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OCRWM Bulletin

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Congressional Testimony On The Monitored Retrievable Storage Proposal—Excerpts From Presentation By Ben C. Rusche, Director, OCRWM, Before The Senate Committee On Energy And Natural Resources, April 29, 1987

"... In our proposal, we recommend that Congress:

- Approve the construction of a monitored retrievable storage (MRS) facility at Clinch River near Oak Ridge, Tennessee;
- Limit the storage capacity at the MRS facility to 15,000 metric tons of spent fuel;
- Preclude waste acceptance by the MRS facility until a construction authorization for the first repository is received from the Nuclear Regulatory Commission (NRC);
- Direct DOE to implement measures responsive to the concerns and recommendations of the State and local governments and to direct DOE to implement the program plan accompanying the proposal.

"...The proposal consists of three volumes and, in accordance with the Nuclear Waste Policy Act of 1982 (NWPA), it includes the proposal itself (Volume 1); an environmental assessment (Volume 2) that examines the three alternative sites and six site-and-design combinations; and a program plan (Volume 3) that includes plans for funding and plans for integrating the MRS facility into DOE's waste management system... Also provided are comments by the NRC and the Environmental

Protection Agency (EPA). Formal comments from the State of Tennessee, indicating former Governor Alexander's general opposition to the MRS, were received by DOE and were included. In addition, Governor McWherter's position on DOE's proposal, that reaffirms Governor Alexander's opposition, were also included.

"Included in the State of Tennessee comments are comments from the Clinch River MRS Task Force. The task force consisted of local officials and citizens from the City of Oak Ridge and from Roane County, TN. This task force endorsed the proposal for the location of the MRS at the preferred site provided the proposal met certain conditions which the Department believes it has met.

NRC and EPA Comments

"...The NRC offered the following observations:

- **Siting**—The preferred site identified by DOE for the MRS is the site of the former Clinch River Breeder Reactor Plant which has already been shown to be a qualified site from the standpoint of public health and safety for a nuclear power plant...
- **Design**—...Although an in-depth review would be required before the

facility could be licensed, it appears from the conceptual design that each requirement in 10 Code of Federal Regulations Part 72 can be met...

- **Cask Certification**—...DOE has indicated that transport casks developed under the NWPA for transporting commercial spent fuel to a repository will be certified by NRC. Based on experience to date, spent fuel can be moved safely in NRC-certified casks.

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Congressional Testimony on the Monitored Retreivable Storage Proposal — Excerpts from Presentation by Ben C. Rusche, Director of OCRWM

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• **Demonstration of Consolidation**—The consolidation of spent fuel needs to be adequately demonstrated to assure that this operation can be performed on the production-scale contemplated for the MRS... DOE has indicated ... its intent to test and demonstrate disassembly/consolidation equipment...

• **Safeguards**—The NRC staff's analysis of the MRS safeguards provisions at the conceptual design stage indicates that all the NRC safeguards requirements can be met.

"...Based on their review of the environmental assessment and the accompanying technical documentation, EPA concurred with DOE's recommendation to construct an MRS facility...

They further indicated that this action can be accomplished within acceptable regulatory and environmental standards. However, that determination is subject to their review and comment on the Environmental Impact Statement required for construction and licensing...

Cost of the MRS

"The expenditures for the MRS program from the time of Congressional approval until the facility becomes operational are estimated at approximately \$907 million, of which approximately \$710 million would be used for construction. The annual operating costs for the facility, which would employ about 600 workers, would be approximately \$73 million, not including financial assistance and tax-equivalence payments...

