

From: Stephanie Talarek <stalarek@psr.org>
Sent: Thursday, October 15, 2020 11:16 AM
To: WCS_CISFEIS Resource
Subject: [External_Sender] Comments on EIS
Attachments: Comments on EIS.docx

To Whom It May Concern:

My name is Stephanie Talarek, and I am emailing you on behalf of Physicians for Social Responsibility. I have provided comments on the EIS for the proposed consolidated interim storage facility for storing spent nuclear fuel in Andrews, TX.

Thank you,

Stephanie Talarek

Stephanie Talarek

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Federal Register Notice: 85FR27447
Comment Number: 7220

Mail Envelope Properties (CAK0SV6L+FYC9dc36dHs-x+NcJEV_a-xZb8rz5GqMPb9kPTaZyQ)

Subject: [External_Sender] Comments on EIS

Sent Date: 10/15/2020 11:15:46 AM

Received Date: 10/15/2020 11:16:01 AM

From: Stephanie Talarek

Created By: stalarek@psr.org

Recipients:

Post Office: mail.gmail.com

Files	Size	Date & Time
MESSAGE Comments on EIS.docx	552 18525	10/15/2020 11:16:01 AM

Options

Priority: Standard

Return Notification: No

Reply Requested: No

Sensitivity: Normal

Expiration Date:

Recipients Received:

I am Stephanie Talarek, representing Physicians for Social Responsibility. PSR is concerned about the health risks of this plan, and PSR does not think the plan should move forward until its health risks have been addressed. The proposed 40,000 Metric Tonnes of irradiated (or "spent") nuclear fuel, the hottest nuclear waste in existence, is from the cores of nuclear power reactors which will remain dangerous for 1 million years, and if left unshielded can give a lethal dose within minutes.

This plan aims to send and transport the deadliest waste in the country to and through low income communities of color which violates environmental justice principles and puts these communities, and all who travel on the same roads, rails and waterways, and live and work near transport corridors, at risk for decades to come. Radioactive leaks or accidents can impact water supplies, ranching, and agriculture, and remediation could cost taxpayers billions of dollars.

Far superior for protecting public health would be to put this deadly nuclear waste into a deep-underground permanent repository designed to keep it isolated from living things for a million years. This proposed Consolidated Interim Storage is a band-aid approach that increasingly makes matters worse. The plan does not provide protections for long term or permanent isolation. It is most likely that the waste will be on site for much longer than the 40-year license period, and the EIS ignores this. This puts millions of people, the air, water (such as the Ogallala Aquifer - the nation's largest aquifer), soil, ecosystem, agriculture and businesses at long-term risk from radioactivity.

Containers will not be buried and will be left on the surface, out in the open, exposed to temperature extremes, intense winds, hail, flooding, tornados, earthquakes, lightning, storms, wildfires and other extremes which could lead to dangerous cracks and leaks in the radioactive waste containers. This in turn is putting the environment at risk as well as putting the health and wellbeing of workers, nearby communities, and passersby needlessly at risk.

Furthermore, this new proposed waste facility is near two other operating nuclear facilities, and is in the Permian Basin, home to the largest deposits of gas and oil in North America, and thus home to gas and oil drilling, fracking and processing. Having these numerous sites near each other only increases the potential for health and environmental risks.

In summary, PSR is concerned about the health risks posed by this plan. The health risks are numerous such as those posed by potential contamination and transportation risks caused by accidents, leaks, sabotage, and even routine transport emissions. To be clear, exposure to ionizing radiation can cause cancers, genetic damage, and birth defects and can lead to death. PSR believes that this plan can not move forward until these health risks have been properly addressed.