

CALIFORNIA ENERGY COMMISSION

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FAX COVER SHEET

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Date: Aug. 26, 1999 Time: 11:55 A.M.

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Re: Comments on the Draft EIS for a Geologic Repository for the Disposal of Spent Nuclear Fuel and High-Level Radioactive Waste at Yucca Mountain, Nye County, Nevada

Pages: 29

Message: As we discussed, the federal Department of Energy (DOE) has just issued a Draft EIS for their proposed action to construct, operate, and eventually close a geologic repository at Yucca Mountain in Nevada for the disposal of spent nuclear fuel and high-level radioactive waste. Preliminary site characterization studies concluded that Death Valley is hydraulically connected to, and down-gradient of, the aquifer beneath the Yucca Mountain site. The potential for migration of radionuclide contaminants into eastern California aquifers, therefore, is of concern as are potential impacts on water supplies for California fish and wildlife populations in and near the Death Valley National Monument.

In 1988, we established a State of California High-Level Nuclear Waste Task Force to review DOE's Site Characterization Plan to identify any additional studies needed to address issues relevant to California. In light of DOE issuing the Draft EIS, we are asking whether it is reasonable to reestablish this Task Force to coordinate the review of this EIS or whether these California agencies are conducting their own independent reviews. I phoned the State EIS Clearinghouse and they had not yet received the document and DOE did not have a record of which agencies in California are being sent this document for review.

Attached as I promised are:

1. The original list of members of the High-level Nuclear Waste Task Force (established in 1988) and coordinated by the Energy Commission
2. Letter from the Energy Commission sent in 1988 to the agency Directors (sent to Directors of Dept. of Conservation, Dept. Water Resources, Fish and Game, Parks and Recreation, Water Resources Control Board) asking that an informal working group be established;
3. Comments prepared by this Task Force on the Yucca Mountain Site Characterization Plan;
4. Cover letter for the Draft EIS; please note that the comments are due Feb. 9, 2000.

I am trying to determine whether California agencies are planning to comment separately on this Draft EIS or whether it would be reasonable to reestablish this working group so that comments can be prepared jointly. If the group is reestablished, we should probably include the Dept. of Health Services and the Dept. of Toxic Substances Control to get input on radionuclide migration and health effects.

HIGH-LEVEL NUCLEAR WASTE TASK FORCE

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