

OCRWM

Bulletin

United States Department of Energy
Office of Civilian Radioactive Waste Management
Washington, D.C. 20585

Published by Office of Policy, Integration and Outreach

JANUARY 22, 1985

WM DOCKET CONTROL CENTER

'85 JAN 25 10:52

IN THIS ISSUE . . .

SPECIAL FOCUS - DRAFT ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENTS

	<u>Page</u>
<u>DOE Issues Draft Environmental Assessments</u> - Important milestone in siting process achieved 12/20/84. A report on the 12/19/84 press conference.	2
<u>Schedule for Draft Environmental Assessments Public Hearings and How to Submit Comments.</u>	3-4
<u>How the Recommended Sites Were Selected</u> - Why Yucca Mountain, Nevada; Deaf Smith County, Texas; and Hanford, Washington are proposed for recommendation.	5-6
<u>Answers to Frequently Asked Questions about the Draft Environmental Assessments.</u>	6-8
<u>How to Get More Information About the Draft Environmental Assessments.</u>	9-11
<u>Milestones for Environmental Assessments</u> - Key steps leading to publication of the Final Environmental Assessments.	12
<u>OCRWM Program Milestones</u> - Major Actions on the OCRWM agenda.	13
<u>New Publications</u> - Description and Issuance Dates of Program Documents.	14-15
<u>Events Calendar</u> - Upcoming Meetings.	16

WM Record File

109

WM Project: 1

Docket No. _____

PDR

LPDR _____

-1-

Distribution:

REB/MSB

HJM/JOB

(Return to WM, 623-SS)

DRM/KENNEY

MRK/LAB

COPLAN/LENHAN

BDY/IC

cc: JOHNSON

RUSSELL

B502010721 B50122
PDR WASTE
WM-1 PDR

OCRWM Bulletin

THE DEPARTMENT OF ENERGY ISSUES DRAFT ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENTS OF SITES FOR DISPOSAL OF HIGH-LEVEL RADIOACTIVE WASTE

On December 19, 1984, DOE held a press conference to announce the release on the following day of nine draft Environmental Assessments relating to potential high-level radioactive waste disposal sites. At one of the most heavily attended press conferences in DOE history, three sites were proposed for detailed investigation ("site characterization") for the Nation's first permanent geologic repository for high-level radioactive waste. In addition to the press attending in Washington, other reporters from around the United States audited the conference via phone circuits that DOE made available.

The three sites proposed for site characterization are, in alphabetical order by State: Yucca Mountain in Nevada; Deaf Smith County in Texas; and Hanford in Washington. Site characterization includes construction of exploratory shafts to depths of a proposed repository--about 1,000 to 4,000 feet below ground--so that hands-on scientific data collection and analysis can be done to determine if those sites meet the criteria for construction of the repository. These characterization activities are part of the actions required by the Nuclear Waste Policy Act of 1982 signed into law on January 7, 1983.

At the press conference, both DOE Secretary Donald Paul Hodel and OCRWM Director Ben Rusche spoke briefly before answering questions from the press. Both Hodel and Rusche strongly emphasized the importance of public participation, review, cooperation and consultation as well as State and local review as inputs to the siting process. Hodel observed that the "Environmental Assessments represent the best information available to us, based upon a careful review of what we think the relevant items are . . . we are going through a public review process at this time, not because the statute requires it, but because we want to be sure that there's a full and free public discussion and debate before we make that three-site recommendation for characterization." In addition, Hodel pointed out, "there will be 5 years of environmental work in detail, characterizing these sites, in full public view, in careful cooperation and collaboration with the States . . . so that by the end of the process there will be no activity we have ever undertaken in this country which has been open to as much . . . public opportunity for discussion and review as this one."

Rusche, in his remarks, observed that the NHPA "provides a strong confirmation of the operation of the democratic process in dealing with a very contentious issue, and provides unusual--even unique--opportunities for Federal/State interactions" and that "we have found an increasing . . . willingness of the States to work together with us, because after all, it is in their interest, as it is in the interest of the country to see that we do the best job that can be done, and that's what we're committed to do."

