

Uranium Watch – Utah Bulletin

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DIVISION of RADIATION CONTROL OPPORTUNITY to COMMENT on LISBON VALLEY GROUNDWATER WORK PLAN

Comments Due January 20, 2012

The Utah Division of Radiation Control noticed an opportunity to comment on an Amendment to the decommissioned Lisbon Valley Uranium Mill license. Amendment 4 requires the submittal of a work plan and schedule related to the groundwater contamination at the former Mill site. Monitoring well data in 2010 showed increases in uranium concentrations, where decreased were expected. In 2004 the Nuclear Regulatory Commission granted Rio Algom Mining LLC alternate concentration limits (ACLs), because of a plume of contaminated water from the Mill. The revised License would require the submittal of the plan by December 16, 2011. Rio Algom has already submitted the plan and schedule, but the DRC decided to provide notice of the problems with increased uranium concentrations in the groundwater and provide an opportunity for the public to comment on amended license.

- DRC Website Public Notice - with Links to draft License and Statement of Basis
<http://www.radiationcontrol.utah.gov/>

DRC PROPOSES RULE to DEFINE "MAJOR" LICENSING ACTIONS

Comments Due January 3, 2012

The Utah Division of Radiation Control (DRC) has proposed a rule to define "major" licensing actions that require public notice and an opportunity to provide comment. The DRC is providing an opportunity for the public to comment on the Proposed Rule. According to the Notice of Proposed Rule: "This amendment to Rule R313-17 defines what licensing actions are considered to be major actions, and the amendment requires that a public notice be issued and a public comment period be held for license categories 2b and c, 4a, b, c, d, and 6 as identified in Section R313-70-7. " The categories include uranium milling and radioactive waste disposal.

The amendment also allows the Executive Secretary to give a public notice of and provide an opportunity to comment on other licensing actions of interest." This rule change applies to uranium mills and will also impact the types of mill licensing actions that require an environmental analysis by the DRC, as required by the Atomic Energy Act (42 U.S.C. § 2021(o)). Therefore, it is important that the DRC better define "major licensing action."

- **Notice of Proposed Rule and Text of Rule**
<http://www.rules.utah.gov/publicat/bulletin/2011/20111201/35416.htm>

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**UTE MOUNTAIN UTE TRIBE CALLS for MAJOR
CHANGES in OPERATION of WHITE MESA MILL**

The Ute Mountain Ute Tribe's Environmental Program submitted extensive comments on the License Renewal of the White Mesa Uranium Mill, calling for substantial changes in the Mill operation and the way that the Mill is regulated by the Utah Division of Radiation Control (DRC). The Tribe requested closure of 2 tailings impoundments (cells 2 and 3), additional air and groundwater monitoring, revised corrective action plan to address groundwater contamination, suspension of processing of alternate feed, a separate quality assurance plan, and other actions by the DRC and Denison Mines (USA) Corporation in order assure protection of the public's health and safety and the environment. The Tribe provided data in support of their requests.

Uranium Watch also submitted comments on the Draft License and Safety Evaluation Report. UW questioned the lack of a complete environmental analysis of the License Renewal and asked for full documentation to show that the Mill was complying with applicable radiation exposure regulations. The DRC will issue the final license and SER sometime next year.

- White Mesa License Renewal Comments, with Exhibits
<http://www.uraniumwatch.org/whitemesamill.licenser renewal.htm>

UPDATES

- **Blue Castle Project Water Rights:** The State Engineer, Division of Water Rights, is expected to make a decision on the provision of water for the proposed nuclear reactor in Green River in early 2012.

- **Environmental Assessment for La Sal Mines Complex:** The Bureau of Land Management and US Forest Service are expected to release the draft Environmental Assessment (EA) for the White Mesa Mill in early 2012 for public comment.

- **Mine Safety and Health Administration Violations:**

Facility	Citations	Penalties Paid	Penalties Yet to be Paid	Penalties in Contest	Penalties Not Yet Assessed
2011					
White Mesa Mill	36	\$10,441 (26)			10
BeaverShaft/La Sal	47	\$1,016 (10)		\$13,780 (19)	18
Pandora Mine	18	\$16,546 (14)	\$343 (2)	6,458 (1)	1
Arizona #1 Mine	29	\$4,420 (17)	\$14,386 (11)		1
2010					
BeaverShaft/La Sal	34	\$3,111 (20)		\$10,063 (14)	
Pandora Mine	16	\$7,564 (11)		\$165,300 (5)	