



Department of Energy

Washington, DC 20585

JUN 29 1992

Mr. Joseph J. Holonich, Director
Repository Licensing & Quality Assurance
Project Directorate
Division of High-Level Waste Management
Office of Nuclear Material Safety
and Safeguards
U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission
Washington, D.C. 20555

Dear Mr. Holonich:

This responds to the U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission's (NRC) Phase I review comments on Study Plan 8.3.1.9.2.2, "Water Resource Assessment of Yucca Mountain, Nevada." The NRC's Phase I review of the subject study plan stated a concern with the assumption that ground water is the only resource expected to have the potential for future human intrusion. The sentence at issue from the study plan states, "At present, the only resource expected to have the potential for inadvertent intrusion due to future exploitation near the repository is ground water (DOE, 1988a)." The U.S. Department of Energy (DOE) understands how such a statement might be of concern to the NRC.

The statement of concern is a paraphrased adaptation from page 9.3.1.9-11 of the Site Characterization plan which states in part, "Ground water currently is the only commodity to be classified as a resource in the immediate vicinity of the site." Study 8.3.1.9.2.1, "Natural Resource Assessment of Yucca Mountain," will evaluate the potential for mineral and energy resources, and it will not be compromised by premature conclusions.

Because of NRC's concern, DOE commits to drop the sentence at issue from any future revision of this study plan. Purely from an administrative standpoint, we do not wish to revise the plan only to remove the statement. We did wish to promptly respond to the misunderstanding arising from the statement, and we hope this clarification is satisfactory to the NRC.

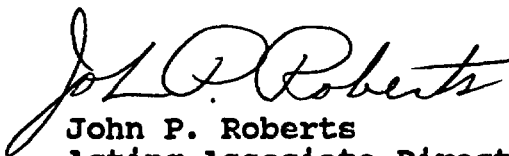
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If you have any questions, please contact Mr. Chris Einberg of my office at 202-586-8869.

Sincerely,



John P. Roberts
Acting Associate Director for
Systems and Compliance
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