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**STATE OF NEVADA YUCCA MOUNTAIN SURVEY  
SUMMARY REPORT  
October, 2004**

**Introduction**

The following information was collected by means of a statewide telephone survey done between October 7th and 18th, 2004. The survey was conducted by Northwest Survey & Data Services based in Eugene, Oregon. .

From a randomly generated list of telephone numbers, 402 completed interviews were obtained. The response rate for the survey was 58.9%, and the margin of error is plus or minus 4.8%.

Just under forty-three percent (42.5%) of respondents were male and 57% were female. Slightly more than eighty-five percent (85.6%) said they were registered voters. Of those 37.8% were Democrats; 34.8% Republicans; 10% were Independents; and 5.7% were affiliated with other parties or declined to answer.

Thirty-Two percent of respondents were between 18 and 39 years of age; 38% were between 40 and 59 years of age; and 30 % were 60 and older.

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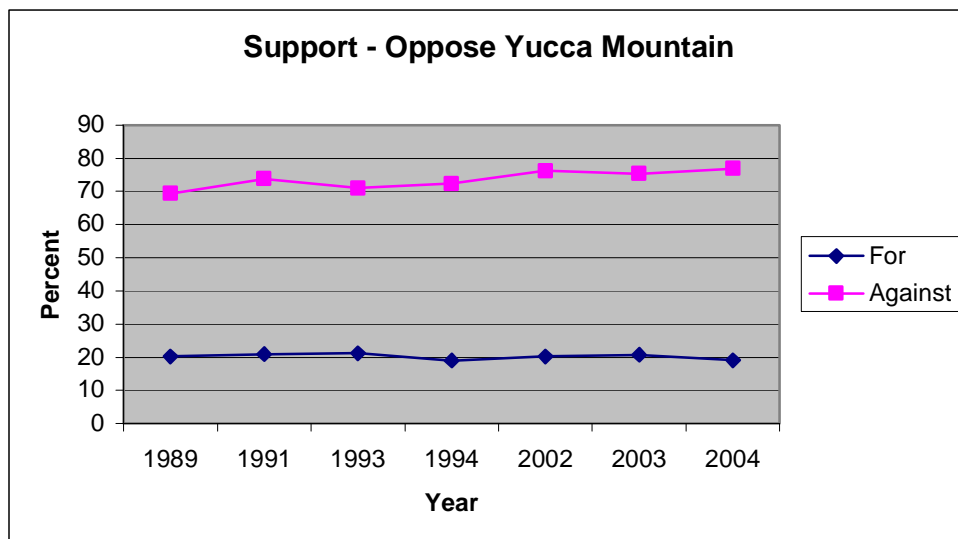
## Summary of Key Findings

### *Public Sentiment For and Against Yucca Mountain*

The survey found that, despite ongoing nuclear power industry promotional activities in Nevada, opposition to the program remains very high. Statewide, 76.8% of Nevadans oppose locating a high-level nuclear waste repository at Yucca Mountain and would vote against it if given the opportunity. Only 19.2% support the project. These figures represent a modest increase in opposition to the project from the time of the last such survey in October 2003. At that time, slightly over 75% were opposed to the project.

Figure 1 below shows that the level of opposition to the Yucca Mountain project has remained consistently high for the past 13 years. The figure depicts results for surveys conducted in 1989, 1991, 1993, 1994, 2002, 2003 and 2004.

