

TC/87/05/21

WM Record File
106

WM Project 16
Docket No. _____

MEMORANDUM FOR:

**John J. Linehan, Acting Chief
Operations Branch
Division of High-Level Waste Management**

PDR
LPDR (5)

Distribution: _____

(Return to WM, 623-SS)

FROM:

**Ronald L. Ballard, Chief
Technical Review Branch
Division of High-Level Waste Management**

SUBJECT:

**ACQUISITION OF GEOPHYSICAL SURVEY DATA FOR THE DEAF SMITH
COUNTY SITE**

In the attached letter from you to Jefferson O. Neff dated March 24, 1986, NRC staff informed DOE of the release by Pennzoil Explorations and Production Company of seismic data in the area of the Deaf Smith County site. The letter stated that the staff considered that these newly released seismic reflection profiles may provide valuable information on the subsurface characteristics in the vicinity of the site and should be reviewed.

In a conference call from NRC staff to DOE and ONWI staff on March 31, 1987, we inquired about the status of the data acquisition and evaluation. We were informed that DOE geophysicists, after having visited the seismic data brokers to view the available seismic reflection profiles, forwarded recommendations to their management regarding the acquisition of portions of the available data. They informed us, however, that there is no money allotted for that purpose in the present DOE budget. We again indicated that this information could provide valuable information for our review of the site, including our evaluation of the proposed Exploratory Shaft Facility, which is now being planned and is under discussion. We were advised by John Ellenburger that our concerns may best be expressed in a letter.

We request that you communicate to DOE that there is presently a paucity of geotechnical data for the site. It would seem prudent to actively pursue methods of supplementing the data base prior to making decisions regarding the location and design of facilities and submittal of their SCP. As the seismic data provide a method of obtaining site data prior to the actual initiation of site characterization activities, the NRC staff advises that action be taken by DOE to acquire all readily available data, including the recommended data and make them available, together with analyses and interpretations, for NRC staff review prior to their scheduled submittal of the SCP.

If there are any question or comments on this letter please contact Tom Cardone at (301) 427-4526.

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WM Project: WM-16
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ORIGINAL SIGNED BY

**Ronald L. Ballard, Chief
Technical Review Branch
Division of High-Level Waste Management**

Attachment:
As stated

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