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Mr. W. Wade Ballard, Jr.
Office of Waste Isolation
NE-330
U.S. Department of Energy
Washington, DC 20545

WM-10
PDR
(Return to WM, 623-SS)

Dear Mr. Ballard:

This is to confirm discussions between Bill Bennett and me on October 13, 1982 concerning the submission of copies of the Site Characterization Report to the NRC and distribution of copies to the public.

In the conversation, I explained the need for 100 copies to be provided to the NRC for its review (staff reviewers, consultants, public document room requirements, etc.). Bennett agreed that 100 copies would be provided.

Bennett and I also agreed that the requests for the SCR by the public will be referred to the DOE. The public demand is uncertain, but because the SCR review process involves a period of public comment on NRC's Site Characterization Analysis (SCA), it is possible that there may be a sizeable demand. As we have discussed before, the SCA will not contain details of the DOE program; readers wanting such details will have to review the SCR. We will explain to the public, through the Federal Register Notice giving notice of receipt of the Site Characterization Report, that copies of the SCR, if desired, should be obtained from the DOE. Attached for your information is the draft Federal Register Notice.

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Mrs. Ann Savolainen, Chief of the Policy and Publications Management Branch, will be in touch with your staff regarding details of the public referrals. Mrs. Savolainen (FTS 492-7608) will be the point of contact within the Commission for specific arrangements on this matter.

Sincerely,

ORIGINAL SIGNED BY

Hubert J. Miller, Chief
High-Level Waste Technical
Development Branch
Division of Waste Management

Enclosure:
Federal Register Notice - Draft

cc: John Anttonen, DOE Richland

wb p/15/82

*via telecon with N. Still

DFC	: WMT	: WMHL	: WMPI	: PDMB/ADM	:	:
NAME	: HJ Miller:ls	: MJB:V	: JOBunting	: ASavolainen*	:	:
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DRAFT

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U.S. NUCLEAR REGULATORY COMMISSION

PROJECT NO. _____

NOTICE OF RECEIPT OF A SITE CHARACTERIZATION REPORT
FROM THE U.S. DEPARTMENT OF ENERGY

AGENCY: U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission

ACTION: Notice of Receipt of a Site Characterization Report From
the U.S. Department of Energy

SUMMARY: The U.S. Department of Energy (DOE) has filed with the U.S.
Nuclear Regulatory Commission (Commission) a Site Characterization Report
(SCR) for a candidate high-level waste repository on the Hanford
Reservation in the State of Washington. This SCR was received
 (date and has been assigned Project No. WM-_____.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Mr. Hubert J. Miller, Chief, High-Level
Waste Technical Development Branch, Division of Waste Management, U.S.
Nuclear Regulatory Commission, Mail Stop 623-SS, Washington, D.C. 20555.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: The submission of a Site Characterization Report (SCR) is pursuant to the Commission's procedural rule regarding disposal of high-level radioactive wastes in geologic repositories. The rule is codified as Part 60, Title 10 of the Code of Federal Regulations (10 CFR 60) and was published in the Federal Register February 25, 1981 (46 FR 13971). In accordance with Section 60.11 of this rule, "As early as possible after commencement of planning for a particular geologic repository operations area, and prior to site characterization, the DOE shall submit . . . a Site Characterization Report." Detailed guidance on preparation of Site Characterization Reports is contained in NRC Regulatory Guide 4.17, "Standard Format and Content of Site Characterization Reports for High-Level Waste Geologic Repositories."

In accordance with Section 60.11(d) of the above-mentioned regulations, the Director of the Office of Nuclear Material Safety and Safeguards of NRC (Director) will, over the next several months, prepare a draft site characterization analysis (Draft SCA) of the information provided in the SCR. A notice relating to the availability of this analysis and soliciting public comments will be published in the Federal Register. A period not less than 90 days will be allowed for public comments on this Draft SCA. The Director will then prepare a final site characterization analysis issuing an opinion that the Director has either

no objection to DOE's site characterization program, if such an opinion is appropriate, or specific objections to DOE's proceeding with characterization of the named site. In addition, the Director may make specific recommendations to DOE on matters relating to its site characterization activities. This SCA will be a critique of the plans of the DOE contained in the SCR. Therefore, readers of the SCA interested in detailed aspects of the DOE site characterization program will have to consult the SCR. Those who wish to be added to the distribution list for a copy of the Draft SCA upon its availability should write to the U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission, Division of Waste Management, Docket Control Center, Mail Stop 623-SS, Washington, D.C. 20555.

It is important to note that the NRC staff review of this SCR is not a licensing action, but part of an ongoing pre-application review process. This process is designed to enable DOE to gather the information upon which to decide whether to apply for a license--or more specifically, an NRC authorization to construct a repository--at a particular site. The SCR review process is intended to be a vehicle for identifying at an early stage what the specific potential licensing issues are at a site based on what is known from investigations to date. It permits an opportunity for consultation between the DOE and NRC with public involvement on the site characterization and data gathering

programs that the DOE plans in order to be able to address and resolve issues that have been identified in licensing. To ensure continuous review of DOE activities at each site, DOE is required (by NRC regulations) to submit semiannual reports on the progress of site characterization.

It should also be noted that under 10 CFR Part 51, Section 51.40(d), DOE is required to characterize at least three sites representing two geologic media at least one of which is not salt as "the minimum necessary to satisfy the requirements of NEPA [the National Environmental Policy Act]." DOE has indicated to NRC that it has ongoing studies at Yucca Mountain at the Nevada Test Site (NTS), as well as salt sites in the Gibson Dome area of Utah's Paradox Basin, the Texas Panhandle area of the Permian Basin, and four salt domes in the Gulf Interior Region in Louisiana, Mississippi, and Texas. DOE has not notified NRC of any final decision as to which of the sites it will characterize.

Subpart C of 10 CFR 60 states that requests for consultation may be made in writing by representatives of State, Indian tribal, and local governments regarding review of NRC regulations, licensing procedures, potential schedules, and the type and scope of state activities in the future licensing review process as permitted by law. For further

information regarding Subpart C of 10 CFR 60, please refer to this portion of the Code of Federal Regulations or to the Federal Register Notice dated February 25, 1981 (46 FR 13971).

A copy of the Site Characterization Report for the Hanford site is available for public inspection at the following locations: U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission, Public Document Room, 1717 H Street, Washington, D.C. 20555;(LPDR's to be determined). Individual copies of the SCR may be purchased from (to be determined)

Dated at Silver Spring, Maryland, this ____ day of ____ (date) ____.

FOR THE NUCLEAR REGULATORY COMMISSION

John G. Davis, Director
Office of Nuclear Material
Safety and Safeguards