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

THRU: Robert E. Browning, Director,
Division of High-Level Waste Management, NMSS

FROM: B. Joe Youngblood, Chief, Operations Branch
Division of High-Level Waste Management, NMSS

SUBJECT: STAFF REVIEW OF DOE REPORT ON COMPILATION OF I-129
GROUNDWATER DATA AT HANFORD

The Department of Energy has recently released a report, prepared by the Westinghouse Hanford Company, that summarizes existing information about I-129 in groundwater at the Hanford site. We have identified no information in the report that would have any significant bearing on the suitability of the Hanford site as a HLW repository. Our position continues to be that data to support any conclusion regarding the adequacy of the Hanford site for a HLW repository from a hydrology standpoint can only be obtained through additional large-scale hydrologic stress testing of the site.

The historic I-129 data collected is from aquifers no deeper than approximately 1,500 feet, whereas the repository is located at approximately 3,000 feet. This data is therefore not directly related to the issue of the potential for upward migration from the repository horizon to shallower aquifers. Such information will be obtained from the large-scale hydrologic testing that was the subject of our April, 1987 meeting at Hanford with DOE, the States and Tribes. The historic near surface I-129 groundwater data will be considered by the staff in conjunction with data from the deep groundwater testing program.

A draft synopsis of the main points discussed in the Westinghouse report is attached.

If you would like to be briefed further on this topic, please let me know.

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B. Joe Youngblood, Chief,
Operations Branch
Division of High-Level Waste Management
NMSS

Enclosure:
As stated

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WM Project: WM-10
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MEMORANDUM FOR: Thompson
 FROM: Browning
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