

Additional Review By M. D. Campbell and Associates, L.P.
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Key to Comments:

Black = Original Article Content

Yellow = Particular Offending words or phrases

Red = C&A Mining Group Comments

Article in Question:

Mining Company, Uranium Opponents Seek Public Approval

Sunday, December 09, 2007

Sonny Long, is a reporter for the *Victoria Advocate*, Texas

Opponents of uranium mining are fighting on two fronts: the court of public opinion and the courtroom. On the legal front, opponents have requested a hearing to contest Uranium Energy Corp.'s application for a mining permit, the next step toward full-scale mining. Private residents, the Goliad County commissioners court, and the county's groundwater conservation district have all asked the Texas Commission on Environmental Quality for a hearing.

[Using the term "fighting", the reporter sets the stage for conflict, and for warning the reader that two sides exist in the fight, the good (private residents) and the bad (the opponents, otherwise known as the mining company).]

The hearing is a legal proceeding similar to a civil trial and, if granted, would be in Austin at the State Office of Administrative Hearings. If the groundwater becomes contaminated, some landowners near the proposed mining area say they would consider suing not only the uranium company but also the landowners who leased their land for mining.

[1. A hearing is a regulatory hearing and is not similar to a civil trial, as the reporter claims. The hearing is used to help the TCEQ weigh both sides of the issue from a regulatory perspective and either allow or not allow the permit to be issued.

2. The statement is then followed by a hypothetical condition that "some" landowners near the proposed mining area "say" that they would "consider" suing not only the uranium company but also the landowners who leased their land for mining. Notice that the reporter neither cites who the landowners are or who they would sue. Sounds like the landowners and reporter are practicing a form of coercion against the landowners who were fortunate enough to have economic uranium mineralization present within their land in order to further a personal agenda against uranium mining (and likely nuclear-power development). This is a form of yellow journalism.]

On the public relations front, the county commissioner's court has passed a resolution against uranium mining in the county. Although non-binding, the resolution made clear the court's stance. Opponents also are funding a more visible effort in Victoria, where a digital billboard flashes its daily message opposing uranium mining. Some donations are collected at town hall meetings. A sign at a recent meeting stated, "our billboard has area folks talking and thinking." The billboard cost \$105 a day, according to another sign.

[1. If the members of the commissioners court are in the real-estate development business, they would likely be carrying an agenda against uranium mining in the northern part of Goliad County if they had real-estate interests in that area, which would represent a conflict of interest.

2. The reporter quotes a sign claiming that their "billboard has people talking and thinking," when they are just as likely talking about the small group of people in the Goliad County who have another agenda. This agenda is against an environmental-friendly form of mining that would increase employment and sales tax revenues for all the county residents. This small group is guided by a few real-estate developers and salesmen.

3. In one sense, it is fortunate that the uranium has been discovered in the aquifer in Goliad County, and elsewhere, before the real-estate developers built strip malls and residences on the land above the uranium mineralization occurring naturally in the aquifer. If it hadn't been discovered, law suits against the developers would likely follow once the uranium was discovered in the drinking water below a few years after they were built.]

Harry Anthony, the mining company's chief operations officer, calls those in opposition to uranium mining, "a great vocal minority."

Guest columns and the letters to the editor in the Advocate also lend a voice to both sides of the debate. The residents' committee, Uranium Information at Goliad, supplies a regular column in the Goliad newspaper featuring questions and answers about uranium mining and the ongoing process. The group also has distributed brochures expressing concerns about uranium mining.

[Has the language used by the "residents' committee" been evaluated for accuracy by a professional geologist or engineer or does the language contain no clear message but unfounded innuendo and claims about contaminated ground water or health impact? Previous statements by *Uranium Information at Goliad* have been heavily biased towards the anti-uranium philosophy.]

Those brochures caused Anthony to question the tactics of uranium mining opponents. A photograph showing a barren well field is actually in Wyoming, not Texas, Anthony said, calling it intentionally "misleading the public." A caption under the photo reads, "Note the lack of trees and vegetation." The brochure does not state where the photo was shot, although a photo credit is given to Peter Diehl of Wise Uranium.

