UNITED STATES
NUCLEAR REGULATORY COMMISSION
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20555-0001

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AUG 10 1994

Mr. Ronald A. Milner, Acting Director
Office of Program Management and Integration
Office of Civilian Radioactive Waste Management
U.S. Department of Energy
1000 Independence Avenue, SW
Washington, D.C. 20585

Dear Mr. Milner:

SUBJECT: OBSERVATION OF DESIGN REVIEW OF EXPLORATORY STUDIES FACILITY DESIGN PACKAGE 2C

Enclosed for your information is the U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission Design Review Observation Report 94-02 for the U.S. Department of Energy (DOE), Office of Civilian Radioactive Waste Management 90 percent Technical Review of Design Package 2C, "Topopah Spring North Ramp," for the Exploratory Studies Facility, held in Las Vegas, Nevada, May 16-20, 1994. The State of Nevada, and affected units of local government provided representatives to observe this review. A list of the attendees is provided as Attachment 1 to the enclosure.

For this review, the NRC staff provided verbal and documented comments on the programmatic and technical aspects of the design, design control process, Determination of Importance Evaluation, and conduct of the design review. The NRC staff also provided comments related to Design Package 2C based on the sample of the preliminary predecisional design package reviewed during the time available. Observation of the 90 percent design review does not constitute an in-depth design review or imply NRC acceptance of the design.

In accordance with the schedule established for this design review, a comment resolution meeting was held on June 9, 1994, to develop written responses to documented comments identified on the appropriate comment forms in this letter. Acceptable responses to the comments of the NRC staff on Design Package 2C have been received. We note, however, that the NRC staff has not received responses to the comments the staff provided for the 90 percent design review of Design Package 2B (J.J. Holonich to D.E. Shelor letter dated February 18, 1994).

Based on its observations of the 90 percent design review of Design Package 2C, the NRC staff finds the effectiveness and adequacy of the design interface review between the design disciplines and the contractors prior to the 90 percent design review to be much improved in comparison to the 90 percent review of Design Package 2B.

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The NRC staff plans to observe future design reviews and technical review activities to ensure that consideration of the above comments has been factored into the process. If you have any questions, please contact Bill Belke at (301) 415-5874.

Sincerely,

Joseph J.Holonich, Chief
High-Level Waste & Uranium Recovery
Projects Branch
Division of Waste Management
Office of Nuclear Material Safety
and Safeguards

Enclosure: As stated

cc: R. Loux, State of Nevada
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M. Murphy, Nye County, NV
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NAME	WLBelke		RLJohnson		MJBell		JJHolonich	
DATE	08/05/94		08/05/94		08/05/94		08/09/94	

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