OCRWM Bulletin

SCHEDULE FOR DRAFT ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENTS PUBLIC HEARINGS

AND HOW TO SUBMIT COMMENTS

The sites that DOE has proposed for recommendation for characterization are preliminary and subject to public review and comment during a 90-day period ending March 20, 1985. To facilitate informed and widespread participation in this process, DOE has held a series of briefings and will conduct public hearings as listed below.

ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT HEARINGS

Louisiana:

February 25, 1985 - 4-9 p.m.

Civic Center Auditorium
520 Broadway Street
Minden

February 26, 1985 - 2-9 p.m.

Prince Murat Hotel
1480 Nicholson Drive
Baton Rouge

Mississippi:

February 21, 1985 - 2-9 p.m.

Holiday Inn North
5075 I-55 North (Briarwood exit)
Jackson

February 22, 1985 - 4-9 p.m.

Richton H.S. Auditorium
701 Elm Street
Richton

February 23, 1985 - 1-6 p.m.

Gulf Coast Community College
Auditorium, Jefferson Davis Campus
Switzer and DeBuys Roads
Gulfport

Nevada:

February 25, 1985 - 10 a.m.-
2 p.m. and 6-10 p.m.

Amargosa Valley Community Building
Amargosa Valley

February 26, 1985 - 10 a.m.-
2 p.m. and 6-10 p.m.

Hacienda Hotel, Madrid Room
3950 Las Vegas Blvd. S.
Las Vegas

February 28, 1985 - 10 a.m.-
2 p.m. and 6-10 p.m.

Pine Room, Student Union Bldg.
University of Nevada Campus
Reno

Texas:

February 26, 1985 - 4-9 p.m.

Tulia High School Auditorium
501 N.E. 4th Street
Tulia

OCRWM Bulletin

February 28, 1985 - 4-9 p.m.

Hereford High School Auditorium
701 Union Street
Hereford

March 1, 1985 - 2-9 p.m.

Austin Hilton Inn
6000 Middle-Fiskville Road
-Austin

Utah:

February 19, 1985 - 4-9 p.m.

Monticello High School
164 S. 2nd West
Monticello

February 20, 1985 - 4-9 p.m.

Helen M. Knight Elementary School
W. 4th North
Moab

February 22, 1985 - 4-9 p.m.

Hotel Utah
Main at South Temple
Salt Lake City

Washington

March 5, 1985 - 2-5 p.m.
7-10 p.m.

Federal Building
825 Jadwin Avenue
Richland

March 7, 1985 - 2-5 p.m.
7-10 p.m.

Dept. of Social and Health
Services, Bldg. 2, Hearings Room
12 and Franklin
Olympia

March 12, 1985 - 2-5 p.m.
7-10 p.m.

To Be Determined
Portland, Oregon

To confirm location details and other information about the hearings for Washington contact Judy Tokarz (509) 376-7378, for Nevada hearings contact Christopher West (702) 295-0946, and for information on hearings in other States contact Gary Pitchford (312) 972-2010.

How to Submit Comments

One does not need to testify at a formal hearing in order to comment on the draft Environmental Assessments. Interested parties are invited to provide written comments to: Comments EA, U.S. Department of Energy, ATTN: Comments --EA, 1000 Independence Avenue, S.W., Washington D.C. 20585. All comments should be received by DOE by March 20, 1985, to ensure consideration in preparing the final Environmental Assessments. The specific site being addressed in each comment should be clearly indicated.

Following the end of the public comment period, consultation with affected States and Tribes will continue, final Environmental Assessments will be published, and DOE will then make formal recommendations to the President in the summer of 1985. His decision on site characterization is expected during the summer or early fall of 1985.

OCRWM Bulletin

HOW THE RECOMMENDED SITES WERE SELECTED

The Nuclear Waste Policy Act of 1982 prescribes the process for the recommendation of sites for detailed site investigation. Two important steps in this process are development of Siting Guidelines and the Environmental Assessments. The Siting Guidelines are a set of criteria and procedures for use in all stages of the repository site-selection process. The Siting Guidelines were published after an extensive period of public review and comment.

