

NOV 04 1999

10 MS. NEWTON: My name is Janice Newton, and I am the
11 vice chair of the Southeast County Citizens Advisory
12 Committee and a resident in Death Valley National Park.

13 Our committee represents citizens living
14 and working both within and to the southeast of Death
15 Valley National Park. The committee was formed by the Inyo
16 County Board of Supervisors specifically to provide input
17 to the board regarding Yucca Mountain issues and the
18 concerns of county citizens in this affected area.

19 DOE needs to be aware that the repository
4... 20 places at risk the largest national park in the lower 48
21 states, both through the waste transportation campaign and
22 the potential for groundwater contamination.

23 Yucca Mountain is situated approximately 12
24 miles from the northeastern boundary of Death Valley
25 National Park. To the best of our knowledge, groundwater

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1 moving through the deep carbonate aquifer beneath Yucca
2 Mountain flows south and west, eventually becoming surface
3 water in the Funeral Mountain Range. The Funerals lie on
4 the eastern border of the park. Springs from this
5 formation serve as domestic and commercial water in Furnace
6 Creek and the adjacent areas within the park. These vital
7 springs sustain sensitive habitat in and adjacent to the
8 Funeral Mountains.

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

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

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

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

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9 The designation of State Route 127 as a
10 high-level nuclear waste corridor during the next 20 to 30
11 years will depress property values and impair beneficial
12 development that would otherwise occur in the area. Death
13 Valley Junction, Shoshone, and Tecopa are expected to
14 experience considerable growth as a result of the rapid
15 urbanization now being experienced by Las Vegas and
16 Pahrump. In fact, developing portions of extreme southeast
17 Inyo County are closer to Las Vegas than Pahrump itself,
18 and the entire region is dependent on groundwater to
19 support all existing and future development.

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20 In conclusion, I feel I can speak for most
21 of the people of southeast Inyo County when I say we are
22 very concerned and interested in the activities at Yucca
23 Mountain. The EIS, which is now under review, should
24 recognize the human economic and environmental conditions
25 in our area and address the concerns raised before you

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1 today. |

2 Thank you.

3 THE FACILITATOR: Chuck Thistlethwaite.