550893

Rachel Castor
College of St. Benedict
Box 270
St. Joseph, MN 56374

Carol Hanlon, DOE
Yucca Mountain Site Characterization Office (M/S #025)
P.O. Box 30307
North Las Vegas, NV 89036-0307

RECEIVED
SEP 24 2001

RE: Comments on Yucca Mountain Project

Dear Ms. Hanlon,

I am writing to express my deep concern over the Yucca Mountain Project and the flawed process railroading it toward approval.

Yucca Mountain, located 80 miles northwest of Las Vegas, is on disputed territory claimed by the Western Shoshone Nation under the Ruby Valley Treaty of 1863, but currently held by the DOE. An aquifer beneath the site is the only source of drinking water for the closest community. Seismic activity in the area makes it likely that radioactivity from the proposed repository would eventually contaminate the groundwater and surrounding environment.

Moreover, 70,000 metric tons of high-level radioactive waste from commercial nuclear reactors and DOE weapons sites across the country would be shipped to the proposed dump, launching an unprecedented nuclear transportation scheme. Routing projections indicate that radioactive Yucca Mountain shipments would likely pass within half a mile of the homes, schools, and workplaces of 50 million Americans in 43 states.

The DOE's preliminary site suitability evaluation is premature at best. In addition to longstanding technical problems with the repository proposal, a safe transportation scenario has not been identified, the required Environmental Impact Statement has not been released, and key regulations are yet to be finalized.

I cannot understand how the Secretary of Energy can be preparing to recommend Yucca Mountain for a high-level nuclear waste dump when thousands of public comments on the Draft Environmental Impact Statement still have not been addressed. Without a Final Environmental Impact Statement, a detailed transportation scenario, finalized Siting Guidelines, or a licensing rule, the Department of Energy lacks the basis for consideration of site suitability. The public cannot have confidence in any recommendation that arises from such a dramatically flawed process.

As a very concerned U.S. taxpayer and citizen, I strongly urge you to abandon the Yucca Mountain Project.

Most sincerely,

Rachel Castor

Rachel Castor

1