The Environmental Assessments contain, among other things, a comparative evaluation of the five sites proposed for nomination against the siting guidelines. The sites are in five States and in diverse geologic environments: Richton site, Mississippi; Yucca Mountain site, Nevada; Deaf Smith County site, Texas; Davis Canyon site, Utah; and the Hanford site, Washington. These five sites are compared in detail against the final Siting Guidelines and each other in Chapter 7 of the recently issued Draft Environmental Assessments to determine which sites appear most favorable for recommendation.

Comparisons place primary significance on the postclosure guidelines and secondary significance on the preclosure guidelines. The postclosure guidelines are concerned with the characteristics, processes, and events that may affect the performance of the repository after closure, such as climatic changes. The objective is to ensure that the health and safety of the public will be protected for thousands of years. The preclosure guidelines specify factors related to the radiological safety of the general public, protection of the environment, socioeconomic, transportation of waste, and the ease and cost of repository development. Both major classes of guidelines contain technical and system guidelines that were used in the comparative evaluation process.

The five sites are placed in rank order for each of the technical guidelines. Since the sites are ranked differently with respect to individual guidelines, some method is required to combine or aggregate these rankings to derive an overall ranking. Three recognized methods were used for aggregating the individual guideline rankings for each of the five sites to identify the three candidate sites that are preferred for site characterization. The methods are progressively more sophisticated in that they account for more factors; they are also progressively more complex and require more input assumptions.

Overall rankings of sites obtained by the three aggregation methods, over a broad range of weights, are shown below:

<u>Method 1</u>	<u>Method 2</u>	<u>Method 3</u>
1. Yucca Mountain	1. Hanford	1. Yucca Mountain
2. Deaf Smith County	2. Yucca Mountain	2. Deaf Smith County, Hanford
3. Hanford	3. Deaf Smith County	3. Richton
4. Richton	4. Richton	4. Davis Canyon
5. Davis Canyon	5. Davis Canyon	

OCRWM Bulletin

As the above rankings indicate, all aggregation methods rank the same three sites in the top three positions, over a broad range of weights. As a set, these sites offer maximum diversity in geohydrologic settings and in rock types for the site selection for the first repository. Such diversity increases the probability that a suitable repository site will be available even if studies should reveal a generic deficiency in one type of rock or geohydrologic setting. DOE believes that the Yucca Mountain site, Nevada; Deaf Smith County site, Texas; and Hanford site, Washington offer on balance, the most advantageous combination of characteristics for the successful development of a repository and should therefore be recommended for site characterization.

ANSWERS TO FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS ABOUT DRAFT ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENTS

Question:

What impacts on the local environment and economy will result from the sinking of a deep shaft in the characterization process, and what activities will be performed in the underground workings?

Answer:

The shafts will range in diameter from 6 to 26 feet. We do not expect major impacts in the context of many mining operations that are now often carried out. The operations are expected to provide many new jobs at each site, which should result in additional economic activity. Possible adverse impacts resulting from these activities will be analyzed in cooperation with the affected parties to minimize any negative consequences.

Question:

If this program is going to cost about \$25 billion are we seeing some hidden costs of nuclear power that are now becoming evident?

Answer:

This whole program is being paid for by a mill-per-kilowatt hour charge that is paid by the utilities for electricity produced by nuclear power. This is being paid for by the people who buy electricity generated by nuclear plants.

OCRWM Bulletin

Question:

Is there an estimate of the need for a second repository since new nuclear plants are not being built now?

Answer:

The Nuclear Waste Policy Act stipulates that not more than 70,000 tons of material may be placed in the first repository before a second repository is placed in operation. The amount of waste that will become available as a result of plants now in operation or those that are scheduled to be placed in operation approximates 130,000 tons by the year 2020. Therefore, there is a projected need for a second repository.

Question:

What happens next to those sites not nominated, those nominated but not recommended, and to those sites recommended?

Answer:

Those sites that are not nominated are eligible for second repository nomination. Those sites nominated, but not recommended for site characterization are ineligible for the second repository. Those sites recommended for site characterization are eligible for the second repository if they are not selected for the first repository.

