For further information concerning this meeting, contact: Timothy J. Galpin, Assistant for CNO Executive Panel Management, 4401 Ford Avenue, Suite 601, Alexandria, VA 22302-0268, Phone: (703) 756-1205.

Dated: February 16, 1995.

L. R. McNees,

LCDR, JAGC, USN, Federal Register Liaison Officer.

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DEPARTMENT OF ENERGY

Finding of No Significant Impact Proposed Remedial Action at Two Uranium Processing Sites Near Slick Rock, CO

AGENCY: Department of Energy.

ACTION: Finding of no significant impact.

SUMMARY: The U.S. Department of Energy (DOE) has prepared an environmental assessment (EA) (DOE/ EA-0339) of the proposed remedial action at two uranium processing sites near Slick Rock in San Miguel County, Colorado. These sites contain radioactively contaminated materials that would be removed and stabilized at a remote location. Based on the information and analyses in the EA, the DOE has determined that the proposed action does not constitute a major Federal action significantly affecting the quality of the human environment within the meaning of the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) of 1969 (42 U.S.C. 4321 et seq.), as amended. Therefore, preparation of an environmental impact statement is not required, and the DOE is issuing this Finding of No Significant Impact (FONSI).

ADDRESSES: Single copies of the ea are available from: Charles Cormier, Uranium Mill Tailings Remedial Action Acting Project Manager, U.S. Department of Energy, Uranium Mill Tailings Remedial Action Project Office, 2155 Louisiana NE, Suite 4000, Albuquerque, New Mexico 87110 (505) 845–4628.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION ON THE NEPA PROCESS, CONTACT: Carol M. Borgstrom, Director, Office of NEPA Oversight, EH– 25 U.S. Department of Energy, 1000 Independence Avenue, SW., Washington, D.C. 20585 (202) 586–4600 or 1–800–472–2756.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

Background

The Uranium Mill Tailings Radiation Control Act (UMTRCA) of 1978, Public Law (PL) 95-604, authorized the DOE to perform remedial action at two uranium processing sites near Slick Rock, Colorado, to reduce the potential health effects from the radioactive materials at the sites and at vicinity properties associated with the processing sites. The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) promulgated standards for the UMTRCA in Title 40, Code of Federal Regulations, Part 192 (40 CFR Part 192). These standards contain measures to control the contaminated materials and to protect groundwater quality. Remedial action at the Slick Rock sites must be performed in accordance with these standards and with the concurrence of the U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission (NRC) and the state of Colorado.

Site Descriptions

The Slick Rock uranium processing sites consist of the Union Carbide and North Continent sites. The Union Carbide processing site is approximately 2 road miles northwest of the unincorporated town of Slick Rock in San Miguel County, Colorado. The North Continent processing site is approximately 1 road mile east of the Union Carbide site. Both sites are on the west bank of the Dolores River in the floodplain, and the nearest residence to either site is approximately 0.3 air mile. Both the Union Carbide and North Continent sites are privately owned. Almost all the land surrounding the processing sites is administered by the Bureau of Land Management (BLM) and is used for livestock grazing. County Roads S8, S9, and 10R traverse the area of the processing sites and connect with State Highway 141 approximately 0.75 road mile south of the North Continent site.

Contaminated materials at the Union Carbide and North Continent processing sites cover approximately 55 and 12 acres, respectively. There are also 17 acres of contaminated materials across the Dolores River from the Union Carbide site. The contaminated materials consist of the uranium mill tailings from the uranium ore processing operations, soils beneath the tailings, and windblown and waterborne contamination from the tailings. The total volume of contaminated materials at both processing sites is estimated to be 618,300 cubic yards. In addition, approximately 2500 cubic yards of contaminated materials at four nearby

properties (vicinity properties) are associated with the processing sites.

The proposed Burro Canyon disposal site is approximately 5 road miles east of the Slick Rock processing sites via County Roads S8 and 10R and State Highway 141. The site is above the 1000-year floodplain of the Dolores River. The disposal site is on land administered by the BLM and used primarily for livestock grazing. The town of Slick Rock is approximately 2 air miles southwest of the disposal site.

Proposed Action

The proposed remedial action is relocation of the contaminated materials from the Slick Rock processing sites to the Burro Canyon disposal site. At the disposal site, the contaminated materials would be stabilized in a partially below grade disposal cell and covered with approximately 5 feet of earth and rock. The disposal cell would cover approximately 12 acres and the final disposal site would cover approximately 57 acres. The final disposal site would be permanently transferred from the BLM to the DOE, and any future use of the disposal site would be precluded. Approximately 178 acres at the Burro Canyon site would be used for the disposal cell, final disposal site, and temporary construction facilities. Soil excavated at the disposal site would be used to construct the disposal cell; any remaining soil would be left at the disposal site, graded, and reseeded. Ground water at the disposal site would be protected by the claystones and mudstones in the geological formations below the disposal site. These natural foundation materials would inhibit any downward migration of contaminated water from the contaminated materials. The disposal cell cover system would inhibit infiltration of rainfall and runoff through the disposal cell.

After remedial action, the Slick Rock processing sites would be backfilled with clean fill material, recontoured to promote surface drainage, and revegetated. The processing sites would then be released for any uses consistent with existing land use controls. The DOE will evaluate the need for ground water compliance at the processing sites during the Uranium Mill Tailings Remedial Action (UMTRA) Ground Water Project.

The proposed remedial action includes the application of supplemental standards to approximately 17 acres of BLMadministered land across the Dolores River from the Union Carbide processing site. This area contains riparian habitat, and there is no access