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Bountiful, Utah 84010

65 FR 39206
June 23, 2000

(154)

David L. Meyer
Rules and Directive Branch
Mailstop T-6D-59
U.S. NRC
Washington, D.C. 20555-0001

Re: DEIS Comments on Proposed PFS-Skull Valley Storage Site

Dear Mr. Meyer:

I am writing this letter as a concerned citizen to comment on the DEIS on the proposed shipment and storage of high level nuclear waste to Skull Valley, Utah. I want to focus on the issue that has been totally missed in the DEIS, the affect that this facility would have on the ability of the Air Force to use the flight testing range and how that may affect national security; and the potential economic impact to the State of Utah of losing Hill Air Force Base.

Skull Valley is a unique flight testing range, the value of which may well be credited with Hill Field surviving the base closures during the 1990s. There are two reasons why this should be of major concern to the NRC and the other cooperating agencies which must be thoroughly considered in the DEIS. First, it is the mission of the NRC to protect the public health and safety, the environment, and the common defense and security. The ability of the Air Force to properly test its planes and train its pilots strikes right at the heart of the common defense and security. It has been contended at the public hearings by those who would know, that this facility would result in the closure of this flight testing range. The DEIS must state whether that is the case. Any conclusion that the NRC may arrive at must be supported by a formal statement from the Air Force as to the impact that this facility would have on the Air Force's use of the testing range. That the Air Force may not desire to take an official position be it for political reasons or otherwise should not be acceptable for purposes of the DEIS. If this nuclear storage facility would have any impact on the Air Force's decision to use that testing range, the value of that testing range and the corresponding impact to the common defense and security must be thoroughly addressed and quantified in the DEIS.

Second, the DEIS must address whether the nuclear storage facility would have any impact on the value to the military of keeping Hill Field open. During the 1990s it was nip and tuck as to whether Utah would lose Hill Field. At the time it was represented that what may have saved Hill Field is the value of the west desert as a testing range. A key component of the DEIS is to evaluate the economic impact of the nuclear storage facility to the receiving state. The DEIS must compare the value to the State of Utah of keeping Hill Field as opposed to the value to the State of Utah of having this nuclear storage facility. Again, this is an issue which must not be summarily dismissed in the DEIS and must be supported by an official statement by the Air Force as to whether the presence of the nuclear storage facility would affect Hill Field's presence

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add Scott Flanders
(SCF)

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in the State of Utah.

To fully evaluate these issues, the NRC and cooperating agencies have some work to do and the decision process must be extended.

I appreciate your attention to this matter.

Sincerely,



Paul M. McConkie

cc: Gov. Michael Leavitt
Sen. Orrin Hatch
Sen. Robert Bennett
Rep. James Hansen
Bureau of Land Management
Surface Transportation Board
Bureau of Indian Affairs

FACSIMILE TRANSMISSION SHEET

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Comments: _____

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