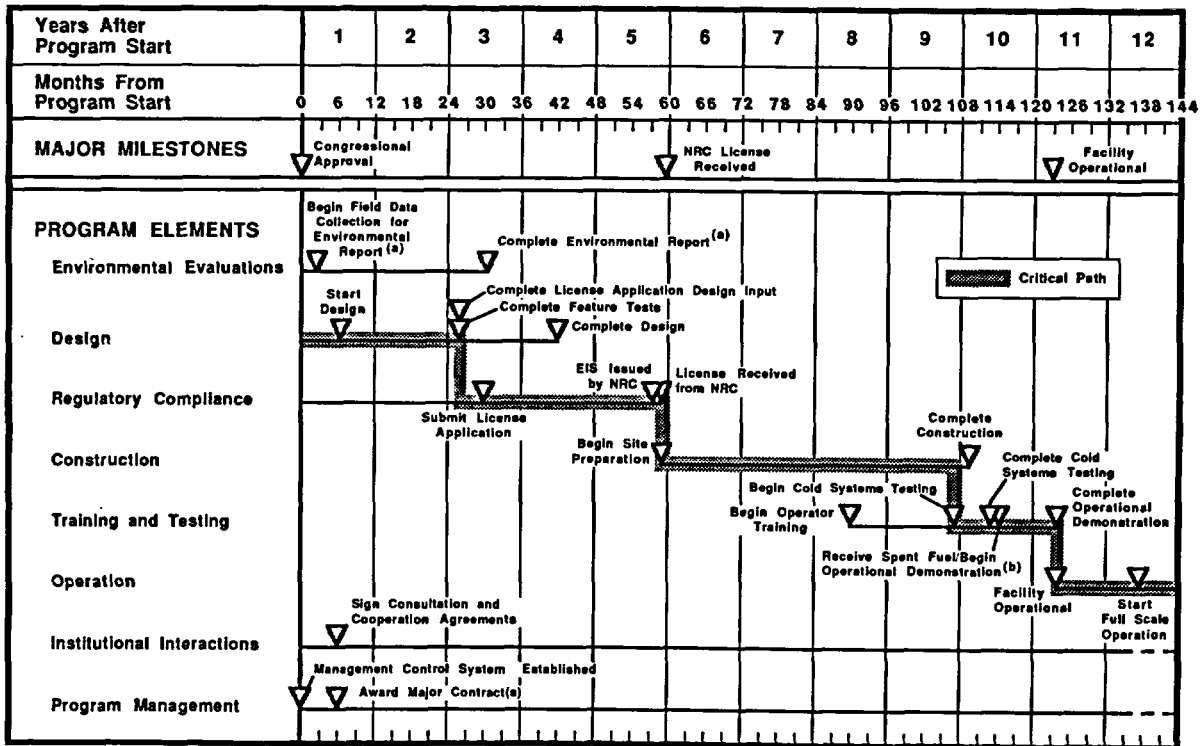
Decommissioning would cost approximately \$83 million. These add up to a total development, construction, operation and decommissioning cost of about \$3 billion...

"The net cost to the total system is about \$1.5 billion because of savings at the repository and in the transportation system." (A further savings, up to \$1 billion, is estimated for reactors with storage problems.)

"It will take an estimated 10 years from the time of Congressional approval to completion of construction of the MRS. Figure 1 provides a timeline of the major milestones and program elements involved in the MRS deployment schedule.

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MRS Deployment Schedule (Figure 1)



(a) The precise nature of this document will be dependent on the provisions of any authorizing legislation.
 (b) The shipment of spent fuel to the MRS facility is contingent upon receipt of a construction authorization for the first repository. This revised schedule for the first repository in the Draft Mission Plan Amendment contemplates receipt of such authorization by the first quarter of 1998.

OCRWM Annual Report for Fiscal Year 1986 Submitted to Congress

As required by the NWPAs, OCRWM has submitted its fourth *Annual Report to Congress*. This report covers the activities of OCRWM for fiscal year 1986 which ended on September 30, 1986.

Fiscal year 1986 was marked by substantial progress in the development of the major elements of the waste management system:

- The President's approval, on May 28, 1986, of the three sites recommended for detailed characterization studies for selection of the first repository was a landmark achievement. This completed the first major phase of the repository schedule under the NWPAs which included several other major milestones that were completed during May 1986.
- The Secretary of Energy nominated five sites as suitable for characterization, recommended three of the five to the President, and made a preliminary determination that the recommended sites would be suitable for the construction of a repository. These actions were taken on the basis of the extensive information in the environmental assessments completed by OCRWM on each of the sites.

