



U.S. DEPARTMENT OF ENERGY, YUCCA MOUNTAIN PROJECT, LAS VEGAS, NV 89134

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

**DOE Says it will Use Rail for Transportation to Yucca Mountain Repository;
Selects Proposed Caliente Corridor as Nevada Route**

LAS VEGAS, April 5, 2004 -- The U.S. Department of Energy (DOE) today announced that it has selected the use of rail for the majority of shipments of spent nuclear fuel and high-level waste to a repository at Yucca Mountain, Nevada. These contents are currently stored at 127 sites around the country.

Due to the availability of transportation modes at some storage facilities in the United States, the department noted that some shipments might require transport by road.

The shipment of spent nuclear fuel and radioactive waste is highly regulated and subject to the utmost scrutiny. DOE carefully follows the Department of Transportation (DOT) and Nuclear Regulatory Commission (NRC) transportation rules now and will follow or exceed any others that may be established in the future whether by the Congress or by DOT or NRC. DOE also will consult with states, Native American tribes, local governments, utilities, the transportation industry and other interested parties.

DOE's decision to select the mostly rail scenario in Nevada will require the construction of a rail line to connect the repository site at Yucca Mountain to an existing rail line in the State of Nevada. To that end, the department today also selected the Caliente corridor in which to construct a rail line. The Caliente corridor was previously identified as the department's preferred alternative for building a rail line in Nevada to service Yucca Mountain. If the repository is licensed by the NRC, shipments could begin as early as 2010.

The Caliente corridor is approximately 319 miles in total length. For more information about this corridor, visit the OCRWM web site at <http://www.ocrwm.doe.gov>.

The Record of Decision for the Caliente corridor will be published this week in the Federal Register, along with a Notice of Intent to develop an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS). The EIS will be prepared in accordance with the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) to consider alternative alignments within the Caliente corridor for construction of a rail line. No actual construction of a rail line within the selected corridor can take place until completion of the NEPA process.

(More)

DOE will solicit public comment through an EIS scoping process that identifies issues and resources to be considered in the corridor EIS. Three public scoping meetings for the Rail Alignment EIS have been scheduled. They are as follows:

Monday, May 3, 2004	Tuesday, May 4, 2004	Wednesday, May 5, 2004
4:00 p.m. to 8:00 p.m.	4:00 p.m. to 8:00 p.m.	4:00 p.m. to 8:00 p.m.
Longstreet Inn & Casino	Goldfield Community Center	Caliente Youth Center
Highway 373	301 Crook Street	U.S. Highway 93
Amargosa Valley, Nevada	Goldfield, Nevada	Caliente, Nevada

The purpose of each meeting is to provide information to the public concerning the selected rail corridor, including the process for developing an environmental impact statement, and to gather information from the public about the corridor.

The department invites comments on several issues, including the consideration of additional alternatives, additional environmental resources, mitigation measures, and allowing private entities to ship commercial commodities on its rail line.

If you require special accommodations to participate in the meeting, please call, toll-free, 1-800-225-6972 at least 24 hours in advance. If you are unable to attend a meeting, please write or fax your comments by May 24, 2004 to: Ms. Robin Sweeney, EIS Document Manager, Office of National Transportation, Office of Civilian Radioactive Waste Management, U.S. Department of Energy, 1551 Hillshire Drive, M/S 011, Las Vegas, NV 89134, Telephone 1-800-967-3477, Facsimile 1-800-967-0739. You can e-mail comments via the Internet at <http://www.ocrwm.doe.gov>.

In July 2002, Congress approved the designation of Yucca Mountain in Nevada for development as the nation's first geologic repository for spent nuclear fuel and high-level radioactive waste.