**Figure 1**



### *Continued Opposition vs. Making a Deal*

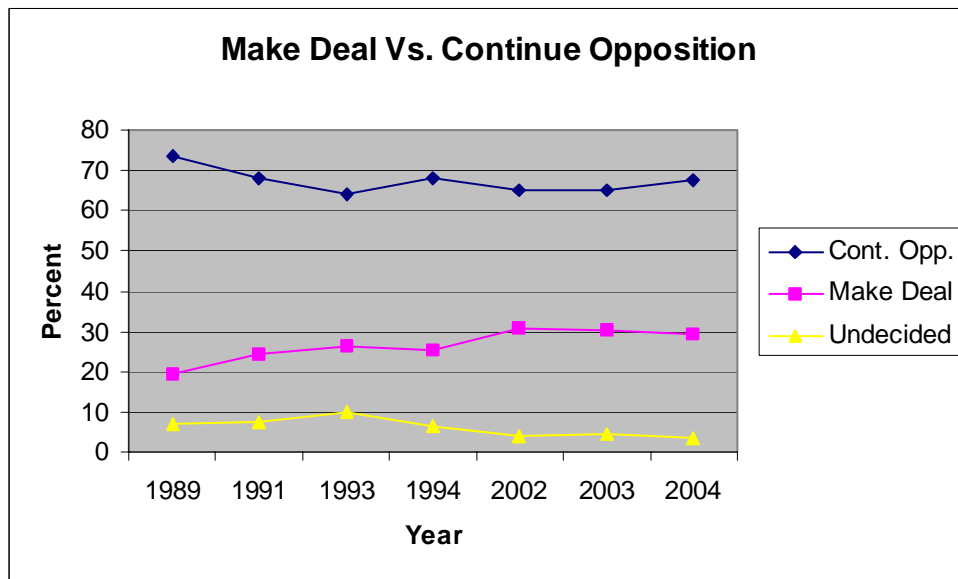
Nevadans also remain strongly opposed to the State abandoning the fight to stop the Yucca Mountain project. The survey asked people to respond to the following question:

“Some people think Nevada should stop fighting the repository and instead try to make a deal with the federal government for benefits.

Other people believe Yucca Mountain is a poor choice, and that state resistance should not be weakened or compromised by entering into a deal for benefits. Do you believe the state should stop its opposition and make a deal, or do you think the state should continue to do all it can to oppose the repository, even if that means turning down benefits that may be offered by the federal government.”<sup>1</sup>

Sixty-seven percent (67.4%) of the respondents favored continuing State opposition, even if that meant turning down benefits, while just 29.1% favored making a deal. These survey findings were also remarkably consistent with results for the same question from past surveys (Figure 2).

**Figure 2**



The survey was specifically designed to assure that the question on whether to continue opposition or make a deal was not preceded by questions or information that would bias the response. The oppose or make a deal question was number two in the survey, right after the first question that asked whether a respondent favored or opposed Yucca Mountain.

In order to obtain an indication of how recent events might have affected people’s views on whether Nevada should try to make a deal or continue to oppose the project, the same question was included twice more in the questionnaire - directly after a question about the State’s legal challenges to the project (the question asked if respondents were aware the

<sup>1</sup> This same question has been asked in each survey conducted since 1989. The question was carefully crafted to avoid biasing respondents while framing the issue in a clear and concise manner.

Nevada had won a court decision that will make it difficult for the federal government to move ahead with the project) and again at the very end of the questionnaire.

Surprisingly, only slightly over 36% of respondents knew of the outcome of the State's lawsuit while over 60% were not aware of it. However, when asked whether, knowing of the result of the suit, they believed the state should stop its opposition and make a deal or continue to oppose the project even if that meant turning down benefits that might be offered by the federal government (the exact same wording for the question that was used the first time), the percentage of people advocating continued opposition increased from 67.4% to 72.9%.

When the same question was asked at the end of the survey, 72.1% advocated continuing opposition and only 26.1% favored making a deal for benefits.

## *Actions the State Could Take to Stop the Project*

Later in the survey, respondents were asked whether they agreed or disagreed with various actions the State could take in its efforts to oppose the project.

**Table 1**

Ranking of public support for actions the State of Nevada can take in its efforts to stop the Yucca Mountain project (Questions 7 – 11):			
	<u>Type of Action</u>	<u>% Agree</u>	<u>% Disagree</u>
# 1	Lawsuits to stop the project	66.7%	30.8%
#2	Deny DOE water permits for the project	64.7%	30.4%
#3	Actions to stop other DOE activities at NTS in protest	52.2%	40.3%
#4	Use the Nevada Highway Patrol to stop waste shipments	50.8%	45.0%
#5	Use the Nevada National Guard to stop DOE from proceeding	36.8%	59.2%

As Table 1 shows, Nevadans strongly endorse the continued use of litigation as a way to stop the Yucca Mountain project. Almost 67% support lawsuits designed to halt the project.

