



# Work Plan

## Fiscal Year 1993

Yucca Mountain  
Repository Assessment  
Office

## INTRODUCTION

The U.S. Congress, in the Nuclear Waste Policy Act of 1982, directed the Department of Energy (DOE) to investigate potential sites for the location of an underground geologic repository to contain the growing volume of high-level radioactive waste. This waste, while primarily composed of spent nuclear fuel from the electric industry's nuclear reactors, also includes certain defense radioactive wastes. Between 1982 and 1987, DOE studied several sites, returning to Congress with the recommendation that three sites, including Yucca Mountain, Nevada, be studied.

In 1987, Congress amended the Nuclear Waste Policy Act, directing DOE to study Yucca Mountain and determine its suitability, before looking at any other site. The 1987 Amendments Act also included provisions for local government participation in the process by naming the situs county (Nye County, Nevada) an *affected unit of local government*, and provided the Secretary of Energy with the discretion to designate other contiguous jurisdictions as affected. The Act includes provisions for such counties, when designated as affected by the Secretary of Energy, to participate in oversight and impact assessment activities relating to characterization of the site. The Secretary subsequently named Clark and Lincoln Counties in Nevada as affected units of local government. Inyo County requested "affected unit" status on August 3, 1988 (several counties in Nevada made similar requests). Following denial of its request, Inyo County petitioned the Ninth Circuit Court of Appeals for judicial review of the Secretary's action. Following a successful appeal, Inyo County was designated as an "Affected Unit of Local Government" on May 20, 1991. Inyo County has participated in oversight activities since the 1987 Amendments Act, funding such activities through the general fund of the County. In October, 1991 the County received its first funding under the Nuclear Waste Policy Act as Amended, to perform oversight and impact assessment activities as described in the Act.

Inyo County seeks to ensure that repository siting and subsequent repository activities (such as transportation) do not adversely impact the public health, safety, or welfare of County residents. The County has established a Yucca Mountain Repository Assessment Office to review, monitor and evaluate siting activities at Yucca Mountain, and to perform such activities as are required to assess the potential impact of repository activities on the County. The objectives of this program are:

- To monitor and comment on site characterization activities in order to ensure that the interests of Inyo County are represented.

- To determine the extent of potential environmental, economic, social and risk related impacts on Inyo County from the proposed repository at Yucca Mountain.
- To identify potential groundwater impacts on Inyo County from the proposed repository and to ensure that the groundwater resources of the County are protected.
- To identify potential transportation impacts on Inyo County and its residents and to ensure improvements are made to the transportation network and the local emergency response infrastructure to accommodate safe transport of nuclear wastes through the County.
- To provide accurate information to the residents of Inyo County, and to encourage public participation in County decisions regarding the repository.

The issues that concern Inyo County, the objectives of the County with regard to the Yucca Mountain repository, and the tasks to be accomplished by this oversight program are the subject of this Work Plan for Fiscal Year 1993. In reviewing repository siting activities Inyo County will consider a number of key issue areas, including national program planning, transportation routing, emergency response capabilities, social and cultural effects, stigma effects and risk perception, community services and facilities, population impacts, fiscal effects, economic development potential, and environmental hazards.

Inyo County is not the only agency involved in oversight and impact assessment activities concerning the Yucca Mountain repository. The State of Nevada, as well as the nine Nevada Counties that have also been designated as affected, will be performing many of the same type of tasks. The Inyo County Assessment Office intends to work cooperatively with all other agencies and, where possible, avoid duplication of effort. Inyo County is the sole local jurisdiction outside the State of Nevada that is a participant in this effort, and as such must necessarily view certain issues with a different perspective. The State of Nevada and its political subdivisions may ultimately benefit from provisions in the Nuclear Waste Policy Act as Amended, which provide for benefits to the host state. Inyo County has no such

consideration and must therefore make every effort to identify, quantify and mitigate any potential impacts to the County or its residents, acting solely in its capacity as an Affected Unit of Local Government.

