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NOV 04 1999

11 MS. WILLIAMS: Good afternoon. I'm Jane Williams.
12 I'm here today wearing two hats. I am the executive
13 director of California Communities Against Toxics, which is
14 a coalition of 80 community-based organizations and Indian
15 tribes that work on toxics issues. I'm also the national
16 chair of the Sierra Club's Waste Committee, the committee
17 that has national oversight over issues of nuclear waste.
18 I have numerous comments, many of which I
19 will submit to you in a more formal manner. But I wanted
20 to echo some of the very thoughtful comments of my
21 colleagues who came before me, and I also wanted to say
22 that I feel as though I'm on a personal mission to be an
23 interceptor of lemmings who are running to the sea.
24 Our nation's policies on nuclear waste have
25 a long and catastrophic history, including dumping nuclear

waste in the oceans and dumping nuclear waste under ground. Almost all of the underground repositories are currently leaking. In fact, the one in Beatty, which is very close to this site, this proposed site, has very unusual transport mechanisms through soil bank or into the surrounding areas.

We, actually, as a culture, have tried this once before in Chelyabinsk in Russia, where we put nuclear fuel rods in the bottom of the lake, hoping that the lake would keep them cool, and we managed to have a critical accident, and it contaminated a large portion of what is part of the former Soviet Union now.

1 So the Sierra Club's official policy is not to bury nuclear waste, but rather to, as one of the previous speakers talked about, put the fuel rods in an aboveground storage. That policy holds not only for high-level wastes but also for low-level wastes. Much of low-level wastes, as we call it, is not really low-level. It is just not a nuclear fuel rod or uranium.

2... One of the things I wanted to specifically mention, since I live in this area and I have spent a large amount of my time over the last four years working with the Timbisha, an Indian tribe that is federally recognized but as of now has no federal lands in Death Valley, but Death Valley is their ancestral homeland. They have lived there

2 cont. since time and memorial, and Yucca Mountain is one of the natural features that is part of their native lifeways.

I wanted to call to the attention of the Department of Energy and other people that they are the folks that are basically living in the shadow of Yucca Mountain, and they are not mentioned in the EIS, and the EIS basically draws as a conclusion that there would be no disproportionate impact on minority population, and I think that that is not correct.

The Timbisha do exist, even though they don't have their lands back, and certainly they are at the front line of exposure. One of the speakers mentioned Bad

3 Water. Bad Water exists partly because of the Prinubant fault, which serves almost as a hot butter knife for water flowing underneath Yucca Mountain into Death Valley. If there is leakage from Yucca Mountain, it certainly will flow to that fault into Death Valley, which happens to be one of the jewels of our country, a national park.

So there are many issues. I have been watching Yucca Mountain and been very interested in it from an advocacy prospective for many years. We continue down a path of we're going to bury nuclear waste.

4... This NEPA document is apparently illegal in its face and doesn't consider other alternatives, which I'm sure, as you know, are called for in the act itself. You

4 cont. cannot have the project and not the project. You are supposed to be considering a range of alternatives.

So I would ask you to rethink this document. I would ask you to go back and look at real,

5 live alternatives. I would ask you to broaden the diversity of the people working on the EIS within the Department of Energy. I think that your shortsightedness results partly from a lack of understanding of the lifeways of people that you're proposing to affect. And thank you very much for the opportunity to comment.

MR. SKIPPER: Thank you for your comments.

THE FACILITATOR: Our final registered speaker is Lyle Talbot.

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