There is also strong support for denying DOE water permits needed for the project (almost 65%). State actions aimed at halting other DOE activities at the Nevada Test Site in protest over Yucca Mountain also received support from a majority of respondents (52.2%) as did possible use of the Nevada Highway Patrol to stop any radioactive waste shipments destined for Yucca Mountain (almost 51%). Nevadans, however, are not in favor of extreme measures, such as using the Nevada National Guard to halt DOE activities at Yucca Mountain.

***Risks from the Yucca Mountain Project***

Respondents were asked to rank risks potentially associated with the Yucca Mountain project as being little or no risk, slight risk, moderate risk, or high risk. Table 2 summarizes results from these questions.

**Table 2**

Ranking of risks people associate with the Yucca Mountain project and related activities (Questions 12 – 18):			
		High/Moderate Risk	Low/No Risk
#1	Rail and truck shipments of radioactive waste	84.8%	13.7%
#2	Radioactive contamination of the environment	80.9%	16.9%
#3	Losses to property values for homes and businesses located near shipping routes	76.4%	21.9%
#4	Adverse health effects	75.6%	22.4%
#5	Damage to Nevada’s reputation as a place to vacation or live	64.2%	33.8%
#6	Loss of public revenues due to reduced numbers of visitors/tourists	62.2%	36.8%
#7	Economic damage to Nevada’s major industries	61.7%	34.8%

Risks associated with the transport of spent nuclear fuel and high-level radioactive waste by rail and highway ranked first, with almost 85% of respondents considering such risks to be of moderate to high risk. Of those, almost 68% considered waste transportation to be in the high risk category.

Radioactive contamination of the air and water ranked second (80.9%), followed by the risk of loss to property values along nuclear waste shipping routes (76.4%), the risk of adverse health effects from the repository itself or from transportation operations (75.6%), the risk of damage to Nevada’s reputation as a place to live or visit (64.2%), the risk that public revenues would be lost due to decreased numbers of visitors and tourists (62.2%), and the risk of serious economic damage to Nevada’s major tourism and gaming industries (61.7%).

## ***Economic Impacts of Yucca Mountain on Nevada***

Respondents were asked their views on two opposing perspectives on the impact Yucca Mountain would have on the State's economic future:

“Public discussion of the economic effects of Yucca Mountain presents two opposite views. One position says that Department Of Energy employment and spending in Nevada will provide significant economic benefits to Nevada. The other position says that development of the repository and transportation of high-level radioactive waste through the state will compromise Nevada as a place to visit, move to, or invest in, leading to significant economic losses. Do you think the Yucca Mountain project will have a positive economic impact on Nevada or a negative economic impact on Nevada?”

Sixty-Eight percent (68.1%) said that the Yucca Mountain project will have a negative economic impact on the State, with only 24.4% perceiving positive economic effects. The percentage of people viewing the project in negative economic terms is up from 58.1% in 2003.

## ***Trust in the Department of Energy***

When asked whether DOE can be expected to live up to any benefits agreement the federal government might (hypothetically) make with Nevada, almost 69% indicated DOE cannot be trusted (up from 64% in 2003). Just 27.4% considered DOE trustworthy.

# 2004 NEVADA STATE SURVEY

## QUESTION-BY-QUESTION SURVEY RESULTS COMPARED WITH 2003 SURVEY FINDINGS

Question 1:

The federal Department of Energy (DOE) wants to build the nation's first high-level radioactive waste repository at Yucca Mountain in southern Nevada. If given the opportunity to vote on this matter, would you vote for or against locating a nuclear waste repository at Yucca Mountain?

