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Re: Nickel, Nickel, Nickel

Dear Committee Members,

In the past few weeks, Greg Wiles and I have been pontificating ways that we might elevate the public conversation about the 9700 tons of nickel which is located at the Paducah DOE site. We think one of the best ways to elevate the conversation is to prepare and convey the information we know about the nickel. This correspondence is a first attempt at conveying that information.

Below is a summary of a 79 page attachment which includes various articles related to nickel. The attachment contains my highlights and notes.

1. The Paducah DOE site contains 9,700 tons of nickel ingots. The ingots are 99.9% pure nickel. The ingots were made from metal reclaimed during cascade upgrade program in Paducah and Portsmouth in the 1970s and 1980s. *(See page 1 of Nickel Attachment.)* This nickel is the property of the United States of America and is the subject of a Presidential Order from the Clinton Administration which serves as a moratorium on any activity involving this nickel. At present, 1 ton of nickel sells for \$18,000.00.
2. "The most frequently identified contaminant in the nickel is technetium-99. However, traces of neptunium, plutonium, protactinium, thorium, and uranium have also been identified in the nickel." *(See page 7 of Nickel Attachment)*

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3. In 2007, the University of Kentucky prepared a research paper on the issue of separating the nickel from technetium. You will note that our own Dr. David Silverstone is cited at various times in this research paper.  
(See page 2-57 of *Nickel Attachment*.)
4. On August 29, 2020, the Wall Street Journal included an article regarding the effort of a Mr. J.B. Straubel to find more nickel as a part of the expanding electric car industry. Nickel is an essential element for the batteries powering electric cars. The article states:

Mr. Straubel, Tesla's long time chief technology officer, pioneered the lithium-ion battery powertrain design that helped propel the silicone valley company to what is now the highest valuation in the car industry. Since leaving Tesla, about a year ago, he has been trying to solve a problem created by that success, **where to find all the nickel**, cobalt, and lithium need to make the batteries that power Tesla cars and their growing list of rivals. (See page 59-65 of *Nickel Attachment*.)

5. Pages 66-79 are additional articles which discuss the environmental concerns and difficulty associated with finding and mining nickel.

It is important for the public to understand that PACRO does not own the nickel. Rather, the nickel is owned by the United States of America. However, given the emerging electric car industry, we want to make sure that we are doing our part to elevate the "public conversation" of a potential valuable resource located at the Paducah DOE site.

Please contact me with your questions.

Respectfully,



Edwin A. Jones

EAJ/sw

Enclosure: Nickel Information Packet (pages 1-79)