YUCCA MOUNTAIN HYDROGEOLOGY:
DOES DOE REALLY CARE?

IAEA International Peer Review (12/01):

$ “The saturated zone flow system at YM is very complex and not sufficiently understood to propose a conceptual model for a realistic transport scenario.”

$ “The level of understanding of the hydrogeology of the site is low, unclear, and insufficient to support an assessment of realistic performance.”

$ “Until these questions (six ‘major issues’) are answered, it is not possible to develop a realistic conceptual model of the site.”

Nuclear Waste Technical Review Board (1/02):

$ “The technical basis for the DOE’s repository performance estimates is weak to moderate at this time.”

$ “The Board’s confidence in DOE’s analysis of the ability of the natural hydrogeologic systems of YM to isolate radioactive waste is reduced by existing uncertainties in several areas.”

$ “For arriving at more realistic and technically defensible predictions of fluid flow and radionuclide transport, it is very important that DOE continue investigating these uncertainties.”

Margaret Chu (DOE), Director of OCRWM (4/02):

$ “The Board recommends that the Department continue scientific studies to develop more realistic and technically defensible predictions of fluid flow and transport in the unsaturated and saturated zones at YM.”

$ “Bechtel is defining the work scope that will lead to a License Application.”

$ “The scientific investigations and analyses necessary to support License Application will be prioritized and considered with other project activities, such as design, to produce a balanced program within funding restraints dictated by our budget.” (No commitment to comply with critical recommendations of IAEA/NWTRB.)