

PROJECT PLAN  
YUCCA MOUNTAIN REVIEW ACTIVITIES  
**Addendum for Environmental Impact Statement Supplement  
December 2014**

**Purpose**

This plan outlines how the U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission (NRC) staff intends to develop a supplement to the 2002 and 2008 environmental impact statements (EISs) that the U.S. Department of Energy (DOE) developed to support its license application (LA) for a geologic repository for high-level waste at Yucca Mountain, Nevada. Because the DOE has indicated that it does not intend to provide an EIS supplement<sup>1</sup>, the staff will prepare a supplement to address issues related to groundwater that the staff identified during its 2008 adoption review of the DOE final EISs for the Yucca Mountain repository.

**Project Scope**

The technical scope of the supplement is described in the NRC's 2008 Adoption Determination Report (ADR) (ML082420342), which documents the staff's determination as to whether the staff can adopt the DOE EISs. The staff intends to develop and publish for public comment a draft supplement to the DOE EISs, hold public meetings at NRC headquarters and in Nevada to discuss the draft supplement, and respond to public comments and develop a final supplement for publication within 12 to 15 months of starting the project.

**Organization and Roles**

The primary organization within NRC that is responsible for completing the EIS supplement is the Office of Nuclear Material Safety and Safeguards (NMSS). NMSS intends to use contract support in technical areas, for public meetings, and for the processing of public comments on the draft supplement.

The lead authors of the supplement will be the project manager and the primary technical expert. Other staff providing technical expertise will contribute to drafting or reviewing the report. The project manager and an outreach specialist will plan for and coordinate the public meetings.

**General Process and Responsibilities**

The staff will develop the supplement in accordance with the NRC's National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) regulations in 10 CFR Part 51 and the NMSS environmental review guidance in NUREG-1748. Given the description in the ADR of the needed supplementation scope, and pursuant to 10 CFR 51.26(d) and 10 CFR 51.92(d), the staff does not intend to conduct scoping for the supplement.

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<sup>1</sup>DOE letter dated February 28, 2014 (ML14311A167).

Upon receiving Commission direction to begin, the staff will develop the supplement, completing the steps described below:

1. The staff will update its guidance document of February 2014 (“General Guidance for Staff on Yucca Mountain Review Activities,” in ADAMS at ML14057A618), to incorporate guidance for preparing the supplement.
2. The staff will publish in the *Federal Register* a “Notice of Intent” to prepare the supplement. At that time, the staff will begin work on the supplement.
3. The staff will review the DOE analysis and supporting materials, identify any additional analysis needs, conduct limited analyses where necessary, and develop draft supplement text.
4. The draft supplement will be published as a NUREG. The staff will submit the draft supplement to the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), issue a “Notice of Availability” in the *Federal Register*, and publish and distribute the document for public comment.
5. The staff will hold two public meetings in Nevada, one public meeting at NRC headquarters, and a conference call with the public. The meeting at NRC Headquarters will include a webcast. The staff has chosen these meeting locations to be consistent with the supplement’s limited scope in addressing an issue specific to the Yucca Mountain geographic area. Having meetings in Nevada allows people who are located in that area to participate fully.
6. In addition to the two public meetings and upon request, the staff will communicate further with local affected tribes.
7. The staff will prepare responses to public comments on the draft supplement and revise text as necessary. The staff assumes that the NRC will receive less than 1,000 comments. This is based on the following information: 1) During its 2009 scoping process for its then-proposed supplement of the same scope, the DOE received 4 comment letters, resulting in less than 20 comments; 2) For its 2007 draft repository supplemental EIS that addressed the full range of NEPA topics, DOE received approximately 3,900 comments, of which less than 200 pertained to various hydrology issues (including issues overlapping with the supplement scope); 3) The NRC received almost 9,000 unique comments on the Continued Storage draft generic EIS. Because that court-ordered effort applied to NRC-licensed sites nationwide and many licensing actions, the Continued Storage scale was considerably larger than the scale of the proposed supplement.
8. The staff will ensure that the final supplement is reviewed in accordance with NMSS processes and the guidance in NUREG-1748 for NEPA documents.
9. The final supplement NUREG will be submitted to the EPA as required, and the staff will publish a “Notice of Availability” in the *Federal Register* and distribute the document to stakeholders, including other Federal agencies, Tribal and State Governments who have

expressed interest in the Yucca Mountain licensing process, and affected local governments.

### *Other Considerations*

Throughout the process, project staff will adhere to project management timelines and inform management of any issues that may significantly affect schedule and resources, such as the following:

- Technical staff determines that significant effort will be required to conduct new analyses, because the DOE report does not sufficiently address the supplementation topics.
- Public comments on the draft supplement identify an issue that must be addressed through new analysis, requiring a significant level of effort.
- The volume of public comments exceeds the level anticipated and requires more staff time to address.

### **Outreach and Communication**

To ensure that the staff is engaging with NRC stakeholders appropriately as it develops the supplement, the staff will develop a communication plan outlining the communication activities to be conducted throughout the project. For example, the staff will send e-mails and issue press releases and Twitter feeds to announce upcoming milestones (such as issuance of the draft or final supplement) or events (such as public meetings or conference calls). The staff will publish *Federal Register* notices as appropriate for major milestones (e.g., document publication, meeting dates and locations) throughout the NEPA process. Also as appropriate throughout the project timeframe, the staff will hold one or more public conference calls to discuss progress on the supplement and will develop one or more NRC blog posts. To further facilitate direct communication with stakeholders, the staff will establish a dedicated e-mail address that can be used to disseminate information and receive comments on the draft document. The staff will also maintain a public web page for the supplement and upload appropriate documents, such as the draft and final supplement documents, a Question and Answer document, and other relevant information.

As described in the General Process and Responsibilities section above, the staff will hold public meetings in Nevada and at NRC headquarters, as well as a conference call with the public, to receive comments on the draft supplement. All public meetings and calls will be transcribed. In addition to the two public meetings and upon request, the staff will communicate further with local affected tribes.

When the draft and final supplements are published, the staff will make the documents available on the web page, distribute the documents via e-mail (providing an ADAMS link) and, upon request, send CDs or hard copies to stakeholders.

## Schedule

The staff estimates that with dedicated, focused effort, sufficient staff resources, and no unforeseen technical or process issues, the final EIS supplement can be issued approximately 12-15 months after the staff initiates work. The 12-15-month period includes time to complete and publish the draft document [approximately 6 months]; provide a public comment period and hold public meetings [approximately 1.5 months]; and complete, review, and publish the final document [approximately 7.5 months]. The staff believes that it can complete the supplement on the lower end of this range (i.e., within a 12-month timeframe) in the event that the NRC receives substantially fewer public comments on the draft document.

Below is a summary representation of the schedule and approximate timeline, based on the assumption that work starts February 1, 2015.

### Yucca Mountain EIS Supplement Schedule