Yucca Mountain repository site characterization activities are extremely complex, involving many different organizations at the international, national, state, and local levels (see figure one). Inyo County must work to provide meaningful input to the many organizations involved, while determining the impact of their actions on the County. The County's efforts in Fiscal Year 1993 can be grouped into three major areas: oversight and interaction, public information, and impact assessment. This Work Plan will address the tasks proposed in each area separately.

## **OVERSIGHT AND INTERACTION ACTIVITIES**

U.S. Congress The Congress sets both the direction and tone of the national nuclear waste program. The Inyo County program must be alert to critical legislation affecting the direction and objectives of the effort to dispose of nuclear wastes. In addition, annual appropriations actions have critical impacts on both DOE's and Inyo County's program schedules. Contact with the key congressional committees is essential to maintaining awareness of legislative direction. The principal Senate committees are: Energy and Natural Resources; Environment and Public Works; Commerce, Science and Transportation; and Appropriations. The House committees with jurisdiction over nuclear waste disposal are: Interior and Insular Affairs; Energy and Commerce; Public Works and Transportation; and Appropriations.

Inyo County will not be attending Congressional hearings and legislation mark-ups in Washington D.C. on a regular basis. However, the County needs to keep informed of the status of committee actions through contact with congressional staff, both by phone and by periodic face-to-face meetings. On those occasions when Inyo County provides testimony to Congress on legislation affecting local government, a representative of the Board of Supervisors, accompanied by staff, should deliver the testimony. As the funding of lobbying efforts is prohibited by language in the annual Congressional Appropriations Act that funds the program, activities will be limited to obtaining information on congressional direction and viewpoints, responding to requests, and providing testimony when appropriate.

The Department of Energy As the lead agency in repository siting activities, interaction with the Department of Energy (DOE) is a key element in Inyo County's oversight and interaction program. DOE's repository siting activities include not only those performed

at the Yucca Mountain Project Office in Las Vegas, but work done by DOE offices in Washington D.C. and Chicago and by contractors across the country. Inyo County must keep informed of work in progress, and provide both formal and informal comments and recommendations. The majority of the County's oversight efforts will be in this area.

Other Federal Agencies An activity as complex as the Yucca Mountain repository site characterization effort will necessarily cut across the regulatory boundaries and fall under the authority of many different federal agencies. The Nuclear Regulatory Commission (NRC), for example, is intimately involved in the process, as the repository must comply with NRC regulations and be licensed by the NRC. Activities undertaken by DOE and its contractors during site characterization must not only meet NRC Quality Assurance criteria, but must not create a condition that would interfere with eventual licensing of the site as a permanent repository for high-level radioactive wastes. In a like manner, DOE activities fall under the scrutiny of many other federal agencies: the Environmental Protection Agency; the U.S. Department of Transportation; the Federal Emergency Management Agency and others. In addition, all programs implemented under the Nuclear Waste Policy Act as Amended, including the Inyo County Repository Assessment Office, are monitored by such agencies as the Office of Management and Budget and the General Accounting Office.

