



**OFFICE OF THE GOVERNOR
AGENCY FOR NUCLEAR PROJECTS**

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April 14, 2004

Margaret Chu, Director
Office of Civilian Radioactive Waste Management
U.S. Department of Energy
1000 Independence Avenue, SW
Washington, DC 20585

Re: Request for Extension of the Comment Deadline and for Additional Scoping Meetings on the Notice of Intent to Prepare and Environmental Impact Statement for the Alignment, Construction, and Operation of a Rail Spur to a Geologic Repository at Yucca Mountain

Dear Ms. Chu:

The U.S. Department of Energy's April 8, 2004 Notice of Intent to prepare an EIS for a rail spur to the proposed Yucca Mountain repository provides for a forty-five day period for scoping comments, with a deadline of May 24, 2004. Nevada believes that such a short period does not afford enough time from the public and affected parties to comment on the scope of an EIS for a project with such substantial and long-lasting impacts in Nevada and throughout the country. The only way for DOE to adequately identify and assess the full range of impacts that are likely to occur as a result of decisions involving the alignment, construction and operation of a rail line from Caliente to Yucca Mountain is to provide for an adequate scoping period. I am asking, therefore, that the comment period be extended from 45 days to a minimum of 90 days.

The three scoping meetings in rural Nevada that were announced in the Notice are likewise insufficient. In addition to meetings in Amargosa Valley, Goldfield, and Caliente, Nevada, DOE must schedule scoping sessions in the state's major population centers, Las Vegas and Reno/Sparks, since the impacts of a nuclear waste rail line across Nevada will be felt statewide.

Since states and cities around the country also stand to be substantially affected by DOE's choice of a Nevada rail spur, DOE should also schedule scoping meetings in strategic locations

nationwide. Such locations should be chosen based on an analysis of how shipments from reactors and generator sites would be routed to a Caliente rail spur. There must be a sufficient number of such meetings to adequately cover key impacted states/cities throughout the Yucca Mountain transportation system.

Thanks you for your immediate attention to this matter.

Sincerely,

Robert R. Loux
Executive Director

RRL/cs

cc Governor Guinn
Attorney General Sandoval
Nevada congressional delegation
Affected local governments and tribes
Robin Sweeney, DOE Office of National Transportation