

Finding of No Significant Impact

Ground Water Compliance at the Riverton, Wyoming, Uranium Mill Tailings Site

September 1998

**U.S. Department of Energy
Grand Junction Office
Grand Junction, Colorado**

Finding of No Significant Impact

Environmental Assessment

The U.S. Department of Energy (DOE) proposes to implement the natural flushing compliance strategy with institutional controls and monitoring to ground water contamination at the Riverton, Wyoming, uranium mill tailings site. The proposed-action and no-action alternatives are described in the *Environmental Assessment of Ground Water Compliance at the Riverton, Wyoming, Uranium Mill Tailings Site* (see attached DOE/EA-1261). The Environmental Assessment analyzes the effects of the proposed compliance strategy on human health, land use, surface water, ground water, ecology, environmental justice, and wetlands.

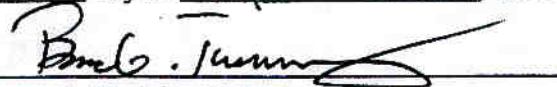
Natural flushing is a process in which natural geochemical and biological processes and ground water movement decrease contaminant concentrations in the aquifer through time. This natural flushing proposal meets the compliance requirements of ground water protection standards and protection of public health and the environment. Subpart B in Title 40, Part 192 of the *U.S Code of Federal Regulations* (40 CFR 192) has provisions that allow for natural flushing as a way to meet the standards.

The *Programmatic Environmental Impact Statement for the Uranium Mill Tailings Remedial Action Ground Water Project* (PEIS) (DOE/EIS-0198) presents a step-by-step approach for determining the appropriate compliance strategy. That approach was used to select the ground water compliance strategy for the Riverton site. The Environmental Assessment was tiered to the PEIS in a manner consistent with the concept of tiering described in 40 CFR § 1508.28.

Finding

On the basis of the Environmental Assessment, which analyzed the relevant environmental issues and the concerns of stakeholders, DOE finds that no significant impact would result from either the proposed action to implement natural flushing with institutional controls or from the no-action alternative at the Riverton site. This Finding of No Significant Impact is pursuant to the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969 (NEPA), 42 USC § 4321 *et seq.*; the Council on Environmental Quality Regulations for Implementing the Procedural Provisions of NEPA, 40 CFR 1500; and the DOE National Environmental Policy Act Implementing Procedures, 10 CFR 1021. The proposed action does not constitute a major federal action that would significantly affect the environment within the mandate of NEPA. Therefore, implementation of the proposed action does not require an environmental impact statement.

Signed in Albuquerque, New Mexico, this 22 day of September, 1998.


Bruce G. Twining, Manager

For further information concerning this proposal, or to obtain copies of the Environmental Assessment, please contact:

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Copies of the Environmental Assessment and the Finding of No Significant Impact will be available at the following locations:

Central Wyoming College Library
2660 Peek Ave.
Riverton, WY 82501

DOE Reading Room
2597 B 3/4 Road
Grand Junction, CO 81502-2567

Riverton Public Library
1330 West Park Ave.
Riverton, WY 82501

Don Aragon, Executive Director
Wind River Environmental Quality Commission
Shoshone-Arapaho Tribes
P.O. Box 217, Fort Washakie, WY 82514

Wyoming State Library
Supreme Court/State Library Building
2301 Capitol Ave.
Cheyenne, WY 82002

For further information about the NEPA process, please contact:

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