- The Secretary also announced that the second repository program is being restructured to focus on cooperative international activities and on technology development in several areas.
- The proposal for the construction of a monitored retrievable storage facility, required by Section 141 of the NWPAs, was completed in February 1986, along with an environmental assessment and a program plan. However, litigation prevented OCRWM from submitting the proposal to Congress during the year. (On March 31, 1987, the proposal was sent to Congress after the U.S. Supreme Court removed the final legal barrier to its submission. See *OCRWM Bulletin*, April 1987.)
- Substantial progress was also made on the transportation system. Both a business plan and an institutional plan were completed, following the issuance of draft documents for public review and a careful evaluation of comments received from States, Indian Tribes, and other interested parties.
- Significant success was achieved in the cooperative spent fuel storage demonstration program conducted

under Title II of the NWPAs. Following dry storage demonstration and research at the Idaho and Pacific Northwest laboratories, two utilities were granted licenses for independent spent fuel storage facilities at their reactor sites.

Public outreach and participation initiatives during 1986 included information exchange, distribution of publications, and enhanced interaction with affected States and Indian Tribes. Numerous meetings were held with the States and Tribes, both individually and as a group, to exchange views on repository siting activities, financial assistance guidelines and the consultation and cooperation process. By inviting the States and Tribes to participate in meetings of its internal coordinating groups, OCRWM markedly enhanced their timely involvement in program decisions.

During 1986, OCRWM continued to participate in several significant international projects and information exchange programs under bilateral, multilateral, and international agency agreements. International agencies in which OCRWM was a participant were the International Atomic Energy Agency, the Nuclear Energy Agency of the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development, and the Commission of the European Communities.

The Annual Report also includes an epilogue that updates the report with a brief summary of progress made since the end of fiscal year 1986:

- Following the procedures in Section 301 of the NWPAs, OCRWM is preparing an amendment to the Mission Plan. The purpose of the amendment is to apprise Congress, the affected States and Indian Tribes, other Federal agencies, and the public of significant developments and new

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Currently Scheduled OCRWM Short-Term Program Milestones

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|------------|--|
| May 1987 | Submit annual Fee Adequacy Report to Congress.
Submit <i>OCRWM Annual Report to Congress</i> . |
| June 1987 | Submit <i>Mission Plan Amendment to Congress</i> .
Issue final <i>Federal Register</i> notice on Defense Waste Fee. |
| July 1987 | Issue first annual Capacity Report. |
| Aug. 1987 | Issue Site Characterization Plan for tuff site. |
| Sept. 1987 | Issue draft Environmental Regulatory Compliance Plans. |
| Oct. 1987 | Issue Site Characterization Plan for basalt site. |

Report on Transportation Coordination and Quality Assurance Coordinating Group Meetings

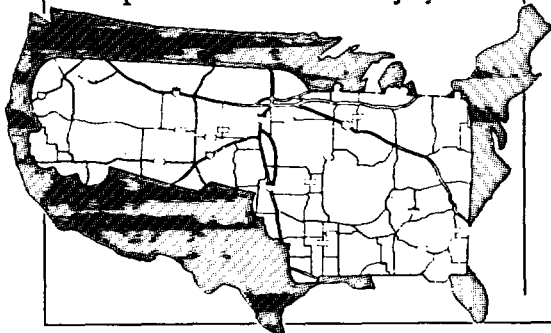
Transportation Coordination Group Meeting

On April 28-29, 1987, OCRWM's Transportation Coordination Group (TCG) met in Salt Lake City, UT. In attendance were representatives of OCRWM, support contractors to OCRWM, States, Tribes, utilities, and the transportation industry. The first day of the meeting focused on updates of ongoing OCRWM activities and suggestions for future TCG activities, particularly on strategies for improving channels of communications. The second day was devoted to a workshop on models for OCRWM transportation risk analyses.

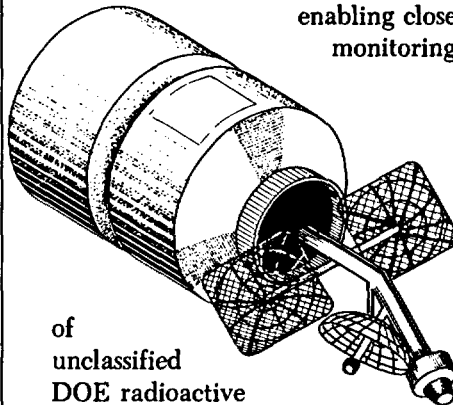
Program updates were given on diverse subjects including:

- **The ALARA Study**—This study was commissioned by OCRWM to evaluate radiation exposures associated with potential NWSA transportation systems. Under these systems, reasonable efforts would be made to reduce exposures to levels "as low as reasonably achievable" (ALARA). The ALARA study group has now completed an analysis of a reference transportation system and alternatives for limiting exposure.

