

To: Andrew Remus
From: Janice Newton

RECEIVED

NOV 04 1999

EIS000260

submitted to
Court
pm
repeatedly
Janice Paul

I'M Janice Newton, Vice-Chair of the Southeast County Citizens Advisory Committee. Our Committee represents citizens living and working both within and to the southeast of Death Valley National Park. The Committee was formed by the Inyo County Board of Supervisors specifically to provide input to the Board regarding Yucca Mountain issues and the concerns of County residents in the affected region.

Death Valley National Park is placed at Risk.

(Point only
not to be said)

4

DOE needs to be aware that the repository places at risk the largest National Park in the lower 48 states, both through the waste transportation campaign and the potential for groundwater contamination. Yucca Mountain is situated approximately 12 miles from the Northeastern boundary of Death Valley National Park. To the best of our knowledge, groundwater moving through the deep carbonate aquifer beneath Yucca Mountain flows south and west, eventually becoming surface water in the Funeral Mountain Range. The Funerals lie on the eastern border of the Park. Springs from this formation serve as domestic and commercial water in Furnace Creek and the adjacent areas within the Park. These vital springs sustain sensitive habitat in and adjacent to the Funeral Mountains.

Submitted to Court repeatedly Janice Paul

1

5 State Route 127 lies directly east of Death Valley. Park Service, Bureau of Land Management and Forest Service personnel assist the County and the California Highway Patrol in responding to accidents in this corridor. There is little in the way of personnel and equipment to respond to a serious conventional accident in this area, much less the ability to deal with nuclear waste spills. This route serves much of the tourist traffic flowing into the Park from Las Vegas and Southern California.

1 Death Valley National Park is a critical factor in the economic well being of Inyo County and important to both California and Nevada. The Park employs 108 full-time personnel, receives 1.5 million visitors per year and generates approximately one million dollars of revenue per year for Inyo County through the transient occupancy tax and transient use tax.

Indirectly, tourist-related commerce in the form of through-travel spending on food, fuel and lodging, provides important economic benefits for numerous small California and Nevada communities outside the Park.

Accidents involving high-level waste and spent fuel, even without a release of material, may undermine confidence in the safety of the route and discourage tourism visitation.

NOT to be read
Property-value Impacts:

- 2 The designation of State Route 127 as a high-level nuclear waste corridor during the next 20 to 30 years will depress property values and impair beneficial development that would otherwise occur in the area. Death Valley Junction, Shoshone, and Tecopa are expected to experience considerable growth as a result of the rapid urbanization now being experienced by Las Vegas and Pahrump. In fact, developing portions of extreme southeast Inyo County are closer to Las Vegas than Pahrump itself, and the entire region is dependent on ground water to support all existing and future development.
- 3 In conclusion, I feel I can speak for most of the people of southeast Inyo County when I say we are very concerned and interested in the activities at Yucca Mountain. [The EIS, which is now under review, should recognize the human, economic and environmental conditions in our area and address the concerns raised before you today.] Thank you.