



**UNITED STATES
NUCLEAR WASTE TECHNICAL REVIEW BOARD**

1100 Wilson Boulevard, Suite 910
Arlington, VA 22209

December 12, 1990

**Dr. John W. Bartlett
Director
Office of Civilian Radioactive Waste Management
U.S. Department of Energy
1000 Independence Avenue, S.W.
Washington, D.C. 20585**

Dear Dr. John Bartlett

On November 20, 1990, the Board's Structural Geology & Geoengineering Panel reviewed the ESF alternatives study at a meeting in Denver, Colorado. In response to a request by Carl Gertz at the conclusion of that meeting, I said I would be pleased to offer early comments to the Yucca Mountain Project Office on the panel's reaction to this study. Attached for your review is a copy of these comments, which I have sent to Carl Gertz and others, as well as a copy of Professor E. J. Cording's consultant report.

Of major interest to you will be item four, where the panel recommends that, before starting the preliminary design of a preferred option, the highest-ranked options be recombined into a set of new configurations. Detailed engineering cost and schedule analyses, including critical paths, should be performed. Consideration also should be given to evaluation of the contingencies and risks in the various excavation methods associated with these new configurations. The result of this effort would be a single, preferred configuration, for which preliminary designs could be produced.

It is our feeling that this step could be conducted in the first quarter of 1991, or as part of the initial Title II Preliminary Design effort. In addition we do not view this effort as necessarily requiring a reiteration of the decision-aiding techniques used in the study up to this point.

I would be happy to meet with you to discuss these issues, as I understand that they are important in scheduling your 1991 activities.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Don U. Deere". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

**Dr. Don U. Deere
Chairman**