Alternatives that currently appear most effective involve design of cask lids, impact limiters, tie-downs, and personnel barriers; increased cask capacity; use of long-handled tools; and safe havens. The report is expected to be available in July 1987.



- **Satellite Tracking**—DOE has developed a prototype transportation tracking and communication system (TRANSCOM). By enabling close monitoring



of unclassified DOE radioactive materials shipments, TRANSCOM will address some state and local concerns regarding emergency response. System requirements for TRANSCOM have been defined, and first generation software was completed in January 1987. A two-way system may be implemented in the late 1980's depending on future satellite launches.

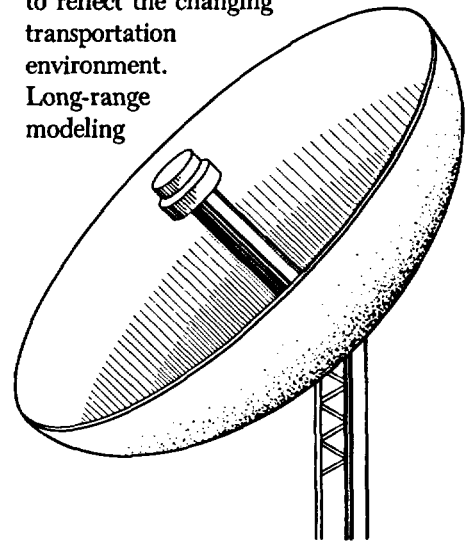
- **Commercial Vehicle Safety Alliance (CVSA) Cooperative Agreement**—DOE has entered into a cooperative agreement to develop a uniform and reciprocal inspection and enforcement package for NWSA truck shipments. Draft proposed standards have been developed and are currently under internal review by the CVSA, and pending further comment, will be voted on by the CVSA. Proposed recommendations to OCRWM include inspections at points of origin and destination, when there is a change of driver team, and when there is a change of transport vehicle.

However, inspection remains a State prerogative. The CVSA plans to make further recommendations that training be provided, particularly in equipment use, and that OCRWM establish a

toll-free number for inspection officer call-ins after an inspection.

The workshop on models for transportation risk analyses described the development and use of a variety of models, and outlined OCRWM's proposed approach for modifying risk models and obtaining input data. Another purpose of the workshop was to obtain the participants' reactions to OCRWM's proposed approach. Among the models described were HIGHWAY, for truck routing; INTERLINE, for rail routing; RADTRAN, for risk calculations; WASTES, for logistics simulation and cost calculations; and TRICAM, for logistics optimization based on cost and risk factors.

Speakers stressed that OCRWM's current focus for risk analyses is on radiological, rather than non-radiological risk. Near-term modeling activities include enhancement of routing models, modifications to RADTRAN, completing development of TRICAM, and updating cost estimation procedures to reflect the changing transportation environment. Long-range modeling



activities include the identification of other approaches, models, and data useful to the future analytical needs of the transportation program.

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Report on Transportation Coordination and Quality Assurance Coordinating Group Meeting

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State, Tribal, and utility representatives suggested additional data for possible consideration in risk models and described their current modeling/risk assessment activities. Options for future interactions at TCG meetings and for OCRWM assistance to States and Tribes in this area were reviewed.

Quality Assurance Coordinating Group Meeting

The Quality Assurance Coordinating Group (QACG) held its quarterly meeting with State and Tribal representatives at the DOE offices in Germantown, MD, on April 23, 1987. Topics discussed included the following:

Non-DOE Observation of DOE Program Audits—The discussion covered such topics as the number of observers per audit, the timing of DOE notification of scheduled audits, and the timing of notification to DOE of audits selected for observation; information requirements of the parties involved; observer involvement, assignment and participation; observer responsibilities; and observer protocol during audits. As a result of the discussion, the following agreements were reached:

- An updated DOE audit schedule will be sent to all affected parties and updated on a monthly basis. Advance notification of each scheduled audit will be sent by DOE to all affected parties who in turn will notify DOE if they wish to observe the audit.
- Each affected party may select the audits they wish to observe. Audit sub-team assignment of observers will be based on observer requests.
- Pre-audit information such as audit agenda, plan, checklists, etc. will be sent to identified observers as soon as they are available.

