

JAN 14 1991

NOTE FOR: John Linehan
FROM: Ronald Ballard *RBB/AS/91*
SUBJECT: REVISION TO THE GEOLOGY-GEOPHYSICS SECTION'S PHASE
I REVIEW OF STUDY PLAN: "CHARACTERIZATION OF STRUCTURAL
FEATURES IN THE SITE AREA"

In a memorandum to you dated May 31, 1990, Keith McConnell (Lead Technical Reviewer) recommended that Activities 8.3.1.4.2.2.1 and 8.3.1.4.2.2.2 of Study Plan 8.3.1.4.2.2 (Characterization of Structural Features in the Site Area) be accepted for review and that a detailed technical review of these activities be performed. The staff's initial impressions were that the description of the activities in the study plan, although lacking some of the required elements of the Level-of-Detail agreement, was sufficient for the NRC to accept the document for review. However, subsequent observations from the Yucca Mountain Project audit of the US Geological Survey conducted June 25-29, 1990, and information obtained in a conference call with the DOE on November 15, 1990, have led Dr. McConnell to modify of his assessments of the acceptability of Activities 8.3.1.4.2.2.1 and 8.3.1.4.2.2.2 and the necessity of performing a detailed technical review of these activities.

Observations from the audit of the USGS indicate that 1) work began on the activities related to study plan 8.3.1.4.2.2 in late March 1990; 2) work has been initiated using a scientific notebook plan that was not identified in the study plan; 3) there have been significant changes to methods described in the study plan for clearing pavement outcrops under activity 8.3.1.4.2.2; and 4) several basic technical procedures and/or scientific notebook plans were not listed in the study plan, were incorrectly referenced in the study plan, or have not been implemented by the USGS. These observations were confirmed by information provided by the DOE in the conference call held November 15, 1990. DOE also indicated in the conference call that a revision to the study plan is envisioned in the next three to six months to incorporate changes to the listing of procedures.

It is clear from the above observations that the DHLWM currently has a version of this study plan that is substantially out-of-date. In addition, DOE has indicated that a substantially revised version of the study plan will be produced in three to six months. Under these conditions, formally "accepting" this version of the activities in this study plan would appear to be

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meaningless. Our recommendation regarding the review of activities 8.3.1.4.2.2.1 and 8.3.1.4.2.2.2 is that the decisions on the acceptability and need for detailed technical review be postponed pending the receipt of the revised version of the study plan.

Ronald Ballard

cc. K. Stablein

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Date:	10/10/91	10/10/91	10/14/91