

YUCCA MOUNTAIN INFORMATION CENTER QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

Why is Nye County spending money on a dead program?

The program is not dead, yet. During his presidential campaign, President Obama made a commitment that he would not go forward with Yucca Mountain (YM). However, until the Nuclear Waste Policy Act is rescinded or changed the Yucca Mountain Project lives on.

Why was the Information Center closed and why is it reopened?

Budget limitations forced DOE to close the center. DOE transferred the facility to Nye County at no cost to the County. The future of YM is more complex than it appears at first glance. As long as the program is alive, it is appropriate that we provide information to the citizens of the county while YM's future unfolds.

Who is paying for operation of the Info Center?

Nye County is paying for day to day operation of the Info Center. However, the funds to do so are provided by DOE in accordance with specific provisions of the Nuclear Waste Policy Act.

What happens if the YM program is terminated?

At the national level, there are several concerns and potential consequences associated with "killing Yucca":

- **Conflict with the Nuclear Waste Policy Act**, as amended, as well as the law approving Yucca Mountain as the site for the national repository -- a measure that was passed in 2002 by decisive, bipartisan majorities of the U.S. House and Senate.
- **Potentially strand a minimum of over 130,000 metric tons of spent commercial fuel** and defense waste at 121 sites in 39 states for over 100 years creating a logistical backlog that would take an additional 50 years to relocate or recycle.
- **Precipitate a full-breach-of-contract with utilities** with respect to the Government's longstanding failure to meet its legal obligation to begin collecting spent nuclear fuel -- resulting in damages estimated by some to be in excess of \$50 billion.
- **Unravel the Nuclear Waste Fund** now reflecting an aggregate electricity consumer investment of nearly \$31 billion in receipts to date, including collections and interest.
- **Erode public confidence in the Department and the Federal Government** by undermining agreements with states and local governments to remove defense-related high-level waste as well as the U.S. Navy's used nuclear fuel.
- **Re-open site investigations for a national geologic repository in up to 28 states**, as identified by the DOE in its 2008 report to Congress.
- **Unnecessarily abandon more than 40 years of scientific investigation and \$10 billion of ratepayer and taxpayer funding** toward development of a national repository.
- **Remove funding of cooperative agreements with regional transportation organizations** which have worked effectively with DOE on transportation planning and other organizations representing stakeholders involved with nuclear waste disposal issues.

- **Seemingly contradicts the President's Memorandum on Scientific Integrity** as issued on March 9, 2009, stating that "political officials should not suppress or alter scientific or technological findings and conclusions."
- **Needlessly undercut the trust and confidence in the integrity and independence of the proposed Blue Ribbon panel** and any ensuing recommendations.
- **Create an unnecessary hurdle and uncertainty for new U.S. nuclear generation**, which is of paramount importance given the Administration's emphasis on reducing carbon emissions and stimulating jobs.

At the local level the immediate direct impacts will be:

- **Loss of settlement agreement funds** (Payments Equal to Taxes (PETT)). These are funds that are paid to the County General fund for use as the County sees fit. The payments are generally tied to the Yucca Mountain budget. The highest annual payment was \$11,500,000.
- **Termination of oversight funding and the associated loss of jobs.** Oversight funding can only be spent in accordance with provisions of the Nuclear Waste Policy Act. Oversight funding has been relatively stable at about \$4,000,000 per year. The Nye County Nuclear Waste Repository Project Office currently employs 13 full time county employees who supervise 26 oversight contracts.

"Facts do not cease to exist because they are ignored." - Aldous Huxley

"We can not make informed decisions if we are not told the truth." - Sheila Weinberg,
Institute for Truth in Accounting