Question:

DOE may not be meeting NHPA mandated deadlines. What will be done to get the program back on schedule while addressing State and public concerns?

Answer:

The schedules are important, but we have not sacrificed State and Tribal interactions and review at the expense of adhering to deadlines. For example, in the case of the final Siting Guidelines, DOE chose to extend the process of consultation with the States beyond the requirements specified in the NHPA by responding to State comments and issuing a second draft for State review before issuing a final document. We have made a firm commitment to begin acceptance of the waste or spent fuel by 1998 as required by the Act and expect to have the waste system in operation by that time.

OCRWM Bulletin

Question:

Will DOE issue final Environmental Assessments for all nine sites?

Answer:

DOE has not determined yet that it is necessary to issue nine final Environmental Assessments. This determination will be based, in part, on the public comments received on the draft Environmental Assessments.

Question:

What about the risk of the transport of nuclear material, and how will DOE deal with State and local laws that conflict with Federal laws regulating the transport of nuclear materials?

Answer:

DOE intends to ship spent fuel and high level waste in accordance with Federal regulations in existence at the time of shipment. The regulation of the transportation of nuclear waste falls primarily under the purview of the Department of Transportation and the Nuclear Regulatory Commission. DOE will work with these agencies, and when necessary, with State and local governments to establish a consistent set of regulations that will ensure safe, efficient movement of the waste. Also, efforts are underway to identify the concerns of States regarding potential impacts of transportation and to cooperate in assessing and minimizing any impacts.

OCRWM Bulletin

HOW TO GET MORE INFORMATION ABOUT ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENTS

Public Inspection of the Draft Environmental Assessments

Copies of all nine draft Environmental Assessments issued by DOE on December 20, 1984 are available for public inspection at the following locations:

DOE Information Offices

Louisiana:

Minden Nuclear Waste Information Office
221 Main Street
Minden, LA 71055
(318) 371-0369

Mississippi:

Richton Nuclear Waste Information Office
103 Dogwood Avenue
Richton, MS 39476
(601) 788-6948

Utah:

Moab Nuclear Waste Information Office
Desert Plaza, 471 South Main Street
Moab, UT 84532
(801) 259-8727

Monticello Nuclear Waste Information Office
San Juan County Courthouse
117 South Main Street, Room 12
Monticello, UT 84535
(801) 587-2231, Ext. 28

DOE Public Reading Rooms

DOE Public Reading Room
Forrestal Bldg., Rm. 1E-190
1000 Independence Ave. S.W.
Wash., D. C. 20585
8:00 A.M. to 4:00 P.M.

Albuquerque Operations Office
National Atomic Museum Library
Albuquerque, NM 87115
9:00 A.M. to 5:00 P.M.

Chicago Operations Office
9800 South Cass Avenue
Argonne, IL 60439
8:00 A.M. to 5:00 P.M.

Oak Ridge Operations Office
200 Administration Road
Room G208, Federal Bldg.
Oak Ridge, TN 37830
8:00 A.M. to 4:30 P.M.

Richland Operations Office
825 Jadwin Avenue
Richland, WA 99352
8:00 A.M. to 4:30 P.M.

San Francisco Operations Office
1333 Broadway, Room 240
Oakland, CA 94612
8:30 A.M. to 4:30 P.M.

OCRWM Bulletin

Idaho Operations Office
550 2nd Street
Idaho Falls, ID 83401
8:00 A.M. to 5:00 P.M.

Savannah River Operations Office
211 York Street, N.E.
Aiken, SC 29801
8:30 A.M. to 4:00 P.M.

Nevada Operations Office
2753 S. Highland
Public Docket Room
Las Vegas, NV 89114
8:00 A.M. to 4:30 P.M.

