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For Immediate Release

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External Affairs

## NWTRB Examines Perceived Risks and Potential Socioeconomic Impacts at Yucca Mountain

The Nuclear Waste Technical Review Board (Board) will sponsor a meeting in Las Vegas, Nevada, May 23 and 24, 1995, to discuss how peoples' beliefs about the risks associated with a potential high-level radioactive waste repository at Yucca Mountain might affect the social and economic conditions of the area. The Board is looking at this issue because, as part of its site-suitability guidelines (10 CFR 960), the Department of Energy (DOE) will address the potential socioeconomic impacts of developing and operating a high-level radioactive waste repository at Yucca Mountain, Nevada.

The Board's Panel on the Environment & Public Health and its Panel on Risk & Performance Analysis will host the joint meeting, which is open to the public. Discussions will be led by a diverse group of social scientists who will look at (1) how to measure the perception of risk; (2) how perceptions of risk alter peoples' behaviors; (3) how to evaluate social and economic impacts; and (4) what role the media plays in these issues. One of the invited panelists is former Board member Dr. D. Warner North. Dr. North served the Board as chair of the Panel on Risk & Performance Analysis from the Board's inception in January 1989 until expiration of his second term one year ago.

As with all Board meetings, time will be set aside on the agenda for comments and questions from the public. To ensure that everyone wishing to speak is provided time to do so, the Board encourages those who have comments to sign the *Public Comment Register*, which will be located at the sign-in table. Those signing up are advised that, depending on the number of people wishing to speak, a speaking time limit may have to be set. However, written comments may be submitted for the record at the sign-in table.

The meeting will be held at the St. Tropez Hotel, 455 East Harmon, Las Vegas, Nevada 89109; (Tel) 702-369-5400; (Fax) 702-369-1150. The meeting will begin at 1:00 P.M. on Tuesday, May 23; recess at approximately 6:00 P.M.; and continue on Wednesday, May 24, from 8:00 A.M. to noon.

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 civilian spent nuclear fuel and high-level radioactive waste. In that same legislation, Congress directed the DOE to characterize a site at Yucca Mountain, Nevada, for its suitability as a potential location for a permanent repository for the disposal of that waste.

Transcripts of the meeting will be available on computer disk or on a library-loan basis in paper format from Davonya Barnes, Board staff, beginning July 10, 1995. For further information, contact

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