



Department of Energy
Office of Civilian Radioactive Waste Management
Office of Repository Development
1551 Hillshire Drive
Las Vegas, NV 89134-6321

QA: N/A
Project No. WM-00011

FEB 03 2005

OVERNIGHT MAIL

ATTN: Document Control Desk
Director, Division of High-Level Waste
Repository Safety
U. S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission
11555 Rockville Pike
Rockville, MD 20852-2738

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF ENERGY'S OFFICE OF CIVILIAN RADIOACTIVE WASTE
MANAGEMENT'S (OCRWM) SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY (S&T) PROGRAM

References: (1) Ltr, Reamer to Ziegler, dtd 11/5/04 (DOE Science and Technology Program)

This letter is in response to your letter of November 5, 2004, requesting information on the OCRWM S&T Program. An S&T Program section will soon be designated on the current OCRWM website. In addition, if you believe it would be useful, we can give your staff periodic briefings on the S&T Program activities. It is our intention to conduct this program openly, and we will keep you informed on the technical content and progress of our S&T work.

The S&T Program's mission statement is: "Provide advanced science and technology to continually enhance our understanding of the repository system and to reduce the cost and schedule for the OCRWM mission." We believe that it is prudent to consider possible future improvements in design and operation for a project that is planned to span several decades, like the development of a geologic repository at Yucca Mountain, Nevada. These would be future improvements beyond the technical basis necessary and sufficient for developing and licensing the facility.

Planning for the S&T Program was inaugurated in fiscal year (FY) 2002 and the first technical activities were begun in FY 2003. Currently, there are several ongoing projects, with other potential activities under consideration subject to funding availability.

Although the S&T Program and the Yucca Mountain Project (Project) maintain close communication and collaboration, it is important to note that no S&T activity is required for the Project to proceed. S&T activities are aimed at enhancing the OCRWM mission beyond what is currently required. Technical activities necessary to the Project are placed in the Project

NLMSS07

FEB 03 2005

baseline, not the S&T Program. While much of the exploratory S&T activity will be conducted with quality controls suitable to such investigative work, we intend that any experimental or theoretical work that might become a basis for later licensing actions will be conducted in full compliance with the approved quality assurance program.

Of course, any information arising from S&T activities, as from any other source, that finds potential negative impacts to public or worker health and safety, will be promptly and fully disclosed to the U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission and the public, and appropriate action taken.

Please contact me or Stephen H. Hanauer, Senior Policy and Technical Advisor, if you would like further information on the S&T Program. Dr. Hanauer will coordinate your communications with Dr. John L. Wengle, Director of the Office of Science and Technology and International. Dr. Hanauer can be reached at (702) 794-1358 or steve_hanauer@ymp.gov.



Joseph D. Ziegler, Director
Office of License Application and Strategy

OLA&S:AVG-0519

FEB 03 2005

cc:

M. G. Bailey, NRC, Rockville, MD
F. D. Brown, NRC, Rockville, MD
Jack Guttman, NRC Rockville, MD
G. P. Hatchett, NRC, Rockville, MD
T. J. Kobetz, NRC, Rockville, MD
D. S. Rom, NRC, Rockville, MD
N. K. Stablein, NRC, Rockville, MD
D. D. Chamberlain, NRC, Arlington, TX
D. B. Spitzberg, NRC, Arlington, TX
R. M. Latta, NRC, Las Vegas, NV
J. D. Parrott, NRC, Las Vegas, NV
J. L. Wengle, DOE/HQ (RW-40E), FORS
H. J. Larson, ACNW, Rockville, MD
M. T. Ryan, ACNW, Rockville, MD
W. C. Patrick, CNWRA, San Antonio, TX
Budhi Sagar, CNWRA, San Antonio, TX
J. R. Egan, Egan, Fitzpatrick, Malsch & Cynkar, Vienna, VA
J. H. Kessler, EPRI, Charlotte, NC
M. J. Apted, Monitor Scientific, LLC, Denver, CO
Rod McCullum, NEI, Washington, DC
W. D. Barnard, NWTRB, Arlington, VA
Pat Guinan, State of Nevada, Carson City, NV
R. R. Loux, State of Nevada, Carson City, NV
Alan Kalt, Churchill County, Fallon, NV
Irene Navis, Clark County, Las Vegas, NV
George McCorkell, Esmeralda County, Goldfield, NV
Ron Damele, Eureka County, Eureka, NV
Michael King, Inyo County, Edmonds, WA
Andrew Remus, Inyo County, Independence, CA
Mickey Yarbrow, Lander County, Battle Mountain, NV
G. T. Rowe, Lincoln County, Pioche, NV
Linda Mathias, Mineral County, Hawthorne, NV
Dave Swanson, Nye County, Pahrump, NV
Mike Simon, White Pine County, Ely, NV
R. I. Holden, National Congress of American Indians, Washington, DC