

ATTACHMENT 1



UNITED STATES
NUCLEAR REGULATORY COMMISSION
WASHINGTON, D. C. 20555

NOV 18 1992

MEMORANDUM FOR: Joseph Holonich, Project Director
Repository Licensing and Quality Assurance
Directorate
Division of High-Level Waste Management

FROM: Ronald L. Ballard, Chief
Geology and Engineering Branch
Division of High-Level Waste Management

SUBJECT: PHASE I REVIEW OF STUDY PLAN 8.3.1.4.2.2 (REV.1),
"CHARACTERIZATION OF STRUCTURAL FEATURES IN THE SITE AREA"

In response to your note dated June 24, 1992, the Geology/Geophysics Section initiated a Phase I review of Rev. 1 of Study Plan 8.3.1.4.2.2, "Characterization of Structural Features in the Site Area." This Phase I review follows an earlier review of Rev. 0 of this study plan (see Enclosure 1) in which the HLGE staff recommended that the study plan not be reviewed or accepted at that time due to the fact that there was a revision to the study plan in progress at the Department of Energy (DOE).

In a recent DOE letter (Roberts to Holonich, dated August 17, 1992; see Enclosure 2) Rev. 2 of Study Plan 8.3.1.4.2.2 is listed under the category of "ESF Revisions (Mid-FY93)" suggesting that we may be receiving a revised version of this study plan in the near future. One reason for the revision may be the fact that at least one activity in Rev. 1 of the Study Plan is predicated on the use of 'drill and blast' technology to construct the shafts and drifts, technology no longer under consideration for ESF construction. You may recall that the 'drill and blast' approach to ESF construction versus the use of a tunnel boring machine was the source of much informal staff discussion approximately a year and a half ago. The main concern expressed in those discussions was whether or not the ability to collect the necessary fracture data was similar in both approaches to ESF construction. While the concern on collecting fracture data was resolved at the staff level, it may be important to consider the approach the revised study plan will take in the collection of the necessary data.

Inasmuch as Study Plan 8.3.1.4.2.2 is to be revised in the very near future and the fact that one of the activities uses an approach to ESF construction no longer under consideration, we recommend that Rev. 1 of this study plan not be accepted and not undergo a formal Phase I review.

We have become quite familiar with this study plan as a result of these two past attempts at completing a Phase I review and, therefore, believe that an expedited review of Rev. 2 would be easily achievable. We recommend that in the notification to DOE of the results of our review of Rev. 1 of this study plan, that DOE also be made aware of our willingness to expedite the review of Rev. 2.

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If you have any questions regarding this review, please contact Keith I. McConnell at 504-2532.

Ronald L. Ballard, Chief
Geology and Engineering Branch, HLWM

Enclosures:
As stated

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