	<u>2003</u>	<u>2004</u>
VOTE FOR	20.7%	19.1%
VOTE AGAINST	75.3%	76.9%
REFUSED/DON'T KNOW/NO ANSWER	4.0%	4.0%

Question 2:

Some people think Nevada should stop fighting the repository and instead try to make a deal with the federal government for benefits. Other people believe Yucca Mountain is a poor choice, and that state resistance should not be weakened or compromised by entering into a deal for benefits. Do you believe the state should stop its opposition and make a deal, or do you think the state should continue to do all it can to oppose the repository, even if that means turning down benefits that may be offered by the federal government.

MAKE A DEAL	30.4%	29.1%
CONTINUE OPPOSITION	64.8%	67.4%
REFUSED/DON'T KNOW/NO ANSWER	4.8%	3.5%

Question 3<sup>2</sup>:

The state of Nevada brought a suit against the U.S. Department of Energy that was decided this summer. The court found that the federal government did not use the proper standards for long-term storage at Yucca Mountain. While the decision did not stop the project outright, it will make it very difficult for the federal government to move ahead with the project.

Were you aware of this result from the state's lawsuit?

YES	36.3%
NO	60.2%
REFUSED/DON'T KNOW/NO ANSWER	3.5%

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<sup>2</sup> Question 3 and 4 were not asked in the 2003 survey because the legal case had not yet been decided.

Question 4:

Knowing of this result from the State's lawsuit, do you believe the state should stop its opposition and make a deal, or do you think the state should continue to do all it can to oppose the repository, even if that means turning down benefits that may be offered by the federal government?

	<u>2003</u>	<u>2004</u>
MAKE A DEAL		24.6%
CONTINUE OPPOSITION		72.9%
REFUSED/DON'T KNOW/NO ANSWER		2.5%

Question 5:

Public discussion of the economic effects of Yucca Mountain presents to opposite views. One position says that DOE employment and spending in Nevada will provide significant economic benefits to Nevada. The other position says that development of the repository and transportation of high-level radioactive wastes through the state will stigmatize Nevada as a place to visit, move to, or invest in, leading to significant economic losses. Do you think the Yucca Mountain project will have:

POSITIVE	31.2%	24.4%
NEGATIVE	58.1%	68.2%
REFUSED/DON'T KNOW/NO ANSWER	8.7%	7.4%

Question 6:

Supporters of the Yucca Mountain program say that the Department of Energy (DOE) can be trusted to live up to any benefits agreement the federal government would make with Nevada. Do you strongly agree, agree, disagree, or strongly disagree with this claim?

AGREE	32.2%	27.4%
DISAGREE	64.3%	68.7%
REFUSED/DON'T KNOW/NO ANSWER	3.5%	3.9%

Question 7:

There are a number of other actions that the State of Nevada could take in its efforts to stop the Yucca Mountain project. Please tell me if you would strongly agree, agree, disagree or strongly disagree with the following actions.

The first one is, filing law suits in the courts to stop the project. Would you strongly agree, agree, disagree or strongly disagree with this step?

AGREE	65.6%	66.7%
DISAGREE	32.4%	30.8%
REFUSED/DON'T KNOW/NO ANSWER	2.0%	2.5%

Question 8:

Calling out the Nevada National Guard to stop the Department of Energy (DOE) from proceeding with activities at the site

	<u>2003</u>	<u>2004</u>
AGREE	36.4%	36.8%
DISAGREE	59.1%	59.2%
REFUSED/DON'T KNOW/NO ANSWER	4.5%	4.0%

Question 9:

Denying the Department of Energy (DOE) water permits it needs for the project

AGREE	61.3%	64.7%
DISAGREE	36.4%	30.3%
REFUSED/DON'T KNOW/NO ANSWER	2.3%	5.0%

Question 10:

Taking action to stop DOE's other activities at the NTS in protest

AGREE	55.6%	52.2%
DISAGREE	40.7%	40.3%
REFUSED/DON'T KNOW/NO ANSWER	3.7%	7.5%

Question 11:

