annually receive and dispose of up to 10,000 yd³ (about 14,000 tons at a nominal 1.4 tons per yd³) per generator of 11e.(2) byproduct material in tailings impoundment #2, with an annual total limit of 100,000 yd³ from all generators. NRC staff would require by license condition that all generators, including in situ facilities, be limited to the 10,000 yd³ per generator, and that the total annual limit of 100,000 yd³ be inclusive of all material received from generators, including in situ facilities.

Summary of the Environmental Assessment

The NRC staff performed an appraisal of the environmental impacts associated with the requested disposal of 11e.(2) material at the Ambrosia Lake site, in accordance with 10 CFR Part 51, Licensing and Regulatory Policy Procedures for Environmental Protection. In conducting its appraisal, the NRC staff considered the following: (1) information contained in the approved Reclamation Plan for the Ambrosia Lake site; (2) information contained in QMC's amendment request; and (3) information derived from NRC staff site visits and inspections of the Ambrosia Lake mill site and from communications with QMC. The results of the staff's appraisal are documented in an Environmental Assessment. The safety aspects for the

continued operation of the mill are discussed in a Technical Evaluation Report.

In the approved 1986 reclamation plan, the Ambrosia Lake facility's tailings capacity was based on an assumption of 18 more years of production at 7,000 tons of tailings per day which would yield an additional 43 million tons of tailings material. When added to the 31 million tons already in the disposal impoundments, the total quantity the design accounted for was 74 million tons. Ambrosia Lake halted operations far earlier than the planned 18 year run and currently has 33 million tons of tailings in impoundments #1 and #2. Therefore, the excess capacity under the 1986 reclamation plan is 41 million tons.

Conclusions

NRC believes this request will not result in significant environmental impacts because the impacts will be a small fraction of those that could result due to currently approved activities for the following reasons:

(1) The total annual volume is a small fraction of the total volume allowed to be produced under the current license.

(2) Groundwater impacts are minimized because the received material will be free of standing liquids and the disposal cells will have a 3-foot thick minimum clay liner.

(3) Air releases will be minimized because most of the material received will be packaged in drums or crates.

(4) Exposure to workers is expected to be similar or lower than exposures to personnel working with 11e.(2) byproduct material under currently licensed operations.

(5) Standard operating procedures are in place for all operational process activities involving radioactive materials that are handled, processed, or stored;

(6) The licensee will continue an acceptable groundwater detection monitoring program to ensure compliance with the requirements of 10 CFR Part 40, Appendix A;

(7) The licensee will conduct site decommissioning and reclamation activities in accordance with NRC-approved plans; and

(8) Because the staff has determined that there will be no significant impacts associated with approval of the license renewal, there can be no disproportionately high and adverse effects or impacts on minority and low-income populations. Consequently, further evaluation of 'Environmental Justice' concerns, as outlined in Executive Order 12898 and NRC's Office of Nuclear Material Safety and

Safeguards Policy and Procedures Letter 1-50, Rev.1, is not warranted.

Alternatives to the Proposed Action

The licensee's proposed action is to amend Source Material License SUA-1473, to allow disposal of 11e.(2) material at the Ambrosia Lake site, as requested by QMC. Therefore, the principal alternatives available to NRC are to:

(1) Approve the license amendment with such conditions as are considered necessary or appropriate to protect public health and safety and the environment; or

(2) Deny the amendment to the license.

Based on its review, the NRC staff has concluded that there are no significant environmental impacts associated with the proposed action; therefore, any alternatives with equal or greater environmental impacts need not be evaluated. Since the environmental impacts of the proposed action and the no-action alternative (i.e., denial of the renewal) are similar, there is no need to further evaluate alternatives to the proposed action.

Finding of no Significant Impact

The NRC staff has prepared an Environmental Assessment for the proposed amendment to NRC Source Material License SUA-1473. On the basis of this assessment, the NRC staff has concluded that the environmental impacts that may result from the proposed action would not be significant, and therefore, preparation of an Environmental Impact Statement is not warranted. The Environmental Assessment and other documents related to this proposed action are available for public inspection and copying at the NRC Public Document Room, in the Gelman Building, 2120 L Street NW., Washington, DC 20555.

Notice of Opportunity for Hearing

The Commission hereby provides notice that this is a proceeding on an application for a licensing action falling within the scope of Subpart L, "Informal Hearing Procedures for Adjudications in Materials Licensing Proceedings, of the Commission's Rules of Practice for Domestic Licensing Proceedings in 10 CFR Part 2" (54 FR 8269). Pursuant to § 2.1205(a), any person whose interest may be affected by this proceeding may file a request for a hearing. In accordance with § 2.1205(c), a request for a hearing must be filed within thirty (30) days from the date of publication of this **Federal Register** notice. The request for a hearing must be filed with the Office of the Secretary either:

(1) By delivery to the Docketing and Service Branch of the Office of the Secretary at One White Flint North, 11555 Rockville Pike, Rockville, MD 20852; or

(2) By mail or telegram addressed to the Secretary, U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission, Washington, DC 20555, Attention: Docketing and Service Branch.

Each request for a hearing must also be served, by delivering it personally or by mail to:

(1) The applicant, Quivira Mining Company, 6305 Waterford Boulevard, Suite 325, Oklahoma City, OK 73118;

(2) The NRC staff, by delivery to the Executive Director of Operations, One White Flint North, 11555 Rockville Pike, Rockville, MD 20852, or by mail addressed to the Executive Director for Operations, U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission, Washington, DC 20555.