Ginger Cook, a landowner who is a member of the county's uranium research and advisory committee, said she put the brochure together and doesn't think it's deceptive at all. "It shows ugly. And ugly is ugly no matter where it's located," Cook said.

[Ginger Cook should be ashamed of herself for misleading the public with a deceptive photo of conditions supposedly present in Texas. Has the reporter determined what agenda Ms. Cook is pursuing? Apparently not. That makes the reporter as guilty as Ms. Cook for supporting the deception. If she had used a photograph of one of the US Steel mines in George West in the 1970s and 1980s, she would have seen a well field set in a grassy pasture.]

Another tactic the company criticized is opponents' statement at town hall meetings that the Texas Commission on Environmental Quality gets more than 80 percent of its revenue from the issuance of permits, implying that the commission would lose money if it turned down a permit. That percentage came directly from the commission's Web site last October, said Margaret Rutherford, who helped organize the citizens committee, but it "was withdrawn shortly after I presented this information."

[The question here arises that why didn't Ms. Rutherford make a copy of the statement supposedly published on a TCEQ website page? No proof, no truth. Once again, with the reporter presenting hearsay information without providing the supporting evidence, the reporter is once again participating in potential deception and misrepresentation to the people of Goliad County.]

"Eighty-two percent of all agency revenue from permits is very incorrect. Permitting fees are actually a fairly small percentage of our revenue," said Lisa Wheeler, commission spokeswoman. The application fee for an underground injection control permit is \$100, according to the commission's Web site.

[The reporter must have realized that he had a problem so he interviewed a TCEQ representative to determine what the webpage actually said. Having determined that the TCEQ did not publish such language, then why did he leave the claim by Ms. Rutherford in this piece after it was confirmed that she had made a false claim. Seems that the "opponents" have now even turned on their state regulatory agency, whose job it is to protect human health and environment on behalf of all residents of the State of Texas.]

The uranium company has done some public relations work itself, providing \$10,000 annually for science and engineering scholarships to Goliad high school seniors. Until the fight shifts to the legal front, both sides remain focused on winning public opinion.

[The company should be commended for making such contributions, which likely will continue for a number of years as the project continues into the mining phase.]

"I know I wear the scarlet 'U'," Anthony said the first time he met with the public in Goliad in June 2006. ""But we are here to extend our hand and be a good corporate neighbor. We want to make sure there is no misinformation."

[The company representative makes an appropriate comment regarding being a good neighbor and being present to make sure misinformation is not distributed without challenge from the company.]

Rutherford says those opposing uranium mining can't fight the battle alone. "You can't be the silent majority here. We need everyone's help. Please help support the cause to keep you informed with accurate, research-based information."

[Having been confirmed that Ms. Rutherford has made false claims, she makes one wonder why she thinks she has any credibility remaining but she continues to claim that she will provide "accurate, research-based information". Once again, the reporter, Mr. Long, joins in with the deception by providing coverage in this clearly biased article published in the *Victoria Advocate*.]

Sonny Long is a reporter for the Advocate who also opposes uranium exploration and mining in the Goliad area. Contact him at 361-580-6585 or slong@vicad.com.

[We at C&A would be among the first to state that Mr. Long has the right under the U.S. Constitution and Bill of Rights to express any opinion he wishes. However, when someone providing public information presents his opinion under the guise of being fair although has purposely provided false, deceptive, and misleading information, that person should be considered a lobbyist, and certainly not a reporter for the local or national news media. Fortunately, these issues, as well as others involving uranium exploration and nuclear power development in general, are now being discussed in the light of reason without fear (see: <http://www.assuranceonline.us/articles.html>), and especially a recent review of Goliad issues by the industry-sponsored group, *Assurance OnLine* ([here](#)). Although prepared by the uranium company, we have reviewed the latter and have determined that the Goliad review has merit and is well founded.]

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