- Observers will be invited to attend all pre-audit, post-audit and audit team caucus meetings. Observer questions will be referred to the audit team or sub-team leader for presentation to the audited organization. Observers will be invited to express their views as part of the exit meeting with the audited organization.

QACG Meeting Schedule—The following dates and locations were agreed upon for the next five QACG quarterly meetings:

DATE	LOCATION
July 23, 1987	Denver, CO
Oct. 22, 1987	Amarillo, TX
Jan. 21, 1988	Las Vegas, NV
Apr. 21, 1988	Albuquerque, NM
July 21, 1988	Denver, CO

Nuclear Regulatory Commission Comments

- **NRC Mini-Audits**—The first NRC mini-audit is scheduled for June 8-12, 1987, at the Los Alamos National Laboratory. The first NRC mini-audit of the Salt Repository Project Office and Basalt Waste Isolation projects are tentatively scheduled for July/August 1987 and November/December 1987 respectively.
- **NRC Generic Technical Positions (GTPs)**—It was agreed that a meeting would be held by NRC to review NRC's disposition of comments on the final GTPs for "Peer Review" and "Qualifications of Existing Data". The NRC disposition of comments received on the GTP on "Items and Activities in the High-Level Geologic Repository Program Subject to 10 CFR60 Quality Assurance Requirements" should be complete by June 30, 1987.

- **NRC Quality Assurance Review Plan**—NRC indicated that a revision to the NRC Quality Assurance review plan was in-process, and a draft should be issued for public comment by June 30, 1987.

Other Program Items

Meeting of the Department of Energy and the Nuclear Regulatory Commission on the Geohydrology Testing Program Before Construction of the Exploratory Shaft for the Hanford Site

As part of the planning process for site characterization of the Hanford site, DOE evaluated and documented the geologic testing program necessary before construction and operation of an exploratory shaft facility (ESF). Such a "pre-ES" testing program has the following objectives:

- to collect data on geologic pre-exploratory shaft conditions;
- to collect data having the potential for providing an early indication of the presence of a disqualification condition;
- to identify the effects of an ESF on the geologic system and subsequent geologic tests; and
- to collect data on geologic conditions that might influence the design of the ESF or the repository.

On April 7-9, 1987, at Richland, WA, a meeting was held for DOE to present the planned program of geohydrologic testing at the Hanford site that would precede construction of the exploratory shaft and to provide an opportunity for DOE to respond to concerns raised previously by NRC staff, States, and Indian Tribes. Defining the pre-ES testing program requires that a choice be made among

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Other Program Items

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various options that involve increasingly intensive data gathering activities. Among these alternatives, DOE recommended an alternative that calls for conducting hydraulic head (water pressure) baseline studies, as well as large-scale hydraulic stress (LHS) testing, hydrochemical sampling and tracer tests from a single hole. This option provides substantial information for engineering design, prediction of the impacts of the ESF on future geohydrologic tests, and perishable conditions in the basalt flows to be tested.

After extensive discussion, the presentation of written comments from the participants, and responses to these comments by DOE, the NRC agreed

that the recommended hydrologic testing program is a reasonable approach for the next step in hydrologic characterization of the Hanford site and provides a framework for hydrologic testing prior to sinking of the ES.

The DOE will develop detailed test plans, both quality assurance and technical, for implementing the recommended option. These plans will include technical criteria for establishing when a hydraulic-head baseline has been established and for determining the magnitude and duration of the LHS and tracer tests. Such plans will be provided to the NRC and other interested parties at least six months prior to the proposed start of testing. ☆

New Publications and Documents

Annual Report to Congress, OCRWM, DOE/RW-0004/3, April 1987

A review of OCRWM activities and financial status for fiscal year 1986 together with a brief summary of publications issued and progress made since the end of the fiscal year on September 30, 1986.

