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GOVERNING BOARD FOR THE TOWNS OF

HAWTHORNE, WALKER LAKE, LUNING

AND MINA

LIQUOR BOARD AND GAMING BOARD

December 6, 2006

Mineral County Scoping Comments

**Mr. Lee Bishop
EIS Document Manager
Office of Logistics Management
Office of Civilian Radioactive Waste Management
U.S. Department of Energy
1551 Hillshire Drive, M/S 011
Las Vegas NV 89134**

- 1. DOE needs to evaluate the potential to site and an intermodal near Hawthorne and compare the use of this facility to one proposed for the Caliente area. Because the rail line terminates at Hawthorne and the cost of rail construction are significant, DOE should evaluate an intermodal site as an alternative to rail construction.**
- 2. The EIS needs to describe the advantages of having a military security force and hazardous response team available at the Hawthorne Army Ammunition Depot to support rail shipments within the corridor. The Depot has a full-time professional fire department that maintains an on-site hazardous materials team. Also, the Depot is already licensed by the NRC to handle certain types of radioactive materials. The costs and advantages to having this type of support should be compared against similar options available along the Caliente corridor.**
- 3. The EIS needs to fully describe all facilities that will be located along the portion of the Mina Route. The advantages and disadvantages of various locations of support facilities should be discussed in detail in the EIS. The Hawthorne Army Ammunition Depot should be considered as a perspective site given its ability to provide security and emergency response capabilities. (See attached document "Transportation Emergency Preparedness-Hawthorne Army Depot Fire and Emergency Services, October 2004").**
- 4. DOE needs to perform a comprehensive risk assessment along the Mina Route from Hazen to Yucca Mountain that analyzes impacts from normal operations and from a severe accident leading to a release.**
- 5. DOE needs to obtain ROWs that are sufficient to provide some level of buffering from future development that might encroach upon the rail line.**
- 6. DOE needs to thoroughly evaluate the potential impacts to mineral resources and development along the proposed rail line and alternatives.**
- 7. DOE need to evaluate the risks and costs of leaving waste on site at generator facilities versus transportation along routes. It appears that one viable no-action alternative is to leave waste at the generator site. This no-action should be compared against the proposed action.**



8. As part of the proposed action, DOE needs to examine areas where additional land withdrawals could occur to facilitate future economic development (i.e. rail and industrial parks). Such development would contribute to the O&M costs of the route through user fees. Also DOE needs to evaluate the potential for other commercial rail users. There is new industrial development in the Hawthorne area that will desire to access the line.
9. DOE needs to identify all the terms and conditions of use associated with the Mina Rail corridor and evaluate whether or not such conditions will have a negative or beneficial impact on future commercial users and development along the rail corridor.
9. Construction and staging areas should be evaluated in the EIS as well as all of the associated impacts.
10. The EIS should evaluate impacts to local communities in Mineral County during construction. The EIS should evaluate the entire range of social and economic impacts associated with rail construction and operation. The EIS should compare and contrast the ability of local communities along the Caliente and Mina Corridors to accommodate impacts from construction and operations.
11. DOE needs to describe and show the locations of the rail routes and the proximity to population. Some discussion should occur with respect to a release and the potential for radiation exposure.
12. DOE needs to provide estimates of radiation exposure to maximally exposed individuals along the proposed rail route under normal operating conditions with no accidents. DOE needs to determine if a maximally exposed individual even exists along the Mina Corridor.
13. DOE needs to evaluate lands in Mineral County and along the route to determine the prospects for future conflicts. DOE should avoid private lands to the extent practicable.
14. DOE needs to commit to work with local communities along the Mina Branch line as they conduct their risk assessment. DOE needs to communicate with local communities to the extent to which accident conditions exist and what would be the likely outcomes under a severe accident scenario.
15. DOE needs to recognize that the majority of the waste shipments to Yucca Mountain may now be entering the State in the north. DOE need to refocus its resources, institutional interactions and support to northern Nevada. In the EIS, DOE needs to commit to regular interactions with communities along the rail corridor.
16. DOE needs to establish a Yucca Mountain Information Center in Hawthorne, such as the new center in Nye County. Education about the project is key to citizens, school students as well as visitors traveling through Mineral County. (See attached "Community Survey Results, July 2006").



17. DOE needs to evaluate whether or not Yucca Mountain train operations will impact the Walker Lake recreation areas. The Lake and associated facilities attracts approximately 100,000 visitors each year. DOE needs to evaluate (with respect to economic impacts) whether or not the presence of nuclear waste trains (which is in close proximity to the east shore) would have an impact on visitors.

18. For the public health and safety of citizens along the Mina route, DOE needs to build underpasses or overpasses anywhere the rail line traverses U.S. Highway 95.

19. DOE needs to ensure that any potential infrastructure and economic impacts that may be brought about as a result of the risks to Mineral County because of the transportation of nuclear waste be maximized, and any rail developed in Mineral County be available for commercial/shared use to include extending the rail line to the Las Vegas area. A dead end line is of no use to any rail users desiring a direct north to south route and vice-versa.

20. Mineral County has a substantial amount of data related to existing conditions. The Yucca Mountain oversight office maintains the Geographical Information System for the county. DOE should contact the Yucca Mountain oversight office to evaluate available information. (See attached document "Mineral County Baseline Report Update 2005").

21. DOE also needs to recognize that most first responders in rural areas will be local law enforcement, thereby the need to evaluate the potential impact to local law enforcement as well as volunteer Fire Departments.

22. The EIS needs to evaluate whether or not the Mina Route will result in Yucca Mountain shipments avoiding the Las Vegas and Salt Lake City areas.

23. DOE needs to describe how western generator sites will ship to Yucca Mountain and explain the potential impacts to the routes. Doe should not use the I-15 corridor through Las Vegas to access Yucca Mountain, particularly when such a route is not the shortest and safest route to Yucca Mountain for many western generator sites.

24. DOE should be responsible to ensure that any and all impacts upon the environment, the infrastructure, the economy and/or the lifestyle of Mineral County residents be fully assessed and that appropriate requests for mitigation of such impacts be submitted to the federal government on all relevant matters including but not limited to; medical services, early warning systems, safety of the public and emergency response.

Respectfully,

Richard Bryant, Chairman
Mineral County Board of Commissioners

CC: Nancy Black, Vice Chairwoman
Ed Fowler, Member