Using the Highway Patrol to stop shipments of high-level nuclear waste in Nevada

AGREE	48.6%	50.8%
DISAGREE	47.6%	45.0%
REFUSED/DON'T KNOW/NO ANSWER	3.8%	4.2%

Question 12:

The federal government and the State of Nevada have identified several risks presented by the Yucca Mountain repository program. I am going to read a short list and I would like you to tell me if you, personally, think these are items with little or no risk, slight risk, moderate risk, or high risk. The first one is, rail and truck shipments of up to 100,000 casks of high-level radioactive wastes across the country to Nevada. Do you think this item is of little or no risk, slight risk, moderate risk, or high risk?

	<u>2003</u>	<u>2004</u>
LITTLE OR NO RISK	6.48%	6.97%
SLIGHT RISK	9.48%	9.48%
MODERATE RISK	16.71%	16.92%
HIGH RISK	65.84%	67.91%
REFUSED/DON'T KNOW/NO ANSWER	1.25%	1.5%

Question 13:

Risk of radioactive contamination by radioactive emissions into the air and water over the next 10,000 years

LITTLE OR NO RISK	9.23%	7.71%
SLIGHT RISK	9.48%	9.20%
MODERATE RISK	13.47%	14.18%
HIGH RISK	64.34%	66.67%
REFUSED/DON'T KNOW/NO ANSWER	3.49%	2.24%

Question 14:

Risk of economic damage to major industries such as gaming and conventions because people avoid Nevada as the "Nuclear Dump State"

LITTLE OR NO RISK	27.93%	24.13%
SLIGHT RISK	9.98%	10.70%
MODERATE RISK	22.44%	21.39%
HIGH RISK	38.15%	40.30%
REFUSED/DON'T KNOW/NO ANSWER	1.0%	2.24%

Question 15:

Risk of damaging Nevada's reputation as a place to vacation or live

LITTLE OR NO RISK	25.19%	23.63%
SLIGHT RISK	9.98%	10.20%
MODERATE RISK	20.7%	18.41%
HIGH RISK	43.14%	45.77%
REFUSED/DON'T KNOW/NO ANSWER	1.0%	2.0%

Question 16:

Risk of loss of public revenues because of a reduced number of visitors

	<u>2003</u>	<u>2004</u>
LITTLE OR NO RISK	26.68%	25.37%
SLIGHT RISK	11.22%	11.44%
MODERATE RISK	23.19%	20.90%
HIGH RISK	37.16%	41.29%
REFUSED/DON'T KNOW/NO ANSWER	1.75%	1.0%

Question 17:

Risk of adverse health effects for Nevada residents from transportation and operations of the repository

LITTLE OR NO RISK	15.71%	15.17%
SLIGHT RISK	12.72%	7.21%
MODERATE RISK	16.71%	16.17%
HIGH RISK	51.87%	59.45%
REFUSED/DON'T KNOW/NO ANSWER	3.0%	1.99%

Question 18:

Risk of losses to property value for homes and businesses located near highways and railroads used for shipping nuclear waste to Yucca Mountain

LITTLE OR NO RISK	10.47%	15.17%
SLIGHT RISK	11.47%	6.72%
MODERATE RISK	17.21%	14.68%
HIGH RISK	59.6%	61.69%
REFUSED/DON'T KNOW/NO ANSWER	1.25%	1.75%

Question 19<sup>3</sup>:

Taking into account everything you know about the Yucca Mountain project, do you now think that Nevada should stop fighting the repository and instead try to make a deal with the federal government for benefits? Or do you think that Yucca Mountain is a poor choice, and that state resistance should not be weakened or compromised by entering into a deal for benefits?

MAKE A DEAL	26.12%
CONTINUE OPPOSITION	72.14%
REFUSED/DON'T KNOW/NO ANSWER	1.74%

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<sup>3</sup> Question 19 was not asked during the 2003 survey. It was used in 2004 as a control question for the earlier questions about making a deal or continuing opposition.