Transportation Institutional Plan Executive Summary, DOE/RW-0143, April 1987

This report provides highlights of the Transportation Institutional Plan that is intended to lay the foundation for cooperation among affected parties and resolution of issues related to establishment and operation of the NWPA transportation system. ☆

Comments Received on Draft Mission Plan Amendment

On January 28, 1987, OCRWM submitted a *Draft Mission Plan Amendment* to the affected States, Indian Tribes, and other Federal agencies for comment. The amendment was also provided to Congress in draft form at this time for information. The end of the comment period was identified as April 3, 1987. OCRWM stated that the *Draft Mission Plan Amendment* would be revised in response to the comments as appropriate and be submitted to Congress. In addition to revising the amendment, OCRWM will prepare a comment response document to respond to all the comments.

In providing the draft amendment for comment, Ben Rusche, Director of OCRWM, identified that the purpose of preparing it at this time was to clearly articulate three issues so that Congress may provide any statutory direction it believes is needed to conduct the program, and to apprise the Congress and program participants of significant developments and new information.

The three issues identified in the draft amendment that may warrant Congressional attention were:

- the indefinite postponement of site-specific work for a second repository;

- the extension of the date contemplated for operation of the first repository from 1998 to 2003; and
- the inability to submit the monitored retrievable storage proposal to Congress because of litigation. (The litigation has since been resolved, and DOE has submitted the proposal to Congress.)

As of the middle of April, a total of 57 comment letters have been submitted on the draft amendment. Comments have been received from 27 State officials or State agencies, the three affected Indian Tribes, three other Indian Tribes, four Federal agencies, two local communities, eight utilities or utility organizations, and three private citizens or organizations. Seven U.S. Senators and Members of Congress provided their own comments or transmitted comments from their constituents.

OCRWM is presently in the process of reviewing the comments, revising the amendment and preparing responses to the comments. The formal amendment is presently planned to be submitted to Congress this summer. ☆

**Headquarters/Office of Geologic Repositories Quality Assurance Auditor Training Course
Held in Germantown, MD, April 21-22, 1987**

Quality Assurance (QA) comprises all those planned and systematic actions necessary to provide adequate confidence that the geologic repository and its subsystems or components will perform satisfactorily in service. The DOE is required to implement a QA program based on the criteria of Appendix B of 10 Code of Federal Regulations Part 50 as applicable. Activities covered by the QA program include site characterization, facility and equipment construction, facility operation, performance confirmation, permanent closure, and decontamination and dismantling of surface facilities.

Managing for quality requires quality audits. A quality audit is a documented activity performed in accordance with written procedures or checklists to verify, by examination and evaluation of objective evidence, that applicable elements of the QA program have been developed, documented, and effectively implemented in accordance with specified requirements.

The third Headquarters/Office of Geologic Repositories auditor training course, held in Germantown, MD, April 21-22, 1987, was attended by 22 persons from DOE, NRC,

State and local governments, Indian Tribes, and contractor personnel. It covered the basic steps for a successful audit program: selection, training and qualifications of personnel; planning and scheduling; conducting the audit; corrective action, follow-up, closeout; management reporting; and independent assessment of the QA program. Also covered in the course were the subjects of the role of the technical specialist during conduct of the audit, auditing-for-effectiveness, and audit ethics that addresses freedom from bias, confidentiality, integrity, fairness, the competence of the person being audited, and consistency. ☆

**Congressional Testimony On The Monitored Retrievable Storage Proposal
—Excerpts From Presentation By Ben C. Rusche, Director, OCRWM**

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“Should Congress approve proceeding with an MRS facility, we are committed to seeking immediately to enter into a formal Consultation and Cooperation Agreement with the host State. The fiscal year 1988 funding estimate of \$58 million for the MRS program assumes Congressional approval to proceed with activities that are critical to the deployment of an MRS facility.

Comparing Systems With and Without an MRS

“In considering whether to approve an MRS, it is reasonable to ask what it buys relative to a system without an MRS...

System Development:

...With no MRS in the waste management system, many of the first-

of-a-kind technical and institutional challenges of high-level waste management and disposal will have to be faced at the first repository site. With the MRS in the system, many of the pertinent issues, except for the long-term disposal issue, will have been addressed prior to the final development efforts for the first repository.

