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Bud Cramer

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BUD CRAMER
5TH DISTRICT, ALABAMA

COMMITTEE ON PUBLIC WORKS
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COMMITTEE ON SCIENCE,
SPACE, AND TECHNOLOGY
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CHILDREN, YOUTH, AND FAMILIES

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Washington, DC 20515-0105

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737 EAST AVALON AVENUE
MUSCLE SHOALS, AL 35661
(205) 381-3450

MORGAN COUNTY COURTHOUSE
BOX 668
DECATUR, AL 35602
(205) 355-9400

April 13, 1993

The White House
Office on Environmental Policy
Ms. Kathleen McGinty
1600 Pennsylvania Avenue
Washington, D.C. 20500

Re: Mr. James C. Barber
Suite 115, Courtview Towers
Florence AL, 35630

Dear Ms. McGinty:

The attached information has been received from my constituent regarding a process for the cleanup of a hazardous waste and for the conservation of a mineral resource.

I would appreciate it if you would review the attached and advise me of any information that may be helpful to Mr. Barber. Please respond to my district office at 737 East Avalon Avenue, Muscle Shoals, Alabama 35661.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

Bud Cramer

Bud Cramer

BC:em

Enclosure

JAMES C. BARBER AND ASSOCIATES, INC.
FERTILIZER AND PHOSPHORUS TECHNOLOGY CONSULTANTS
SUITE 115, COURTVIEW TOWERS
FLORENCE, ALABAMA 35630
TELEPHONE AND FAX 205-764-5722

April 7, 1993

The Honorable Bud Cramer
Congressman, 5th District,
Alabama
737 East Avalon Avenue
Muscle Shoals, Alabama 35661

Dear Mr. Cramer:

The enclosed letter to Mr. Norman A. Zigrossi, President, Resource Group, Tennessee Valley Authority, provides a process for the cleanup of a hazardous waste--precipitator dust--and for the conservation of a mineral resource. A project to recover the precipitator dust will result in the creation of jobs in the Muscle Shoals area.

It would be helpful if the project to recover a hazardous waste, conserve a mineral resource, and create jobs is brought to the attention of Ms. Kathleen McGinty in the White House Office on Environmental Policy.

Sincerely,

James C. Barber

James C. Barber

JCB:lm
Enclosure

JAMES C. BARBER AND ASSOCIATES, INC.
FERTILIZER AND PHOSPHORUS TECHNOLOGY CONSULTANTS
SUITE 115, COURTVIEW TOWERS
FLORENCE, ALABAMA 35630
TELEPHONE AND FAX 205-764-5722

April 7, 1993

Mr. Norman A. Zigrossi
President, Resource Group
Tennessee Valley Authority
400 West Summit Hill Drive
Knoxville, Tennessee 37902

Dear Mr. Zigrossi:

I am writing with regard to a project to recover one of the hazardous wastes now stored at the National Fertilizer and Environmental Research Center (NFERC). The waste is precipitator dust.

The Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) estimated 20,000 tons is in outdoor storage piles, but EPA did not indicate whether the tonnage is on a wet or dry basis. I estimate 30,000 to 35,000 tons on a wet basis.

The precipitator dust has a combined phosphorus content high enough for it to be used as a feedstock for electric furnaces. However, the waste is comprised of very small particles which are not suitable for feeding into electric furnaces.

A process has been invented (U.S. patent 4,968,499) to aggregate the small particles into agglomerates suitable for smelting in electric furnaces. The agglomerates are heated to drive off free and combined water before feeding into the furnace. The particles in precipitator dust are aggregated by a chemical--monocalcium phosphate--prepared from an unwanted byproduct called phosphoric acid sludge. The monocalcium phosphate is prepared by reacting phosphoric acid sludge and finely ground phosphate ore. The electric furnace feedstock prepared from precipitator dust will have a higher grade than any domestic phosphate ores now being mined.

Calculations show that 2,888 tons of elemental phosphorus can be produced from feedstock prepared from 20,000 tons (assumed wet basis) of precipitator dust. At the current market price of $0.91 per pound, the value of the elemental phosphorus that will be recovered will be over $5 million.

Research and development at NFERC showed that the low-grade phosphate mined in Maury and Williamson Counties in Tennessee had to be blended with high-grade phosphate in order to smelt the material successfully. High-grade phosphate needed for

blending is scarce and costly. The smelting of low-grade Tennessee ore is being phased out. Nevertheless, smelting of the Tennessee ore will provide a high-grade byproduct called ferrophosphorus which is needed in the metallurgical industry. Phase-out of phosphorus production in Tennessee has created a shortage of ferrophosphorus.

High-grade feedstock prepared from precipitator dust is expected to be ideal for upgrading, thereby permitting low-grade Tennessee phosphate to be smelted. When the precipitator dust is converted into electric furnace feedstock, a demonstration is recommended to show that blending will permit the low-grade Tennessee phosphate ore to be smelted. The demonstration should be conducted at an existing electric furnace, and the furnace should be equipped with instruments and measuring equipment needed to make an engineering study of the smelting operation. Since I have had experience in conducting engineering studies on the electric furnaces at NFERC, I would appreciate an opportunity to participate in engineering studies on smelting precipitator dust.

Phosphoric acid sludge is currently used to make ammonium phosphate fertilizers. However, impurities in the sludge prevent making high-grade fertilizers and it is infeasible to use the ammonium phosphate to make fluid fertilizers. A practical use for phosphoric acid sludge, such as upgrading electric furnace feedstock, would benefit the fertilizer industry.

When all the precipitator dust has been smelted, monocalcium phosphate may be prepared in lump form and phosphoric acid sludge can continue to be used to upgrade electric furnace feedstock. Smelting low-grade Tennessee phosphate can continue and a valuable mineral resource will be saved.

TVA formerly owned mineral rights on 2400 acres of land in Giles County, Tennessee. The land contained an estimated 9.3 million tons of phosphate ore. In 1987 the mineral rights were sold to Occidental Chemical Coporation, but the ore has not been mined because the grade is too low for smelting.

Information in the files at NFERC is needed to complete plans for an engineering study of the smelting of feedstock prepared from precipitator dust. And information is needed to calculate the quantity of phosphoric acid sludge required to upgrade the feedstock. Under the Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) you are requested, therefore, to provide the following information available in files at NFERC.

1. Chemical composition of the total 9.3 million tons of phosphate in the Giles County tract. The constituents specifically needed are P_2O_5, CaO, SiO_2, Fe_2O_3, and Al_2O_3, but any data on other constituents would be helpful.

2. Quantity of phosphate ore in deposit by grades. I understand this information was compiled in preparation for public sale of the mineral rights.

3. Map showing location of the phosphate ore deposits in Giles County.

Your help in supplying the information requested above will be appreciated.

Sincerely,

James C. Barber

JCB:lm
CC: Congressman Bud Cramer
5th District, Alabama