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Dr. Roy E. Williams
Williams and Associates, Inc.
P.O. Box 48
Viola, Idaho 83872

RE: NNWSI

Dear Dr. Williams:

Enclosed is a package of material related to the exploratory shaft at NNWSI. The enclosures include:

1. April 14, 1983, letter to Dr. Vieth from Seth Coplan detailing areas of concern relative to exploratory shaft construction and sealing. This letter outlines information considered necessary regarding exploratory shaft construction and sealing and includes a review of a DOE document entitled "Conceptual Design Report, Exploratory Shaft-Phase I, NNWSI" by Golder Associates for NRC.

2. June 7, 1985 letter to John Linehan from Dr. Vieth providing DOE's response to Mr. Coplan's letter of April 14, 1983. Included with this letter are two enclosures detailing construction specifications for the exploratory shaft facility. This material was provided for preparation of last August's workshop on NNWSI exploratory shaft design.

3. July 15, 1985 letter to John Linehan from Dr. Vieth providing a copy of Sandia National Laborartories performance analysis related to determination of quality assurance levels for the exploratory shaft. This was supplemental information for the August workshop. In fact, most of the discussion at the workshop centered on this document.

4. Summary meeting minutes for the NRC/DOE exploratory shaft design technical meeting of August 27-28, 1985.

5. Follow-up letter from John Linehan to Dr. Vieth elaborating on NRC comments made during the August 27-28, 1985 meeting.

6. Abstract from a paper on "In Situ Testing from the Exploratory Shaft at Yucca Mountain, Nevada Test Site, Nevada" by D.L. Vieth, et. al., given at the September 18, 1985 symposium on coupled processes.

Although the hydrology team is not the lead technical group on the subject of shaft sealing, you will find that mine hydrology is an important element of the subject. I am not requesting a written review of this material. However, I

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expect the NNWSI team to be thoroughly familiar with this package and history of the issue. DOE will be revising the Exploratory Shaft Performance Analysis Study considering the NRC comments. The issue here is the QA level to be applied to shaft construction. In effect, Level 2 QA (lower level) can be applied to construction only if the shaft does not impact health and safety of the public which can be interpreted to mean the existence of the shaft(s) does not affect the isolation capabilities of the repository which in turn means sealing is not required although DOE may choose to do so anyway (not subject to close NRC review). This is my understanding of the "issue" involved here. Therefore, it is necessary for us to be familiar with this subject. Clearly, our input into this will be requested in the future. If you discover any obvious omissions from the NRC comments, please inform me.

Additionally, this can be considered preparation for early review of the draft Exploratory Shaft Test Plan. A copy should still be available in the Site Rep's office in Las Vegas. A technical meeting on the NNWSI Exploratory Shaft Test Plan has yet to be re-scheduled. It is likely our support will be required at this technical meeting.

The action taken by this letter is considered to be within the scope of the current contract NRC-02-85-008. No changes to cost or delivery of contracted services and products are authorized. Please notify me immediately if you believe that this letter would result in changes to cost or delivery of contracted products.

Sincerely,

/S/

Jeffrey A. Pohle, Project Officer
Hydrology Section
Geotechnical Branch
Division of Waste Management

cc: Barry Bromberg, ACB

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