

February 8, 1995

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Robert R. Loux, Executive Director  
Agency for Nuclear Projects  
Nuclear Waste Project Office  
Capitol Complex  
Carson City, Nevada 89710

Dear Mr. Loux:

We have received your letter dated January 10, 1995 (R. Loux to M. Knapp), which contained the State of Nevada's response on the pneumatic pathways concern addressed in the U.S. Department of Energy letter dated November 14, 1994 (D. Dreyfus to R. Bernero). This letter also included comments on what the State of Nevada thinks should be done before the Tunnel Boring Machine Hold Point at the Paintbrush bedded unit and Topopah Spring welded unit contact can be lifted. The NRC staff will consider these comments as we review additional U.S. Department of Energy responses to the State of Nevada's pneumatic pathways issue. As we indicated in our March 31, 1994, letter (B. Youngblood to R. Loux), the NRC will be applying "objection" level criteria to determine if a hold point on Exploratory Study Facility construction is necessary. It is our intention to keep the State of Nevada informed of NRC staff progress on the pneumatic pathways concern through normal correspondence.

Thank you for your comments. Should you have any questions related to this letter, please contact William Ford of my staff (301) 504-2445.

Sincerely,

John H. Austin, Chief  
Performance Assessment and Hydrology Branch  
Division of Waste Management  
Office of Nuclear Material Safety  
and Safeguards

cc: See next page

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CC: list for letter to R. Loux from J. Austin dated 2/8/95

cc: J. Meder, Nevada Legislative Counsel Bureau  
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