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Dr. Robert J. Wright
Senior Technical Advisor
High-Level Waste Technical
Development Branch
Division of Waste Management
U. S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission
Washington, DC 20555

Dear Dr. Wright:

TRANSMITTAL OF THE DRAFT REPOSITORY HORIZON IDENTIFICATION REPORT: VOLUMES I AND II, DOCUMENT RHO-BW-ST-28P, OCTOBER 1983

During your visit to Richland to attend the DOE/NRC workshop on the Underground Test Plan, my office provided to you five copies of the subject two-volume report. Volume I contains the technical data on the candidate repository horizons evaluated, and Volume II contains the decision analysis for ranking of those horizons. Volume I contains an Executive Summary outlining the rationale and methodology used for the horizon identification. The report identifies the Cohasset Flow as the preferred candidate repository horizon.

We have recommended to the Office of Geologic Repository Deployment, DOE-HQ, that the Cohasset Flow be considered as the preferred candidate repository horizon on the basis of the data available as of July 1, 1983, and the enclosed assessment. As new project information is developed, the BWIP will periodically review the horizon decision for confirmation as the preferred horizon. Designation of a preferred horizon at this time will enable appropriate aspects of BWIP studies such as repository design, repository performance, planning for in situ testing, horizon specific geohydrology and geochemistry tests, etc., to focus on a single, specific horizon.

Identifying a preferred candidate horizon based on available data does not preclude the possibility of changing the preferred horizon if such a change is warranted by data obtained in the future. At the time of shaft sinking and prior to scheduled break-out in early 1987 all appropriate information will be reexamined to confirm the decision on the Cohasset Flow as the candidate horizon. Drilling of the shaft

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to its total depth will provide the option to break out in any of the candidate horizons. The decision to drill to full depth will also be reexamined at the time of shaft sinking.

If you have any questions covering the two-volume report or comments to offer, please contact D. J. Squires of my staff.

Very truly yours,



O. L. Olson, Project Manager
Basalt Waste Isolation Project Office

BWI:DJS

Enclosure

cc, w/o enclosure:
C. R. Cooley, DOE-HQ
M. W. Frei, DOE-HQ