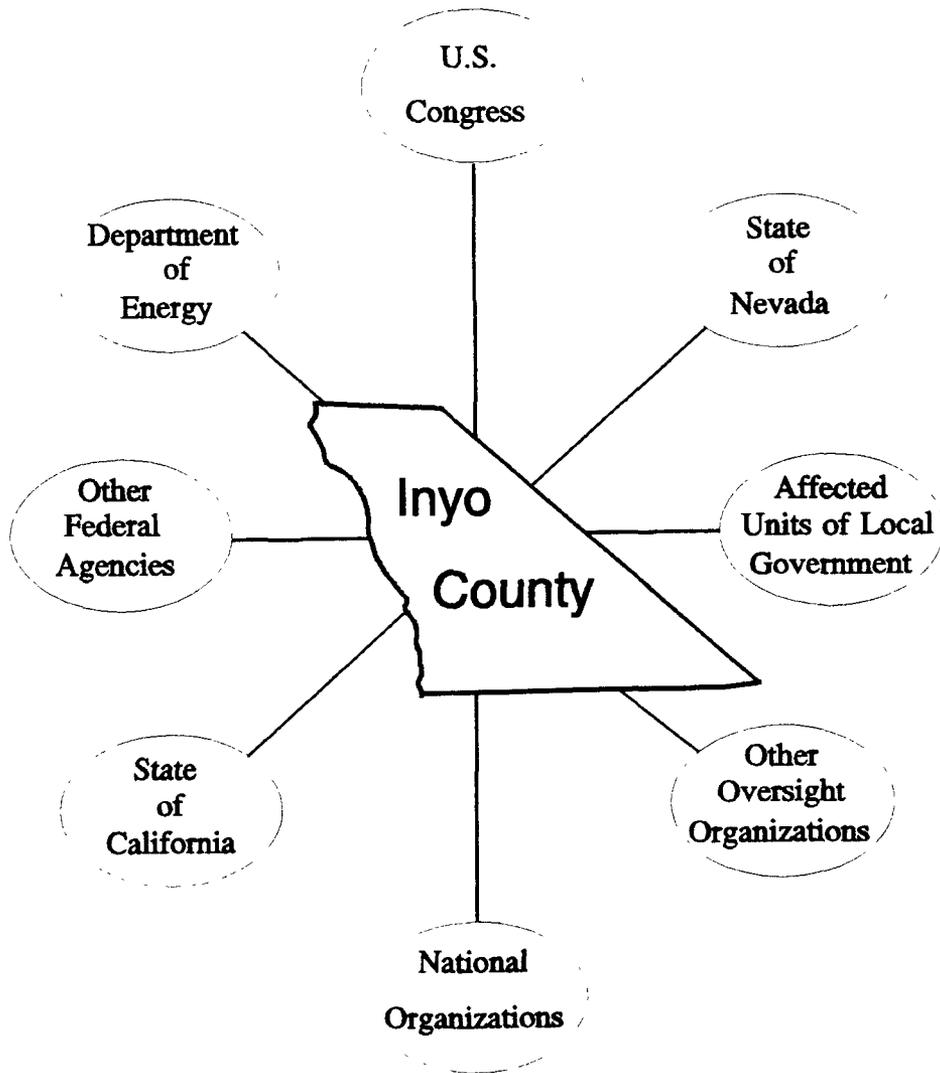
It is essential, therefore, for Inyo County to maintain direct contact with these key implementation and regulatory agencies, both to inform them of the County's interests and to learn first hand of their intended programmatic actions.

Oversight Organizations The Department of Energy's repository siting efforts are being closely scrutinized by many other organizations. They include: the Nuclear Waste Technical Review Board (NWTRB); the Edison Electric Institute; the National Association of Regulatory Utility Commissioners; and others. Many of these different organizations focus on specific portions of DOE's work, such as the NWTRB, which generally confines its review to technical portions of the program.

These organizations have an influence over national policy, and certain organizations can provide access for Inyo County into the policy debate on repository issues.

National and Regional Organizations Organizations such as the National Association of Counties, the Commercial Vehicle Safety Alliance, and the National Conference of State Legislatures can provide a forum for addressing such national policy issues as safety standards, monitored retrievable storage, and transportation routing. At the regional level, the Western Interstate Energy Board provides useful input to transportation and other issues.

# Inyo County Yucca Mountain Repository Assessment Program



## Interactions Plan

Figure 1

State and Local Governments Activities of the State of Nevada, and of the other affected counties is of continuing interest to Inyo County. The bi-monthly meetings held between the affected counties and interested parties allows for the sharing of information, the coordination of activities and cooperation between the parties on study areas of mutual interest and benefit. Such cooperation provides information in the most cost effective manner, as well as insuring comparable data.

Other State agencies may impact the repository program. An example of this is the routing activities currently being undertaken by the California Highway Patrol. Inyo County must be involved as these efforts develop, in order to have appropriate input to concerns that affect the residents of the County. In addition, work being done by the State of New Mexico's Radioactive Waste Consultation Task Force and the Environmental Evaluation Group on repository siting issues at the Waste Isolation Pilot Project (WIPP) near Carlsbad can provide significant lessons in the areas of transportation routing, emergency response planning, repository safety requirements and socioeconomic impact assistance.

