



Department of Energy
Washington, DC 20585

June 25, 2008

Designated ORIGINAL
For PM

Dear Stakeholder:

Enclosed are two U.S. Department of Energy (DOE or Department) National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) documents related to the Yucca Mountain Project:

- *Final Supplemental Environmental Impact Statement for a Geologic Repository for the Disposal of Spent Nuclear Fuel and High-Level Radioactive Waste at Yucca Mountain, Nye County, Nevada* (DOE/EIS-0250F-S1) (Repository SEIS), and
- *Final Supplemental Environmental Impact Statement for a Geologic Repository for the Disposal of Spent Nuclear Fuel and High-Level Radioactive Waste at Yucca Mountain, Nye County, Nevada – Nevada Rail Transportation Corridor* (DOE/EIS-0250F-S2) (Nevada Rail Corridor SEIS), and *Final Environmental Impact Statement for a Rail Alignment for the Construction and Operation of a Railroad in Nevada to a Geologic Repository at Yucca Mountain, Nye County, Nevada* (DOE/EIS-0369) (Rail Alignment EIS).

Repository SEIS

In 2002, the Department issued the *Final Environmental Impact Statement for a Geologic Repository for the Disposal of Spent Nuclear Fuel and High-Level Radioactive Waste at Yucca Mountain, Nye County, Nevada* (Yucca Mountain Final EIS) (DOE/EIS-0250F). In the Yucca Mountain Final EIS, DOE considered the potential environmental impacts of a repository design and associated construction and operational plans.

Since then, DOE has continued to develop the repository design and associated plans. Accordingly, in October 2006, the Department decided to supplement the Yucca Mountain Final EIS. The Repository SEIS has been prepared consistent with the Nuclear Waste Policy Act, as amended, and the Council on Environmental Quality (CEQ) and DOE regulations that implement NEPA. Nye County, Nevada, the location of the proposed Yucca Mountain repository, participated as a cooperating agency in the preparation of the Repository SEIS.

DOE's Proposed Action is to construct, operate, monitor, and eventually close a geologic repository at Yucca Mountain for the disposal of spent nuclear fuel and high-level radioactive waste. Under the Proposed Action, most spent nuclear fuel and high-level radioactive waste in storage or projected to be generated at 72 commercial and 4 DOE sites would be shipped to the repository by rail (train), although some shipments would arrive at the repository by truck. The Repository SEIS evaluates (1) the potential environmental impacts from the construction, operation, monitoring, and eventual closure of the repository; (2) potential long-term impacts from the disposal of spent nuclear fuel



and high-level radioactive waste; (3) potential impacts of transporting these materials nationally and in the State of Nevada; and (4) potential impacts of not proceeding with the Proposed Action (the No Action Alternative). The Department's preferred alternative is to proceed with the Proposed Action to construct, operate, monitor, and eventually close a geologic repository for the disposal of spent nuclear fuel and high-level radioactive waste at Yucca Mountain.

DOE issued the Draft Repository SEIS for public comment on October 12, 2007. The 90-day public comment period extended through January 10, 2008, during which time the Department held six public hearings in Nevada (Hawthorne, Caliente, Reno, Amargosa Valley, Goldfield, Las Vegas), one in California (Lone Pine), and one in Washington, D.C. DOE has considered all comments received in preparing this final EIS and incorporated both the comments and DOE's responses in the document. The Repository SEIS reflects changes made to the Draft Repository SEIS in response to public comments, the availability of new and updated information, and to reflect the views of Nye County.

Nevada Rail Corridor SEIS and Rail Alignment EIS

The Nevada Rail Corridor SEIS and the Rail Alignment EIS have been prepared under the CEQ and DOE regulations that implement NEPA. The U.S. Air Force, Surface Transportation Board, U.S. Bureau of Land Management, Nye County, Esmeralda County, Lincoln County, and the City of Caliente, Nevada participated as cooperating agencies in the preparation of these final EISs.

The Nevada Rail Corridor SEIS supplements the rail corridor analysis of the Yucca Mountain Final EIS published in 2002 by analyzing the potential impacts associated with constructing and operating a railroad to connect the Yucca Mountain repository to an existing rail line near Wabuska, Nevada (referred to as the Mina corridor). DOE analyzes the Mina corridor at a level of detail commensurate with that of the rail corridor analysis in the Yucca Mountain Final EIS. DOE also updates, as appropriate, the information and analysis for other rail corridors evaluated in detail in the Yucca Mountain Final EIS. The Nevada Rail Corridor SEIS also evaluates the No Action Alternative under which DOE would not construct and operate a railroad within the Mina corridor.

The Rail Alignment EIS analyzes the potential impacts of constructing and operating a railroad along specific alignments in the Caliente and Mina corridors. Under the Proposed Action, DOE would determine a rail alignment in which to construct and operate a railroad for shipments of spent nuclear fuel, high-level radioactive waste, and other materials from an existing rail line in Nevada to a geologic repository at Yucca Mountain. DOE also evaluates the No Action Alternative under which DOE would not determine an alignment or construct and operate a railroad within the Caliente or Mina rail corridors. The Department identifies the Caliente Implementing Alternative as its preferred alternative, and identifies its preferred rail alignment segments starting in Caliente and ending at Yucca Mountain. The Department also indicates that it prefers the

Shared Use option, that is, DOE would make its rail line available to commercial shippers for shipments of general freight.

DOE issued the Draft Nevada Rail Corridor SEIS and the Draft Rail Alignment EIS for public comment on October 12, 2007. The 90-day public comment period and locations of the eight public hearings are discussed above under **Repository SEIS**. DOE has considered all comments received in preparing these final EISs and incorporated both the comments and DOE's responses in the document. The Nevada Rail Corridor SEIS and Rail Alignment EIS reflect changes made to the draft EISs because of public comments, the availability of new and updated information, and in response to comments from the seven cooperating agencies. DOE will issue a transportation-related Record of Decision, based in part on the Rail Alignment EIS, no sooner than 30 days after the Environmental Protection Agency publishes its Notice of Availability of the Rail Alignment EIS in the *Federal Register*.

For further information on these NEPA documents or to request additional copies, please contact Dr. Jane Summerson at the U.S. Department of Energy, Office of Civilian Radioactive Waste Management, 1551 Hillshire Drive, Las Vegas, NV 89134, by telephone to 1-800-967-3477, by facsimile to 1-800-967-0739, or via the Internet at <http://www.ocrwm.doe.gov>. These NEPA documents also may be found on the DOE NEPA website at <http://www.eh.doe.gov/nepa> under DOE NEPA Documents.

Thank you for your interest in the Yucca Mountain Project.

Sincerely,



Edward F. Sproat, III, Director
Office of Civilian Radioactive
Waste Management

2 Enclosures