

December 17, 2008

MEMO TO: Philippe Dubreuilh

FROM: Philip Justus **/RA/**

SUBJECT: NRC Comments on Draft "Principal Rock Properties Chart of the Repository Horizon at the Potential Yucca Mountain Geological Repository" – Letter Report (Intermediate Milestone 14002.01.141.805)

These comments and markups of copies of the Letter Report (sent separately) are intended for use by the Center for Nuclear Waste Repository Analyses for a future draft of the Rock Properties Chart. In the meantime, the Chart that was developed (specifically, the revised version that eliminated dozens of unnecessary horizontal lines) is to be reproduced and distributed to HQ and Center staff users. The draft Chart meets the requirements for utility and fulfills its intended purpose. That purpose being a handy review tool that is a look-up table for some basic rock properties likely to be encountered in various sections of the Yucca Mountain License Application.

The chart is acceptable for staff use. The Letter Report, and possibly, the Chart, would need to be revised to render it acceptable for public release. In particular, we want various technical terms to be defined and more context provided for the hydrologic, thermal and geotechnical properties selected. We wish to use it as is, request that users build upon it, as needed, and re-issue an enhanced version for public review.

However, at this point in the Yucca Mountain HLW Repository License Application review process, the HQ and OGC staff and managers who would need to review the deliverable are hard-pressed for time to make comments, and the Center staff has little time to revise the Letter Report and perhaps make revisions to the Chart. As a minimum, we would make the current Chart and accompanying text publically available. The timing depends upon budget (we are under a Continuing Resolution now), staff availability (working on higher priority OPS PLANS items) and management priorities. Therefore, I am accepting the deliverable so the staff may go ahead and use it, with the caveat that a revision will be considered by September 25, FY 2009.

I will keep a file of the original markups received (thus far from R. Fedors, B. Hill, P. Justus), along with notes and comments from subsequent users to be considered prior to issuance of the publically available version.