July 23, 1999

Dr. English Pearcy, Manager
Geohydrology and Geochemistry Element
Center for Nuclear Waste Regulatory Analyses
6220 Culebra Road, Bldg. 189
San Antonio, Texas 78238-5166

SUBJECT: COMPLETION OF INTERMEDIATE MILESTONE - IM 1402-861-960 - LETTER REPORT: "INPUT TO NRC WORKING GROUP REPORT ON VIABLE SZ CONCEPTUAL FLOW MODELS"

Dear Dr. Pearcy:

The U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission staff has completed its review of the subject report. The report was sent on July 8, 1999 and was provided one day before the due date. This product is programmatically and technically acceptable and will be placed in our public document room. It will aid our continuing review and issue resolution of saturated zone topics at Yucca Mountain. Our intent is to incorporate this information in our next update of the issue resolution status report for isothermal hydrology.

The report furnishes an excellent starting point for our continuing sensitivity studies through the year 2000, where we will look further at the hydrologic effects of aquifer anisotropy, major faults, background thermal regime, and fracture distributions. Our goal is to determine the relative significance to repository performance of flow parameters in the tuffs and valley fill.

The document continues the trend of nicely integrating the hydrology, structural geology, and geochemistry to improve our understanding of the saturated tuff aquifer system. I especially appreciate the effort needed to consolidate the ideas of a diverse group of professionals. The report is another example of the kind of Center report that is most useful to us in helping to resolve technical issues at Yucca Mountain. If you have any questions, please contact me at (301) 415-6615.

Sincerely,

Neil Coleman, Program Element Manager
Division of Waste Management
Office of Nuclear Material Safety and Safeguards

cc: J. Linehan
B. Meehan
I Sagar, CNWRA

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