

Fall, 1999

INSIDE LOOK

News about Private Fuel Storage, Tooele County, Utah



JOBS, OTHER ECONOMIC BENEFITS WILL COME WITH PFS LICENSE

If the Nuclear Regulatory Commission (NRC) approves the license and Private Fuel Storage builds the temporary spent nuclear fuel storage facility on the Skull Valley Goshute reservation, the project will be an economic blessing for many Utahns.

Construction of the \$3.1 billion facility will provide more than 100 jobs, and a variety of work for construction firms. If licensed, the PFS facility will include:

- A 2.5-mile access road
- Four industrial buildings
- Site operating systems
- 500 concrete storage pads (30'x64'x3')
- A 32-mile rail line connecting the site with the Union Pacific rail line
- Railroad equipment

These items total about \$101 million.

The work will be put out to bid by construction companies, including local contractors.

Aside from facility construction, the project's fuel storage system will need up to 4,000 steel canisters and concrete and steel casks, which stand 18 feet high, are 11 feet in diameter, and have 2" foot thick walls made of concrete and steel. Transportation casks will also be needed. PFS will give preference to local fabricators for casks and canisters, which will be valued up to \$1.8 billion over the project's life. The storage system designers visited Utah in July and August to see potential manufacturing sites and meet with local steel fabricators. One stop on their visit was the Tooele Industrial Depot.

Experience gained while working on the PFS project can put contractors in a good position to bid on additional jobs in the nuclear industry. The steel canisters that PFS



Artist's rendering of how the PFS site will look from Desert Peak

will use are similar in design to others used throughout the industry for temporary storage of spent fuel rods. And similar canisters will be needed when the federal government's permanent repository is ready.

After Construction

When the facility is finished, PFS will employ 40 to 50 people in full-time, well-paying jobs, which will require certain types of experience and education. PFS expects to find qualified candidates for most of these

jobs here in Utah. These kinds of jobs will be available:

- Mechanics/Operators
- Radiation Protection Technicians
- Site Security
- Quality Assurance
- Administrative Staff
- Nuclear Engineers
- Emergency Preparedness Coordinator

Site construction, as well as hiring and training, could begin as early as 2001, depending on the licensing process timing.

PEOPLE ARE ASKING . . .

Here is a sampling of some of the questions and concerns being expressed by the general public.

Q. Is there any work being done at the site now?

A. There has been little work done at the site this year, and we don't expect much activity in the near future. The only work done at the site has been in response to questions from the Nuclear Regulatory Commission (NRC) that PFS must answer. For example, we have performed additional testing on the soil and other aspects of site geology. The major work at the site will begin when the NRC grants PFS a license for the facility and construction can commence.

Q. Is this project going to happen?

A. Private Fuel Storage and the Skull Valley Band of Goshutes certainly hope so, but as of right now we honestly don't know. We are in the midst of the NRC's licensing process, which is long and arduous, as it should be to ensure that the facility meets all regulatory requirements regarding human health and safety, and the environment. Before the license is granted and PFS can begin construction, the

NRC must find the facility meets all of its safety standards. We are about halfway through the licensing process at this time. If all goes according to projections and the license is granted, construction on the spent-fuel facility could begin in 2001.

Q. Could some kind of radioactive, chemical, or biological contaminant, or an explosion, at one of the eight other Tooele County hazardous material operations, spread throughout the county and endanger the PFS site?

A. Selling fear seems to be one of the favorite tactics of PFS project opponents. Some have speculated about accidents in surrounding military, government and private operations in Tooele County, and claim that those could endanger the PFS facility. Those asking "what if" have failed to provide any scientific support or evidence that radioactive, chemical or biological contaminants or explosives would spread throughout Tooele County, much less the PFS site, from accidents at any of those facilities.

All of the facilities in Tooele County have emergency response plans and procedures to handle accidents. No scenarios have been identified that would endanger anyone.

Except for Dugway Proving Ground and Tooele Army Depot facilities, all other operations are at least 18 miles from the PFS site. Even at Dugway, the nearest facility, activities involving hazardous materials are more than 10 miles from the proposed PFS facility.

The PFS Emergency Plan and Safety Analysis Report, submitted with the application to the NRC, assess the threat from weapons-related activities at the Army airfield at Dugway, as well as the chemical munitions storage and incineration operations in the county. These documents concluded that the PFS site would not be in danger because of the distance from those facilities and the terrain in between. The NRC, to assure that activities at those other facilities pose no significant risk to the PFS site, is reviewing these documents carefully.