At-Reactor Storage and Consolidation:

“Without an MRS facility, up to 13,500 metric tons of new temporary storage capacity would be needed at about 45 reactors by the year 2003, when the repository would start operating... The necessary incremental storage can be provided at the MRS facility more efficiently and at less cost, mainly because a single facility specifically designed and licensed for that purpose would be used instead of many

separately designed and licensed independent spent-fuel storage and rod-consolidation installations at various reactors...

Transportation:

“... early, route-specific planning efforts can begin as soon as an MRS site is selected. These include detailed planning with States, Tribes, and utilities on such matters as route designation, pre-notification, emergency response, and equipment procurements...

Conclusion

“It is our hope that Congress will authorize the MRS so that we can proceed with another major step to the development of the total waste disposal system.” ☆

OCRWM Annual Report for Fiscal Year 1986 Submitted to Congress

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information in the program, and to articulate the issues so that Congress may provide any statutory guidance it believes is needed.

- Also included in the epilogue is a description of the steps taken by OCRWM to improve productive institutional relations and to negotiate formal consultation and cooperation agreements.
- The major focus of repository activity since the end of fiscal year 1986 has been on completing site character-

ization plans (SCPs) for the first three repository sites. Detailed study plans were also being developed to accompany the SCPs. Drafts of significant chapters of the SCPs were sent to affected States and Indian Tribes for review and comment as they were completed.

- In addition to the SCPs, both the environmental and the socioeconomic monitoring and mitigation plans, an environmental regulatory compliance plan, are being prepared for each site.

Drafts of the monitoring and mitigation plans were issued to the affected States and Indian Tribes for review and comment in December 1986. Draft environmental regulatory compliance plans were nearing completion and are to be submitted to the affected parties later in the spring.

Copies of the *OCRWM Annual Report to Congress* (DOE/RW-004/3) are available from the National Technical Information Service, U.S. Department of Commerce, Springfield, VA 22161. ☆

Selected Events Calendar

- | | |
|-----------------------|--|
| June 30-July 1 | Second Annual NRC Meeting of State/Tribal Representatives in High-Level Waste Program, Embassy Square Suites, 2000 N Street NW, Washington DC. Contact Nancy Still (301) 427-4664. |
| July 14-16 | Institutional/Socioeconomic Coordination Group Meeting, Seattle, WA. Contact Barry Gale (202) 586-1116. |
| July 14 | National Academy of Sciences Board on Radioactive Waste Management Meeting, Seattle, WA. Contact Peter Myers (202) 334-3066. |
| July 26-31 | National Conference of State Legislatures, Annual Meeting, Indianapolis, IN. Contact L. Cheryl Runyon (303) 623-7800. |
| Aug. 5-7 | Western Interstate Energy Board, High-Level Waste Transportation Committee Meeting, Seattle, WA. Contact Lori Frei (303) 377-9459. |
| Aug. 24-28 | International Conference on Nuclear Fuel Reprocessing and Waste Management (ANS/ENS), Paris, France. Contact (206) 526-3083. |
| Sept. 13-16 | Uranium Seminar, U.S. Council for Energy Awareness, Keystone, CO. Contact Joan Joffe (301) 654-9260. |
| Sept. 15-17 | Environmental Coordinating Group Meeting, Columbus, OH. Contact Jerry Parker (202) 586-5679. |
| Oct. 6-7 | Transportation Coordinating Group Meeting, Denver, CO. Contact Susan Denny (202) 586-2439. |
| Nov. 15-18 | Nuclear Energy Forum, U.S. Council for Energy Awareness, Los Angeles, CA. Contact Joan Joffe (301) 654-9260. |

For details on DOE/NRC meetings call (1/800) 368-2235 for a recorded message. In the Washington, DC, area call 479-0487.

A telephone recording service has been established for the announcement of upcoming meetings related to the waste management program of the NRC. The number is (1/800) 368-5642, Ext. 79002. Washington, DC, area residents should call 427-9002.

For information on meetings and events occurring between issues of the "OCRWM Bulletin" use OCRWM INFOLINK, an electronic bulletin board that can be accessed through a standard computer communications capability on (202) 586-9359 or (202) 586-5406. The "OCRWM Bulletin" is now available through INFOLINK. ☆