## **PUBLIC INFORMATION AND PARTICIPATION**

An important aspect of the repository oversight and assessment program is providing a channel for two way communication between the general public and the Yucca Mountain repository program and the various issues relating to it. Often information on the repository and siting activities is not available, distorted, or one-sided. Residents of Inyo County need access to balanced comprehensible information in order to develop an informed opinion on the many complicated aspects of the Yucca Mountain repository program.

Information Resource Centers As part of the communication process, the Yucca Mountain Repository Assessment Office in Independence will make available the many technical and policy documents produced by the Department of Energy, the State of Nevada, and others. To help make information available to all residents, informational displays will be installed in the central and branch libraries, including those in Tecopa and Furnace Creek. These displays will include selected general program documents and publications, as well as information on Inyo County's activities relating to the repository.

Public Meetings and Presentations Often the best way to present information is by direct contact with the public, providing a forum for discussion and an opportunity for the public to ask questions and get a direct response. In order to facilitate this type of face-to-face

communication, the Repository Assessment Office will not only make formal presentations to the public and civic groups but will assist in the utilization of the DOE's Speakers Bureau by Inyo County Schools and civic organizations. In addition, the Office will work with DOE to schedule periodic public update meetings in Inyo County.

Inspection/Investigation tours First hand knowledge of the operation of a facility or the conditions at a site, is often best acquired by actually visiting the location. To assist in providing local decision makers, civic groups, and the population at large with the background necessary to understand the complex issues involved in high level radioactive waste disposal, the Yucca Mountain Repository Assessment Office will support and arrange tours of key sites and facilities that can provide insights to repository siting activities. Yucca Mountain and the Waste Isolation Pilot Project (WIPP) in New Mexico, as well as locations such as Hanford, Washington would be relevant to understanding repository siting issues.

## **IMPACT ASSESSMENT AND MONITORING**

Repository siting, construction, emplacement, monitoring and closure activities at Yucca Mountain (should the site be found suitable) will continue for at least the next sixty years. Inyo County is charged with the development of a system for monitoring and assessing the impacts of the various repository activities, both short term -- during the site characterization and construction activities -- and long term -- during emplacement, monitoring, and closure. Such a system will require not only a system to collect and analyze the relevant data, but in some areas the development of the data sources themselves. Rural areas of Inyo County, specifically the southeastern portion nearest the proposed Yucca Mountain repository site, are generally lacking in the most basic data collection systems. Accurate population counts, land use information, development potential, and resource data for this area is insufficient for the elaboration of an accurate impact assessment. Described below are the primary areas of study which will be required in order to assemble the necessary background information to allow the County to assess the potential impacts resulting from the siting of a repository at Yucca Mountain.

Environmental There is a lack of specific environmental data on the southeastern portion of Inyo County. The development of this information is highly important, as some of the site characterization and repository activities have the potential to impact the physical environment. Information needs to be collected on all aspects of the geology of the area, such as the geomorphology, the available mineral resources and the existing and predicted tectonic activity, in order to adequately evaluate DOE's studies on the ability of the natural geologic barrier to isolate the repository contents from the environment.

One of the most significant areas of study concerns the hydrology of the site, as the most significant route for radionuclide transmission would be the aquifer which passes under Yucca Mountain. Inyo County will need to collect data on the hydrology of the area, and closely monitor and review the groundwater transport studies done by DOE.

Socioeconomics Primary in the investigation into socioeconomic impacts is an understanding of the current socioeconomic and cultural framework in the area under study, and its relationship to the County as a whole. This framework includes baseline information on the communities, including standard socioeconomic data such as population, work force, and earnings as well as the cultural climate of the communities, community specific development plans, current infrastructure, and the economic base for the area. As this information is collected, and key factors are identified, a monitoring system will be developed including both a data collection system and a database, and a method of integrating this information with other ongoing data collection efforts. As this system is perfected and validated, estimates of potential and actual impacts to Inyo County can be prepared, using the system as the basis for development of a request for impact assistance as authorized under the Nuclear Waste Policy Act, as Amended.