Other Locations

Louisiana

Webster Public Library
521 East and West Streets
Minden, LA 71005

Bienville Parish Library
604 South Maple
Arcadia, LA 71001

Mississippi

Harrison County Library
14th Street and 21st Avenue
Gulfport, MS 39501

Jackson-George Regional Library
3214 Pascagoula Street
Pascagoula, MS 39567

Pine Forest Regional Library
Main Street
Richton, MS 39476

Harriette Person Memorial Library
College Street
Port Gibson, MS 39150

Jackson Metropolitan Library
301 North State Street
Jackson, MS 39201

Laurel-Jones County Public Library
530 Commerce Street
Laurel, MS 39440

Hattiesburg Public Library
723 Main Street
Hattiesburg, MS 39401

Jones County
Jones County Junior College Library
Ellisville, MS 39437

Texas

Deaf Smith County Library
211 East Fourth Street
Hereford, TX 79045

Rhoads Memorial Library
103 S.W. 2nd Street
Dimmitt, TX 79027

Swisher County Library
Swisher County Building
Tulia, TX 79088

Burton Memorial Library
314 South Sully
Clarendon, TX 79226

Randall County Library
201 16th Street
Canyon, TX 79015

Austin Public Library
800 Guadalupe Street
Austin, TX 78768

OCRWM Bulletin

Texas (continued)