Learn more about the project

For more information about nuclear power, spent nuclear fuel and the storage of spent nuclear fuel, visit these web sites:

www.skullvalleygoshutes.org

or

www.privatefuelstorage.com

You may also call the PFS comment line:

1-888-701-8585

Or write to:

**Private Fuel Storage
P.O. Box 1405
Salt Lake City, Utah 84110-1405**

LICENSING SCHEDULE MODIFIED

While much of the work on the PFS license has been behind the scenes in 1999, it will be much more in the public eye in 2000. The NRC is expected to release a draft environmental impact statement (DEIS) in March 2000. The public will be invited to review it and comment. Then, in June and July, the Atomic Safety and Licensing Board is scheduled to come to Utah to begin hearings on the contentions, or issues, that have been raised by the state and other parties who chose to participate in hearings on the project. The hearings will be open to the public and, at the start of the hearings, the Board is expected to allow interested members of the public to make "limited appearance statements."

Hearings on a portion of the contentions were to have started in November 1999. However, those hearings were consolidated with hearings scheduled for next summer after a number of contentions were dismissed for lack of evidence and other deficiencies.

"We are pleased that the number of contentions has dropped from 41 to 20," said Scott Northard, PFS project manager. "This will give all the parties more time to focus on the issues that have merit and can be supported. Our goal has always been to be responsive to legitimate concerns about this project."

SAFETY EVALUATION REPORT

In November, the Nuclear Regulatory Commission staff is expected to release its Safety Evaluation Report (SER) on the proposed PFS facility. The report is the result of a detailed review by the NRC on issues related to the safety of the facility. They began work on the report after reviewing the PFS Safety Analysis Report, which was part of the application for a license. The NRC staff then asked PFS to respond to questions to clarify or expand on information about safety issues. Some safety issues are not covered in the SER but will be included in later supplements. Safety issues will be among those debated in hearings next summer. The report, along with other PFS documents, will be in the public document room at the Marriott Library at the University of Utah.

Meet Mary Allen: Skull Valley Band of Goshutes

Mary Allen, vice chair of the Skull Valley Band, is a breath of fresh air in a world that seems to value style over substance.

"Mary speaks from the heart," says Scott Northard, project manager for Private Fuel Storage (PFS). "She says what's on her mind, straightforwardly and honestly. You can trust her."

For example, Mary was obviously speaking her mind when she addressed the Utah Women's Legislative Council on the subject of the PFS spent nuclear fuel storage facility on her reservation.

"To us, it's a great economic development for the Tribe," she said. "This venture between PFS and the Skull Valley Goshutes would be a great revenue producer and benefit to our members. It would help us provide health care, housing improvements and education for our members. We have thought about the safety and the future of our children; also about the safety of our reservation.

"Do you think the State of Utah thought about us being safe? All we know is that hazardous, toxic and low-level radioactive waste facilities were being built on our traditional territory and all around us. No one asked the Tribe if it was okay to place these sites there."

Though she and Governor Leavitt do not see eye-to-eye on the PFS project, there are areas where they do agree. In 1997, the Governor gave Mary an award for her service to the Utah Department of Corrections. She served on the Native American Religious Issues Task Force, which was formed to help the Corrections Department develop spiritual programs for Native American inmates. Mary also is working with the Governor's office and leaders of other Utah Indian Tribes to place each Tribe's official flag on display at the capital grounds.

Mary is a Grantsville resident who has worked for Alliant Techsystems for 15 years. She is a graduate of Grantsville High School and attended Dixie College in St. George.



Mary Allen

County Fairs Show That The Times May Be Changing

What a difference a year makes!

Again in 1999, Private Fuel Storage community affairs people and members of the Skull Valley Band of Goshutes staffed a PFS booth at the Tooele and Salt Lake County Fairs. This year's experience was a far cry from the events in 1998, and not simply because both fairs were in new venues.

PFS Public Affairs Counsel Sue Martin noted, "Last year, the statement we heard most was, 'Why not leave it where it is.' This year, however, the most-repeated quote was 'Well, we've got to put it (spent nuclear fuel) somewhere.' It was a most interesting turn-around."

The two county fairs are important to PFS in gauging grass roots public opinion about the project. "People knew more about the project this year than they did last," Ms. Martin said. "Some, but not nearly as



Lavelda Wash helped staff the PFS booth at the Salt Lake County Fair.

many as in 1998, still have concerns about it, and we take those concerns very seriously. It takes time and education to calm fears."

One of the visitors at the Salt Lake County Fair was a U.S. Navy veteran who had spent many years with the country's nuclear submarine fleet. As he put it, "This project is important and needs to happen. The biggest problem you're going to have is that you're dealing with the word 'nuclear.' Just the word scares some people. It shouldn't, it doesn't need to, but it does."

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