



NRC NEWS

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NRC DETERMINES NO MAJOR ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACTS PRECLUDE LICENSING MOORE RANCH URANIUM RECOVERY SITE IN WYOMING

The Nuclear Regulatory Commission has determined there are no major environmental impacts that would preclude licensing the Moore Ranch uranium recovery project proposed for Campbell County, Wyo.

In its final Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) for the Moore Ranch project, published Aug. 27, the NRC determined only small to moderate environmental impacts would result from the construction, operation and decommissioning of the proposed in-situ recovery facility. Most of the impacts are projected to be “small,” meaning they would be undetectable or so minor that they would not noticeably alter any important attribute of the resource in question. The EIS also identifies “small to moderate” socioeconomic impacts, primarily due to the potential need for additional housing for employees at the facility. “Moderate” impacts are defined as being sufficient to alter the resource noticeably, but not destabilize its important attributes.

The Moore Ranch EIS is a supplement to the NRC’s Generic Environmental Impact Statement for In-Situ Leach Uranium Milling Facilities (GEIS, NUREG-1910), published in June 2009, which analyzed potential environmental impacts common to in-situ recovery facilities in the western United States. The Moore Ranch supplement analyzes potential environmental impacts specific to the proposed facility.

A draft EIS for Moore Ranch was published for public comment in December 2009. The final EIS addresses the comments received on the draft report.

Uranium One Americas, Inc., submitted the license application for Moore Ranch on Oct. 2, 2007. It was the first application for a uranium recovery license accepted by the NRC in two decades.

The EIS concludes that the impacts of the Moore Ranch Project would not add perceptibly to cumulative impacts of coal-bed methane and oil and gas exploration in the Powder River Basin. The regional benefits of building the proposed project include

increased employment, economic activity, and tax revenues, while costs would, for the most part, be limited to the immediate area surrounding the site.

The Moore Ranch EIS, NUREG-1910 Supplement 1, is available on the NRC website at <http://www.nrc.gov/reading-rm/doc-collections/nuregs/staff/>. More information on the Moore Ranch application review process is available at <http://www.nrc.gov/info-finder/materials/uranium/apps-in-review/moore-ranch-new-app-review.html>.

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