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NWTRB Spring Meeting Siting Critical Facilities — Lessons Learned

In many ways, the proposed high-level radioactive waste repository at Yucca Mountain is a first-of-a-kind project, but it is not the first critical or highly controversial facility ever proposed and licensed. Believing it useful to hear about the successes and failures in siting similar critical facilities, the Nuclear Waste Technical Review Board has placed siting critical facilities at the top of the agenda for its spring meeting on April 11-12, 1994, in Reno, Nevada. The Board is interested in gaining insight into the siting of facilities, including nuclear power plants, dams, radioactive and non-radioactive waste disposal repositories, and other large engineered facilities in the United States and in other countries. Topics on the second day's agenda include updates on seismic fault mapping and site-characterization activities, as well as hydrology in the saturated zone. The meeting, which is open to the public, will be held at the Peppermill Hotel, 2707 S. Virginia Street, Reno, Nevada 89502; telephone (702) 826-2121, fax (702) 826-5205.

During presentations on Monday, April 11, the Board will hear (1) from the Illinois Low-Level Radioactive Waste Disposal Facility Siting Commission about the Martinsville Alternative Site; (2) about experiences during site-characterization at the Waste Isolation Pilot Plant in New Mexico; (3) insights from the proposed high-level radioactive waste repository at Gorleben in the Federal Republic of Germany; (4) about the successful siting of a hazardous waste facility in Alberta, Canada; (5) about siting critical facilities in California, including the Diablo Canyon nuclear power plant and the proposed Auburn Dam; (6) about the scientific controversies that have arisen in some large engineering projects; and finally (6) about regulatory science and science in legal hearings from a lawyer's perspective. The day's activities will conclude with a round-table discussion of the lessons learned from these projects and their possible applicability to the Department of Energy's Yucca Mountain project. On Tuesday morning, April 12, the DOE and its contractors will update the Board on recent investigations of the Ghost Dance fault and the Sundance fault at Yucca Mountain and on the exploratory studies facility. Board members also will hear presentations on the hydrology in the saturated zone at Yucca Mountain, including the current status of saturated zone modeling and the role of the saturated zone in waste isolation. The DOE will discuss regulatory criteria for ground-water travel time. A round-table discussion of the days presentations will complete the agenda.

The Nuclear Waste Technical Review Board was created by Congress in the Nuclear Waste Policy Amendments Act of 1987 to evaluate the technical and scientific validity of activities undertaken

by the DOE in its program to manage the disposal of the nation's spent nuclear fuel and defense high-level waste.

Transcripts of the meeting will be available on computer disks (specify 3-1/2" or 5-1/4") in WordPerfect 5.1 format from Victoria Reich, Board librarian, beginning May 25, 1994. For further information, contact Frank Randall, External Affairs, 1100 Wilson Boulevard, Suite 910, Arlington, Virginia 22209; (703) 235-4473; (FAX) 703-235-4495.