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U. S. NUCLEAR REGULATORY COMMISSION  
RECEIPT OF U. S. DEPARTMENT OF ENERGY'S  
SITE CHARACTERIZATION PLAN  
FOR YUCCA MOUNTAIN, NEVADA SITE

AGENCY: U. S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission.

ACTION: Notice of receipt of the Department of Energy's Site Characterization Plan for Yucca Mountain, Nevada Site.

SUMMARY: The Nuclear Regulatory Commission (NRC) has received for review and comment the Department of Energy's (DOE) Site Characterization Plan (SCP) for the Yucca Mountain, Nevada candidate site for a permanent geologic repository for high-level radioactive waste (HLW). Section 113(b) of the Nuclear Waste Policy Act of 1982 (NWPA) requires that the SCP provide "a general plan for site characterization activities" to be conducted. The purpose of site characterization is to collect pertinent geological and other information necessary to evaluate whether the site is suitable for a permanent geologic repository and, if found suitable, to provide DOE with data adequate to prepare and support a license application seeking from the NRC authorization to construct such a repository.

As part of the pre-license application phase of the repository licensing process established by NWPA and the Nuclear Waste Policy Amendments Act of 1987 (NWPAA), the NRC is required to review and comment upon DOE's SCP, and in accord with 10 CFR Part 60.16, "DOE shall defer the sinking of such shafts

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until such time as there has been an opportunity for Commission comments thereon to have been solicited and considered by DOE." NRC anticipates completion of the review in a seven-month time frame, culminating in issuance to DOE of a Site Characterization Analysis (SCA) with respect to the SCP, as well as such additional comments as may be warranted.

During its review of the SCP, the NRC will provide an opportunity for the State of Nevada and for affected local governments and Indian Tribes to present their views on the SCP and their suggestions with respect to comments thereon which may be made by the NRC. In addition, NRC staff will be made available to consult with the affected parties upon their written request pursuant to Subpart C of 10 CFR Part 60.

At the time of issuance of the SCA, a notice of availability of the SCA and a request for public comment will be published in the Federal Register. Copies of the SCA and of the comments received will be made available at NRC's Public Document Room (PDR) located at 2120 L Street, N.W., Lower Level, Washington, D.C. 20555 and local Public Document Rooms (LPDRs), located at the James R. Dickinson Library, Special Collections Department, University of Nevada-Las Vegas, 4505 Maryland Parkway, Las Vegas, Nevada 89154 and University Library, Government Publications Department, University of Nevada-Reno, Reno, Nevada 89557.

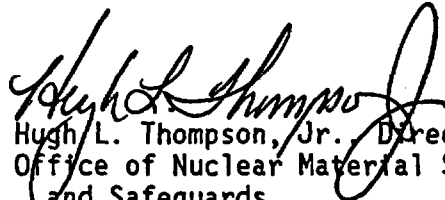
Copies of the SCP may be obtained from DOE by contacting: Stephen H. Kale, Associate Director, Office of Facilities Siting and Development, Office of Civilian Radioactive Waste Management, U. S. Department of Energy, RW-20, 1000 Independence Avenue, S.W., Washington, DC 20585 or Carl P. Gertz, Project Manager, Yucca Mountain Project Office, U. S. Department of Energy, Box 98518, Las Vegas, Nevada 89193-8518.

NRC has made copies of the SCP available for public inspection in its PDR and LPDRs.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: John J. Linehan, Director, Repository Licensing and 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

Dated at Rockville, Maryland, this      day of      1989.

FOR THE NUCLEAR REGULATORY COMMISSION

  
Hugh L. Thompson, Jr. Director  
Office of Nuclear Material Safety  
and Safeguards