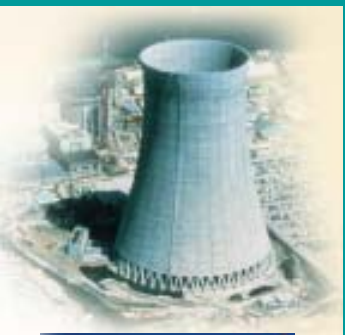

Program Update

NRC RIC 2003 – Session T4:
Spent Fuel Storage, Transportation and Disposal

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U.S. Department of Energy

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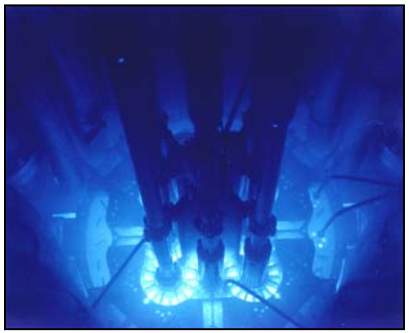
Program Drivers

Support Nuclear Navy Mission

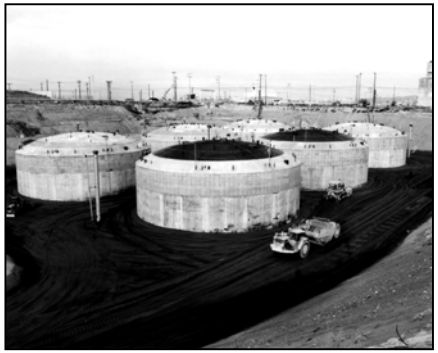
Support Surplus Weapons Material Disposition

- **National Security**
  - Support continued operations of the Navy's principal combat vessels.
- **Nuclear Non-Proliferation**
  - Dispose of surplus weapons-grade plutonium.
- **Energy and Economic Security**
  - Maintain nuclear energy option that supplies 20% of our electricity needs to sustain present and future economic security.
- **Homeland Security**
  - Consolidate nuclear materials presently stored at sites within 75 miles of 162 million Americans.
- **Environmental Protection**
  - Ensure environmentally sound disposition of our commercial and defense wastes.



Support International Nonproliferation Initiatives

Support Commercial Nuclear Energy Option



Support Defense Complex Clean-Up

Approval of the Yucca Mountain Site

- **On February 14, 2002, Secretary Abraham gave his recommendation to the President for approval of the Yucca Mountain site.**

- **On July 23, 2002, the President signed the Joint Congressional Resolution designating the site.**

- **The Department has now focused its efforts on submitting a license application to the Nuclear Regulatory Commission (NRC) and developing a transportation capability.**

Key Repository Milestones

- **December 2004**
  - Submit License Application to Nuclear Regulatory Commission (NRC) for construction authorization.
- **2010**
  - Start receiving wastes and initiate repository operations.
- **2034**
  - Completion of repository operations.

Transportation Planning

- **Transportation Strategic Plan**
  - Outline approach to planning, developing and operating the transportation system.
  - Describe process to work cooperatively with Federal agencies, States, Tribes, Local Governments, waste owners and other parties.
    - Detailed plans
    - Operating system
    - Communication
  - Describe key decisions.

Major Challenges of Program

- **Funding shortfalls of $709M between 1995-2003 (average 16%)**

- **Licensing process is first-of-its-kind**

- **Litigation**
  - From utilities, due to the delay in meeting the 1998 waste acceptance date, which put the Federal Government in partial breach of contracts.
  - Multiple lawsuits filed by State of Nevada.

Near-Term Activities Needing Congressional Attention

- **Administration's proposed funding fix with Budget Enforcement Act (BEA) cap adjustment needs approval.**

- **Administration's intent to submit a "Land Withdrawal Bill" to permanently withdraw land surrounding the repository (necessary for NRC licensing).**