



AGENCY FOR NUCLEAR PROJECTS
NUCLEAR WASTE PROJECT OFFICE

Capitol Complex
Carson City, Nevada 89710
(702) 885-3744

January 11, 1990

Dr. Donald Deere, Chairman
Nuclear Waste Technical Review Board
1111 18th Street NW Suite 801
Washington, D.C. 20036

Dear Dr. Deere

As you are aware, the State of Nevada has a keen interest in U.S. Department of Energy's activities relative to siting and design of the Exploratory Shaft Facility (ESF) at Yucca Mountain. This Office has maintained since 1984 that the decisions which led to the present ESF location were not based on technical grounds but on expediency and convenience. A site selection decision based on a complete use of data available at the time and an understanding of the requirements of site characterization and licensing regulations would probably have led to the selection being made from a number of superior alternatives (of another ESF location).

As a result of the State's continued concern with the ESF location, this Office in late 1988 requested that our Engineering Contractor, H. Platt Thompson Engineering Company, Houston, Texas, develop a generic ESF site selection procedure. The procedure developed was based on the requirements of 10 CFR part 60 for licensing of a high-level radioactive waste repository and on standard geoscience, environmental and engineering principles. We have not employed the procedure to select a new Yucca Mountain ESF site, but rather it was developed simply to determine if the above bases could be combined to produce a viable site selection procedure. The work was completed in February 1990, and we believe the resulting procedure and rationale to have merit.

It is our understanding that the NWTRB plans to meet with the DOE the end of January 1990 to discuss possible alternatives to

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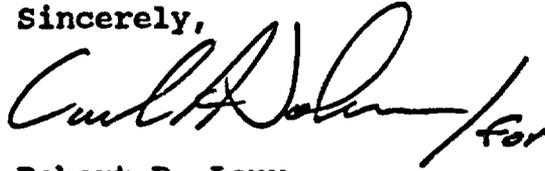
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the present ESF. We think our ESF site selection procedure might be of value to the Board in its considerations and have provided a copy (enclosed) for the Board's use. Should the Board desire any further discussion on this subject, this Office is available at any time.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Robert R. Loux", followed by a diagonal slash and the word "for" written in a smaller, simpler font.

Robert R. Loux
Executive Director

RRL/lmg

cc: Robert Browning, NRC