Amarillo Public Library
413 East Fourth Street
Amarillo, TX 79189

University of Texas General Library
University of Texas
Austin, TX 78712

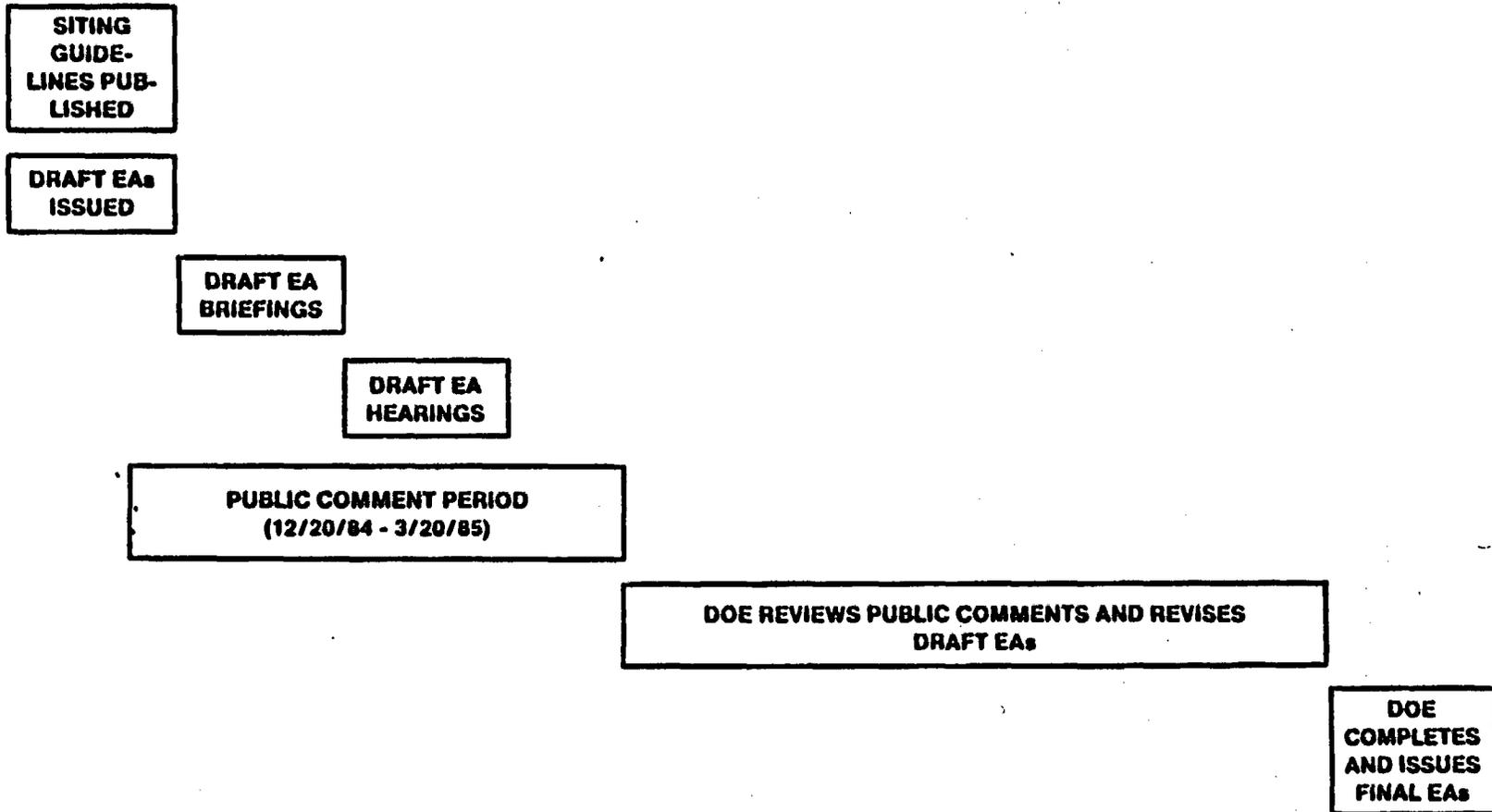
Telephone Requests

To request draft Environmental Assessments by telephone, the following toll-free numbers may be called:

United States except Maryland and Washington D.C.	(800) 850-1600
Maryland	(800) 638-2054
Washington D.C. Metropolitan Area	530-7700

MILESTONES FOR ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENTS

DECEMBER | JANUARY | FEBRUARY | MARCH | APRIL | MAY | JUNE | JULY | AUGUST



OCRWM Bulletin

CURRENTLY SCHEDULED OCRWM SHORT-TERM PROGRAM MILESTONES

- | | |
|-------|--|
| 1/85 | Defense Waste Report to President. |
| 1/85 | Transmit Alternative Means of Financing and Managing Radioactive Waste Facilities (AM/FM) Panel Report to Secretary. |
| 1/85 | Submit Fee Adequacy Report to Congress. |
| 2/85 | Begin public hearings on Draft EAs for first repository. |
| 3/85* | Issue OCRWM Annual Report. |
| 3/85* | End of public comment period for Draft Regional Characterization Report for the second repository. |
| 3/85 | End of public hearings and of public comment period for Draft EAs for first repository. |
| 4/85 | Issue Final Mission Plan. |
| 4/85* | Issue Final Region-to-Area Screening Methodology document for second repository. |
| 5/85* | Issue Draft Project Decision Schedule. |
| 6/85 | Submit Monitored Retrievable Storage Proposal and EA to Congress. |
| 7/85* | Issue Final Regional Characterization Report for second repository. |
| 8/85* | Issue Final EAs for first repository. |

*Updated Milestone Date

OCRWM Bulletin

NEW PUBLICATIONS AND DOCUMENTS

<u>Title and Description</u>	<u>Scheduled Release Date</u>
<u><i>Draft Environmental Assessments</i></u>	Released
<u><i>First Repository Draft Environmental Assessment Reports for Vacherie Dome Site, Louisiana (DOE/RW 0016); Cypress Creek Dome (DOE/RW 0011) and Richton Dome (DOE/RW 0013) Sites, Mississippi; Deaf Smith County (DOE/RW 0014) and Swisher County (DOE/RW 0015) Sites, Texas; Yucca Mountain Site, Nevada (DOE/RW 0012); Davis Canyon (DOE/RW 0010) and Lavender Canyon (DOE/RW 0009) Sites, Utah; and Hanford Site, Washington (DOE/RW 0017).</i></u>	

The Draft Environmental Assessments contain information required by Section 112 of the Nuclear Waste Policy Act of 1982 and serve as a basis for site-nomination decisions. Free copies may be obtained from DOE until March 20, 1985, or until the supply is exhausted by writing to U.S. Department of Energy, Forrestal Building, 1000 Independence Avenue, S.W., Attention: EA, Washington, D.C. 20585. Copies may be requested by phone by calling (800) 850-1600 except for Maryland where the number is (800) 638-2054 and the Washington D.C. Metropolitan Area where the number is 530-7700.

Siting Guidelines

Released

Nuclear Waste Policy Act of 1982; General Guidelines for the Recommendation of Sites for the Nuclear Waste Repositories; Final Siting Guidelines. 10 CFR Part 960.

