

October 14, 2003

Dr. Gordon Wittmeyer, Element Manager
Performance Assessment
Center for Nuclear Waste Regulatory Analyses
6220 Culebra Road, Building 189
San Antonio, Texas 78238-5166

SUBJECT: ACCEPTANCE OF INTERMEDIATE MILESTONE 20.06002.01.161.315,
"ANALYSES AND PREPARATIONS FOR SUPPORT OF PUBLIC OUTREACH
MEETINGS ON THE U.S. NRC ROLE FOR YUCCA MOUNTAIN, NEVADA"

Dear Dr. Wittmeyer:

In your letter of September 25, 2003, you report completion of "Analyses and Preparations for Support of Public Outreach Meetings on U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission (NRC) Role for Yucca Mountain, Nevada." This submission fulfills Intermediate Milestone 20.06002.01.161.315. The U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission (NRC) staff has completed its technical and programmatic review of the subject activities and materials. These activities and materials are acceptable and fulfill the requirements set forth in the fiscal year 2003 Operations Plans for the Public Outreach Element. The subject materials were prepared for public information, contain no predecisional content and are publicly available or will become part of other publicly available materials.

The deliverables represent extensive support and preparation for an NRC public presentation and an NRC public meeting in Independence, California and Tecopa, California, respectively. At both of these events, on June 3 and 4, 2003, a staff member from the Center for Nuclear Waste Regulatory Analyses (CNWRA) made superb presentations on independent groundwater hydrology studies in the Yucca Mountain region. CNWRA staff also accompanied NRC staff for a drop-in visit with Nye County officials, in Pahrump, Nevada on June 5, 2003. In addition, to help NRC staff prepare for these meetings, CNWRA staff reviewed and updated nine information sheets and handouts used at earlier public meetings. Modifications were made to reflect important changes in the high-level waste program, NRC's final Yucca Mountain Review Plan, and current contact information and website addresses. CNWRA staff participated with enthusiasm, either in person, or by telephone, in dry run exercises to help NRC staff orchestrate presentations at the public meetings. Paul Bertetti made highly effective presentations at the meetings and Mike Smith provided able and versatile support throughout.

CNWRA also continues to develop its capability to support NRC in this element by participating with NRC staff in relevant training. During October of 2002, Center staff attended a three-day workshop, "Systematic Development of Informed Consent," at NRC headquarters. This course instructs the participants in consent-building strategies for improving interactions with the public. Later that same month, center staff accompanied NRC staff for a one-day seminar, "Presenting Data and Information," by Edward Tufte, at which participants were instructed in techniques for improving the presentation of quantitative data to a lay audience.

G. Wittmeyer

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In closing, I note that these and the other tasks itemized in your letter demonstrate once again the important and respected role the CNWRA plays in supporting NRC's HLW outreach efforts. Your participation and that of your staff, as members of NRC's HLW public outreach team, continues to assist the NRC staff as we strive to increase public confidence in NRC's HLW regulatory program. If you or members of your staff have any questions, please contact me at (301) 415-6674.

Sincerely,
/RA/

Janet P. Kotra, Ph.D.
Program Element Manager
High-Level Waste Branch
Division of Waste Management
Office of Nuclear Material Safety
and Safeguards

cc: J. Linehan
B. D. Meehan

G. Wittmeyer

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cc: J. Linehan
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CNWRA TICKET: 20030197

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