

November 6, 2006

Lee Bishop
U. S. Department of Energy
Office of National Transportation
1551 Hillshire Drive
Las Vegas, NV 89134-6321

Dear Mr. Bishop:

This letter regards DOE's request for information during the additional scoping and extended comment period for the Rail Line to Yucca Mountain EIS. The additional scoping allows DOE further time to receive comments on a new rail alternative to the Caliente Rail Corridor.

The Nevada SHPO would like to take this opportunity to point out that the GF-4 alternative is aligned extremely close to Goldfield, an historic district listed on the National Register of Historic Places. The district is one of national significance as the center of mining activity between 1900 and 1920. It comprises approximately thirty-five city blocks that contain major architectural resources with 120 buildings constructed between 1904 and 1909, and numerous archaeological sites. Outside the district, the remains of Goldfield's "suburbs" are located, an area where those less fortunate were forced to live on the outskirts of the city. We suspect that Native American encampments would be found along the right of way to the southwest of Goldfield. Although it appears that the Goldfield Cemetery would be avoided by the construction of the line, this may not be the case. Individuals whose families were too poor to bury their deceased in the cemetery often buried them on the outskirts of organized cemeteries. Native Americans could be included in this number, although further investigation would be necessary to determine the exact location of unmarked graves.

The Nevada Historic Preservation Office knows that there are a large number of sites that include the National Register district within the Area of Potential Effect (APE). Preservation in place is the preferred option. However, should this option be selected, the DOE should know that the some of the following effects on properties within the APE must be accounted for:

- Physical destruction of or damage to all or part of a property;
- Alteration of a property;
- Change of the character of the property's use or of physical features within the property's setting that contribute to its historic significance; and,
- Introduction of visual, atmospheric or audible elements that diminish the integrity of the property's significant historic features.

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DOE would have to identify members of the public and tribes who would be consulted along with the SHPO regarding treatment of adverse effects to historic properties. Data recovery would only be one of many kinds of treatment examined as part of mitigation. DOE would have to determine effects not just to properties within the rail line itself but those within the greater area of potential effect, including the Goldfield Historic District, and treat those effects.

If you have any questions regarding these scoping comments please call me at 775-684-3444.

Sincerely,

ALICE M. BALDRICA, Deputy
State Historic Preservation Officer