Published in Federal Register, Part III, pages 47714-47770, December 6, 1984. For copies contact Carol L. Hanlon, U.S. Department of Energy, Forrestal Building, 1000 Independence Avenue, S.W., RW-24, Room 7F-088, Washington, D.C. 20585 (202) 252-1224.

OCRWM Bulletin

<u>Title and Description</u>	<u>Scheduled Release Date</u>
<u>Transportation Business Plan: Strategy Options Document (DOE/RW 0007).</u>	Released
OCRWM is developing a business plan for acquiring and operating a transportation system for shipment of spent fuel and high-level waste to repositories and storage facilities. A preliminary document has been released for public review. Copies may be obtained by writing to the U.S. Department of Energy, Forrestal Building, 1000 Independence Avenue, S.W., Room 1E-218, Washington, D.C. 20585 or calling (202) 252-5568.	
<u>Radioactive Waste Management System Project Decision Schedule, Preliminary Draft.(DOE/RW 0018).</u>	Released
Portrays optimum way to attain the operation of the repository involved within the time periods specified in the Nuclear Waste Policy Act of 1982. For copies contact Charles Smith, DOE Headquarters, Forrestal Building, 1000 Independence Avenue, S.W., RW-24, Room 5A-051, Washington, D.C. 20585 (202) 252-1252.	
<u>Nuclear Waste Fund Fee Adequacy: An Assessment.</u>	January 1985
An evaluation of the adequacy of the existing one mill-per-kilowatt hour fee based on total system life cycle cost estimates and revenue projections. Contact Ron Milner for copies at (202) 252-4465 or write to U.S. Department of Energy, Forrestal Building, 1000 Independence Avenue, S.W., Room 1E-218, Washington D.C. 20585.	

OCRWM Bulletin

OCRWM/PROJECT OFFICE SELECTED EVENTS CALENDAR

<u>Date</u>	<u>Event</u>
Late January	Briefings on draft Environmental Assessments in Washington, Nevada, Utah, Texas, Mississippi, Louisiana, and Washington, D.C. <i>DOE contact is Barry Gale (202) 252-1116.</i>
January 29-30	First Repository States and Affected Indian Tribes Meeting, La Jolla, CA. <i>DOE contact is Neal Duncan, (202) 252-5722.</i>
January 31- February 1	Western Interstate Energy Board Meeting on Transportation, La Jolla, CA. <i>WINB contact is Ellen Livingstone-Behan (303) 377-9459.</i>
January 31- February 1	National Association of Attorneys General High-Level Waste Task Force Meeting, La Jolla, CA. <i>Contact NAG at (202) 628-0435.</i>
February 5-6	Workshop to discuss the risk model, RADTRAN-II, used to evaluate the environmental impacts of transportation as documented in the repository environmental assessments. Sandia National Laboratory, Albuquerque, NM. <i>Sandia contact is Jonathan Cashwell, (505) 844-1899, DOE contact is Edward Wilmott (202) 252-2837.</i>
February 18-28	Hearings on Draft Environmental Assessments in Washington, Nevada, Utah, Texas, Mississippi, and Louisiana. <i>DOE contact is Barry Gale, (202) 252-1116.</i>
February 19-21	Workshop to address business issues related to the transportation of spent nuclear fuel and high-level waste, Albuquerque, NM. <i>DOE contact is K.G. Gollither, Albuquerque Operations Office. (505) 846-2334.</i>
March 11-12	State of Illinois workshop on experience in monitoring high-level waste shipments, Springfield, Illinois Hilton. <i>Illinois Department of Nuclear Safety contact is Gale Melson, (217) 546-8100.</i>
March 12-15	Atomic Industrial Forum Annual Fuel Cycle Conference, New Orleans, LA., Hyatt Hotel. <i>AIF contact is Joan Joffe at (301) 654-9260.</i>
March 24-28	Waste Management '85. Tucson, AZ. Talks will be given at the Tucson Community Center. Hotel reservations can be made at the Holiday Inn Broadway. <i>Contact Dr. M.E. Wacks, or Dr. Roy Post at University of Arizona. (601) 621-6160.</i>