Transportation Specific issues concerning transportation through Inyo County to the proposed repository must be addressed. This includes, not only the shipment of spent nuclear fuel and defense wastes, but the movement of material and personnel to the repository during all phases of the repository program. The potential use of Highway 127 for these shipments necessitates examination of infrastructure needs, socioeconomic impacts, and emergency response requirements. Information on surface flooding will be required to assess the possible impact on potential transportation routes through Inyo County. In addition, development of rail spurs or expanded highway usage will require the development of data sources on the potential environmental impact, including impacts to vegetation and wildlife.

## **CURRENT YEAR TASKS**

It is useful to lay out the proposed tasks, with a description of each task's relevance and importance to the program, in order to provide a framework for future decisions. The scope of the current year tasks will be dependent, however, on the level of funding available to the program through Congressional appropriation. Because of this, this work plan is intended as a planning document, subject to change and revision as funding and circumstances dictate. Each of the three major areas of the program: oversight and interaction; public information and participation; and impact assessment and monitoring, has specific tasks linked to it, and

many of the tasks are incremental in nature. It is necessary to develop baseline community information prior to designing an impact assessment system, just as it is necessary to perform routing investigations prior to developing infrastructure impact estimates. It is also anticipated that near term studies will result in modifications to long term design goals. The fiscal year 1993 planned projects are outlined by category below.

### Oversight and Interaction Tasks

- Task 1.1      Congressional Committee Contact  
Initiate, develop and maintain contact with key congressional staff members. Provide information to California Congressional delegation and others as needed.
- Task 1.2      Monitor Legislative Actions  
Monitor proposed and pending legislative actions on nuclear waste issues, including transportation.
- Task 1.3      Monitor and Interact with the Department of Energy  
Attend meetings, review documents, and comment both formally and informally on site characterization efforts by the Department of Energy. Investigate the development of memorandums of understanding for cooperation between Inyo County and the Department of Energy.
- Task 1.4      Maintain Contact with Other Federal Agencies and Oversight Organizations  
Attend meetings, comment and inform other organizations of Inyo County's position and concerns.
- Task 1.5      Interact with National and Regional Organizations  
Attend national conferences and meetings of such organizations to observe and provide input to policy positions.
- Task 1.6      Interact with State and Local Governments  
Participate in meetings among the affected local governments. Develop interactions with other state and local governments on issues that relate to the repository.
- Task 1.7      Participate in Development of Section 180(c) Provisions  
Actively work to represent the position of local government in the

implementation of Section 180(c) of the Nuclear Waste Policy Act, as amended, which outlines DOE's role in the training of emergency responders along repository shipment routes.

- Task 1.8 Coordinate and Prepare Inyo County's Payment Equal to Taxes (PETT) Request  
As authorized in Section 116(c)(3)(A) of the Nuclear Waste Policy Act, as Amended, coordinate with other County departments to prepare a request for payment of an amount equal to the amount the County would receive if authorized to tax site characterization activities, and the development and operation of the repository, as the County taxes the non-Federal real property and industrial activities occurring within the County.

### Public Information Tasks

- Task 2.1 Develop Information Resource Centers  
Develop and maintain informational displays in cooperation with the County library system.
- Task 2.2 Promote and Participate in Public Meetings and Presentations  
Promote meetings in Inyo County by organizations involved in the repository program. Provide staff to civic organizations and the public to discuss the repository siting process and Inyo County's involvement.
- Task 2.3 Inspection and Investigation Tours  
Arrange and host tours of sites relating to the repository, in order to provide background information to local decision makers and others.
- Task 2.4 Survey of Resident Opinion  
Prepare and administer a survey of Inyo County residents to determine their knowledge and opinions regarding siting of a repository at Yucca Mountain. Where possible, work in coordination with other affected units of local government in developing survey instruments and/or carrying out surveys.

### Impact Assessment and Monitoring

- Task 3.1 Review of Environmental Data  
Closely monitor activities relating to geology and groundwater issues, especially studies concerning the determination of groundwater transport times and

methods. Develop Inyo County specific tasks relating to hydrology as needed.

Task 3.2 Review of Socioeconomic Data

Review existing data for comprehensiveness, format, and availability. Develop data sources and determine new data needs. Develop tasks based on results of review.

