U.S. DEPARTMENT OF ENERGY
OFFICE OF CIVILIAN RADIOACTIVE WASTE MANAGEMENT

NUCLEAR WASTE TECHNICAL REVIEW BOARD
ENVIRONMENT AND PUBLIC HEALTH PANEL MEETING

SUBJECT: ENVIRONMENTAL PROGRAM OVERVIEW

PRESENTER: WENDY R. DIXON
PRESENTER’S TITLE AND ORGANIZATION: DIRECTOR
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LAS VEGAS, NEVADA

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LAS VEGAS, NEVADA
NOVEMBER 22, 1993
CURRENT ENVIRONMENTAL PROGRAM DRIVERS

- Compliance with regulations
- Sound scientific practices
- Site characterization phase activities
ACTIVITIES DESCRIBED IN ENVIRONMENTAL PLANS

ENVIRONMENTAL MANAGEMENT PLAN

ERCP    EMMP    RAD    MET    HAZMAT    RECLAMATION

AIR
WATER
CULTURAL
ECOSYSTEMS

EFAPS

EMP

Provides the roadmap to the environmental document hierarchy

The use of lower-tiered documents was selected to aid in the description of individual components, recognize the existence of different users and oversight reviewers, and ease in document updates and modifications.
ENVIRONMENTAL PROGRAM

- Environmental compliance
  - Permits
  - Hazardous waste management
  - Compliance audits/surveillances

- Environmental field programs
  - Air quality/meteorology
  - Archaeological resources
  - Native American studies
  - Terrestrial ecosystems
  - Reclamation
  - Radiological monitoring
  - Water resources
FOCUS ON CURRENT ENVIRONMENTAL PROGRAM IS SITE CHARACTERIZATION

- Congress did not consider site characterization a major federal action, hence it specifically precluded the site characterization phase of the program from an Environmental Impact Statement. A statutory Environmental Assessment was required.

- Congress, through the NWPA, did require DOE to conduct site characterization in a manner that minimizes any significant adverse environmental impacts to the maximum extent practicable.
CURRENT ENVIRONMENTAL OBJECTIVES

- Compliance with environmental regulations
- Monitoring for potential significant adverse impacts
  - Mitigation of impacts
    - Pollution control equipment
    - Spill collection berms
    - Environmental input to design
    - Exclusion/Inclusion flagging
    - Floodplain assessments
    - Water resource monitoring
    - Pre-activity surveys (archaeological, biological)
    - Waste minimization
    - Desert tortoise studies
    - Topsoil stockpiling & erosion control
    - Reclamation
NATIONAL ENVIRONMENTAL POLICY ACT

- Requires early planning to consider environmental effects and alternative actions
- Does not dictate an agency's choice of action
- Requires description of existing conditions at the time of the EIS
- Requires the establishment of mitigation actions
- Does not require total ecosystems studies
- Clearly espouses rule of reason, best available information, and common sense
THE NWPA PROVIDES A ROAD MAP TO NEPA

Congress stated in the NWPA that the EIS required for the repository need not consider:

- The need for the repository
- Alternatives to geologic disposal
- Alternative sites to Yucca Mountain
DOE EIS PLANS

• Major EIS preparation steps
  1) Scoping
  2) Data gathering and publication of a draft EIS
  3) Public comment on the draft EIS

The current mission plan calls for scoping to begin
CURRENT STUDIES/FUTURE DIRECTION

- Focus of current studies is site characterization
- Information derived will feed into our EIS
- Additional studies normally addressed through scoping process
- Studies can be done earlier depending on programmatic considerations
- Thermal Loading Study Design being prepared
PURPOSE OF THIS NWTRB REVIEW

As requested, provide background on our current program
NUCLEAR WASTE TECHNICAL REVIEW BOARD  
ENVIRONMENT AND PUBLIC HEALTH PANEL MEETING  
Update on DOE’s Yucca Mountain Terrestrial Ecosystem Program  

November 22  
Las Vegas, Nevada

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Time</th>
<th>Session Title</th>
<th>Presenter(s)</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>8:30am</td>
<td>Welcome and Opening Remarks</td>
<td>G. Brewer, NWTRB</td>
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<tr>
<td>8:40 am</td>
<td>Overview</td>
<td>W. Dixon, DOE</td>
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<td>9:05am</td>
<td>Terrestrial Ecosystem Program</td>
<td>K. Ostler, EG&amp;G</td>
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<td>Biological Surveys</td>
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<td>Reclamation</td>
<td>Cathy Wills, EG&amp;G</td>
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<td>Site Characterization Effects Monitoring</td>
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<td>Anticipated Repository Effects</td>
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<td>Summary</td>
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<td>C. Johnson, State of NV</td>
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<td>General Discussion</td>
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