In addition to meeting other applicable requirements of 10 CFR Part 2 of the Commission's regulations, a request for a hearing filed by a person other than an applicant must describe in detail:

(1) The interest of the requestor in the proceeding;

(2) How that interest may be affected by the results of the proceeding, including the reasons why the requestor should be permitted a hearing, with particular reference to the factors set out in § 2.1205(g);

(3) the requestor's areas of concern about the licensing activity that is the subject matter of the proceeding; and

(4) The circumstances establishing that the request for a hearing is timely in accordance with § 2.1205(c).

Any hearing that is requested and granted will be held in accordance with the Commission's Informal Hearing Procedures for Adjudications in Materials Licensing Proceedings in 10 CFR Part 2, Subpart L.

Dated at Rockville, Maryland, this 22nd day of April 1997.

For the Nuclear Regulatory Commission.

Charles L. Cain,

Acting Chief, Uranium Recovery Branch, Division of Waste Management, Office of Nuclear Material Safety and Safeguards.

[FR Doc. 97-10974 Filed 4-28-97; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 7590-01-P

NUCLEAR REGULATORY COMMISSION

Sunshine Act Meeting

AGENCY HOLDING THE MEETING: Nuclear Regulatory Commission.

DATE: Weeks of April 28, May 5, 12, and 19, 1997.

PLACE: Commissioners' Conference Room, 11555 Rockville Pike, Rockville, Maryland.

STATUS: Public and Closed.

MATTERS TO BE CONSIDERED:

Week of April 28

Friday, May 2

9:00 a.m. Meeting with Advisory Committee on Reactor Safeguards (ACRS) (Public meeting) (Contact: John Larkins, 301-415-7360)

10:30 a.m. Meeting with Nuclear Safety Research Review Committee, (NSRRC) (Public meeting) (Contact: Jose Cortez, 301-415-6596)

Noon Affirmation Session (Public meeting) (if needed)

Week of May 5

Tuesday, May 6

2:00 p.m. Briefing on PRA Implementation Plan (Public meeting) (Contact: Gary Holahan, 301-415-2884)

Wednesday, May 7

2:00 p.m. Briefing on IPE Insight Report (Public meeting)

3:30 p.m. Affirmation Session (Public meeting) (if needed)

Thursday, May 8

9:00 a.m. Meeting with Advisory Committee on Medical Uses of Isotopes (ACMUI) (Public meeting) (Contact: Larry Camper, 301-415-7231)

Week of May 12

Tuesday, May 13

2:00 p.m. Briefing by National and Wyoming Mining Associations (Public meeting)

Wednesday, May 14

2:00 p.m. Briefing on Status of Activities with CNWRA and HLW Program (Public meeting)

Thursday, May 15

10:00 a.m. Briefing on Status of HLW Program (Public meeting)

2:00 p.m. Briefing on Performance Assessment Progress in HLW, LLW, and SDMP (Public meeting)

3:30 p.m. Affirmation Session (Public meeting) (if needed)

Week of May 19

Tuesday, May 20

11:30 a.m. Affirmation Session (Public meeting)

2:00 p.m. Meeting with Advisory Committee on Nuclear Waste (Public meeting) (Contact: John Larkins, 301-415-7360)

Wednesday, May 21

10:00 a.m. Briefing on Program to Improve Regulatory Effectiveness (Public meeting)

* The schedule for Commission Meetings is subject to change on short notice. To verify the status of meetings call (Recording)—(301) 415-1292. Contact person for more information: Bill Hill (301) 415-1661.

* * * * *

The NRC Commission Meeting Schedule can be found on the Internet at: <http://www.nrc.gov/SECY/smj/schedule.htm>

This notice is distributed by mail to several hundred subscribers; if you no longer wish to receive it, or would like to be added to it, please contact the Office of the Secretary, Attn: Operations Branch, Washington, D.C. 20555 (301-415-1661).

In addition, distribution of this meeting notice over the internet system is available. If you are interested in receiving this Commission meeting schedule electronically, please send an electronic message to wmh@nrc.gov or dkw@nrc.gov.

* * * * *

William M. Hill, Jr.,

SECY Tracking Officer, Office of the Secretary.

[FR Doc. 97-11231 Filed 4-25-97; 2:47 pm]

BILLING CODE 7590-01-M

NUCLEAR REGULATORY COMMISSION

[Docket No. 040-07102]

Shieldalloy Metallurgical Corp. (Newfield, New Jersey); Director's Decision Under 10 CFR § 2.206

I. Introduction

In an undated letter addressed to U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission ("NRC") Chairman Shirley Jackson and received on October 11, 1996, Sherwood Bauman, Chairperson of Save Wills Creek ("Petitioner"), requested that the NRC take action with respect to NRC licensee Shieldalloy Metallurgical Corporation ("SMC"), of Newfield, New Jersey. The Petitioner requested, pursuant to 10 CFR § 2.206, that the NRC modify SMC's license to allow only possession of radioactive material for the express purpose of decommissioning and decontaminating its Newfield facility, and that current operations resulting in additional radioactive material being stored at the site be immediately halted. The Petitioner cites the lack of adequate financial assurance, as required by 10 CFR § 40.36, as the basis for his request.