Task 3.3 Transportation Route Studies

Develop data and participate in the ongoing effort by the State of California to designate preferred routes for the shipment of hazardous materials under the Hazardous Materials Uniform Transportation Act of 1990, specifically in reference to Highway 127.

# Time Line for Current Project Tasks

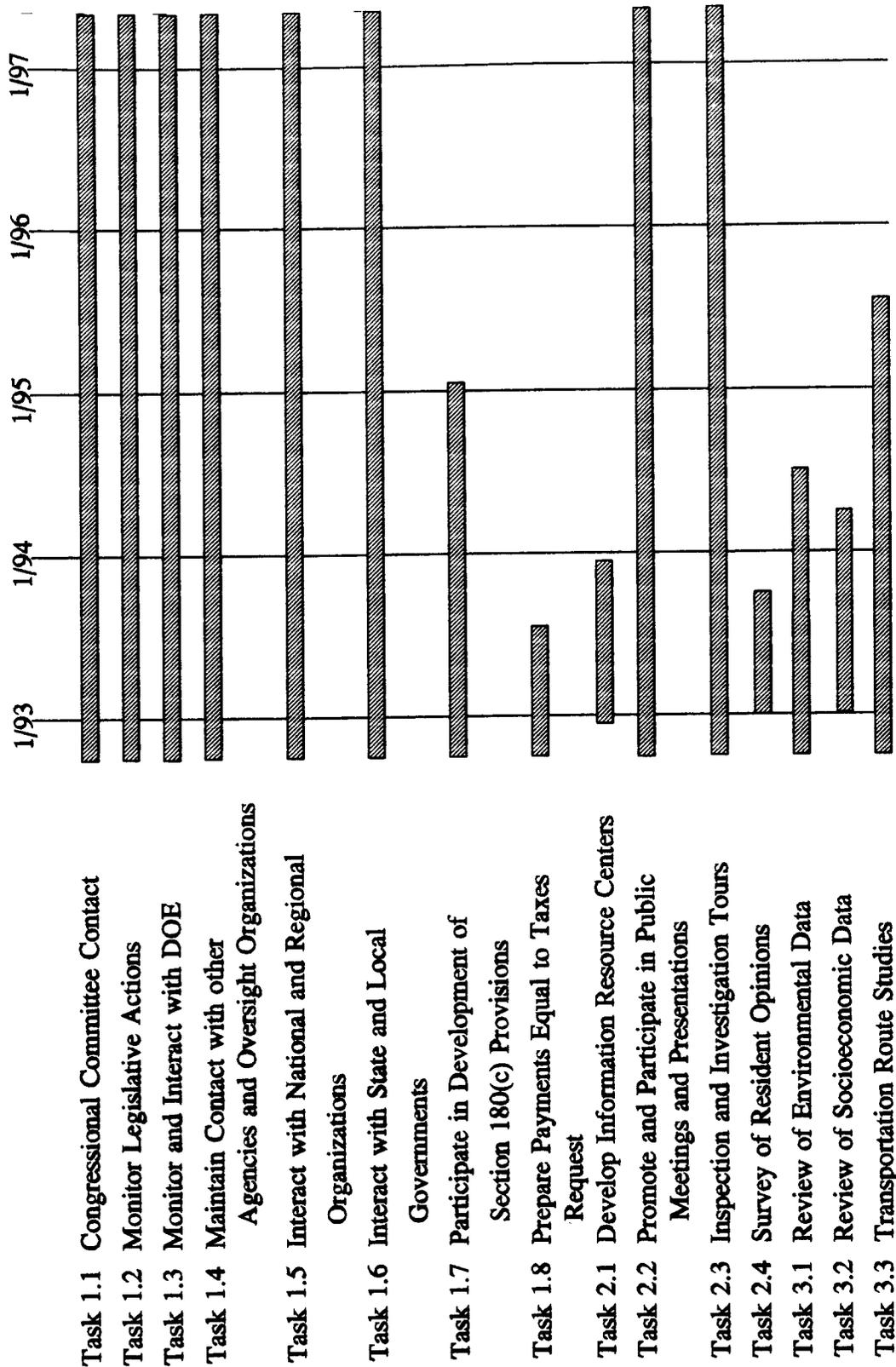


Figure 2