



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

MAR 31 1983

TO ALL INTERESTED PARTIES:

On November 12, 1982, the U.S. Department of Energy (DOE) submitted to the Nuclear Regulatory Commission (NRC) the DOE's Site Characterization Report (SCR) for the Basalt Waste Isolation Project (BWIP), a potential high-level waste repository site on the Hanford Reservation in the State of Washington, designated as NRC Project WM-10. The BWIP SCR was submitted under the provisions of NRC's procedural rule, 10 CFR Part 60, Section 60.11.

While NRC staff was analyzing the BWIP SCR, the Nuclear Waste Policy Act (NWPA) of 1982, Public Law 97-425, was enacted into law. Under Section 113(b)(1) of that Act, DOE is required to submit to NRC, the host state, and any affected Indian tribe on whose reservation a candidate site is located for review and comment: (1) a general plan for site characterization activities to be conducted at such candidate site; (2) a description of the possible waste form or package; and (3) a conceptual repository design that takes into account likely site-specific requirements. The site characterization plan (SCP) required by the Act is similar, but not identical, to the SCR described in NRC's procedural rule, 10 CFR Part 60, Section 60.11.

We understand that DOE intends to submit to NRC later this year an SCP and related documents specified in the Act for BWIP. We also understand that these documents will supersede the November 1982 BWIP SCR and will provide information not included in the November 1982 BWIP SCR.

Upon receipt later this year, NRC will review the BWIP SCP. The NRC is also looking at the impact of the NWPA on NRC's procedural rule. However, pending any changes to NRC's procedural rule, we intend to provide NRC staff's draft analysis of the BWIP SCP for public review and comment prior to publication of a final analysis by NRC staff. Since the NRC staff has completed its review of the November 1982 BWIP SCR, we are publishing our draft analysis of that document now in order to provide DOE and all other interested parties with our views on the proposed site characterization program identified in the BWIP SCR. Accordingly, attached is a copy of the NRC staff's Draft Site Characterization Analysis (DSCA) (NUREG-0960) of the SCR. In addition, we have enclosed a copy of our letter to Mr. Robert L. Morgan, Project Director, Nuclear Waste Policy Act Project Office, Department of Energy, which forwarded a copy of the DSCA.

Sincerely,

RE Browning
Robert E. Browning, Acting Director
Division of Waste Management

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Enclosures:

1. NUREG-0960
2. Ltr to R. Morgan, DOE

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