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RECEIVED

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FEB 11 2000

Ms. Wendy R. Dixon
 EIS Project Manager, M/S 010
 U. S. Department of Energy
 Yucca Mountain Site Characterization Office
 P. O. Box 30307
 North Las Vegas, NV 89036

Dear Ms. Dixon:

After nearly fifty years of studying methods of radioactive waste disposal, it seems that politics and bureaucrats overrule science and common sense.

1. REGIONAL temporary sites for retrievable nuclear waste should be used while heavy concentration on research for transmutation is accelerated. I emphasize "regional"! Look at the EIS map on page S-5 of the EIS Summary (copy enclosed). Regional is important because of the many safety issues of handling and transportation, and added costs of road maintenance (which States cannot currently afford) in addition to the potential long-term impacts of nuclear waste storage safety, which is unknown. It seems much more responsible and intelligent to provide storage sites closer to the nuclear plants.
2. The credibility of the Department of Energy is very questionable, due to the fact that under your own rules, Yucca Mountain does not qualify as a high level nuclear waste repository. Since it does not qualify, you (DOE) want to change your rules so that you can ignore scientific findings and forget safeguards for your convenience, to the detriment of Nevada people. **I would say that underground water reservoirs and earthquake faults are extremely important in examining a site for nuclear waste.** In fact, why would you even consider ignoring these facts?

1
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3. Transportation has not been addressed fully. The danger of shipping waste from throughout the United States over thousands of miles of rail and/or roads is only part of the impact to most States through which the waste would travel. At the present time most States are having financial difficulty keeping up with road repair and maintenance. Federal monies are not available for maintenance. Nevada has more highway miles than most States due to its size. Regulations for containing and transporting nuclear waste for 24 years are not adequate.

1 continued The answer is to have **regional temporary storage facilities** and really step-up the work on research needed to reuse (transmute) the nuclear waste. This should not be a political game, and the mindset of DOE on the Yucca Mountain site as the only repository continues to be very disappointing.

Sincerely,



Sally A. Bilyeu

cc: U. S. Senator Harry Reid
U. S. Senator Richard Bryan
U. S. Representative Jim Gibbons

Enclosure
SAB

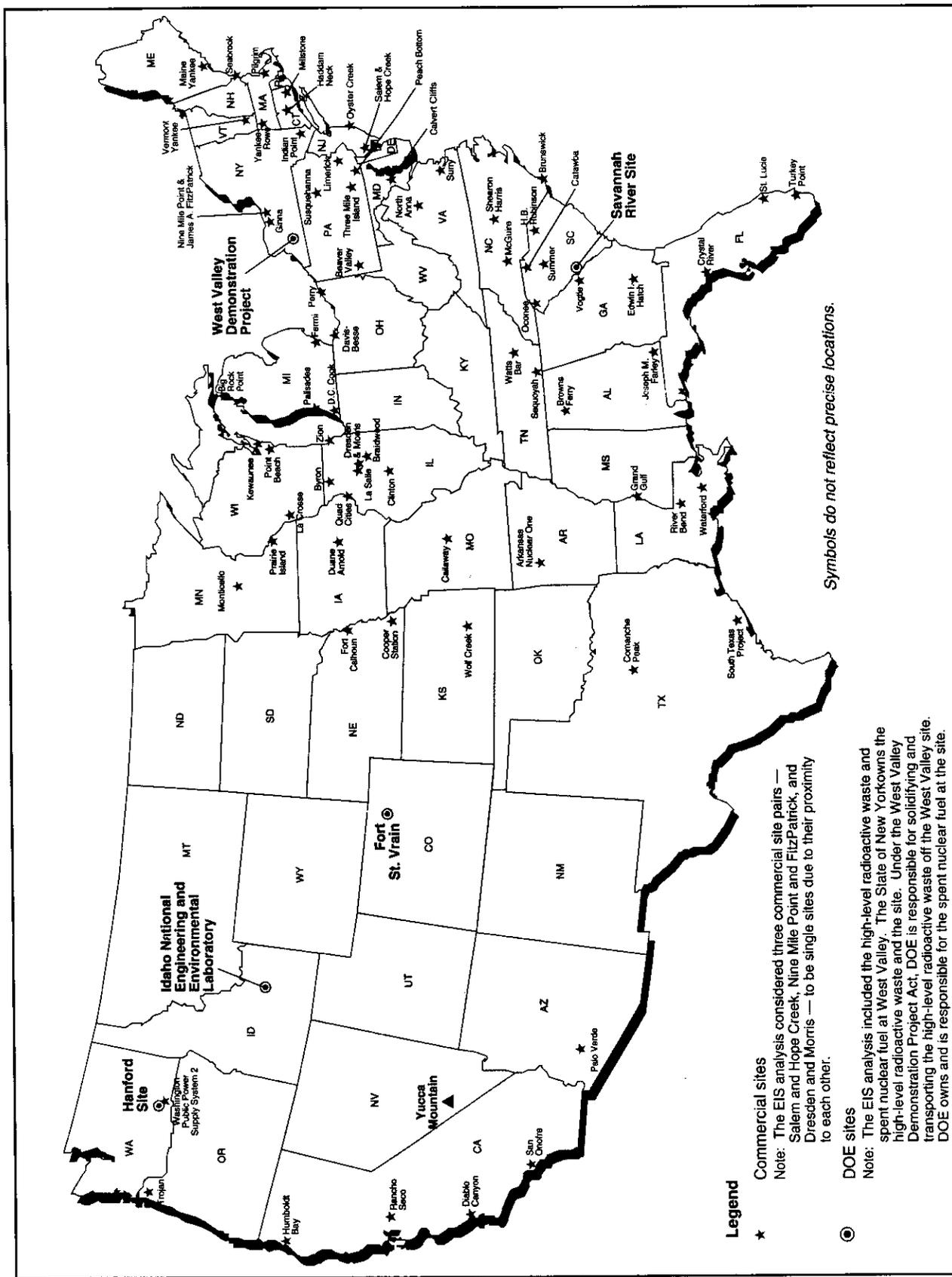


Figure S-1. Locations of commercial and DOE sites and Yucca Mountain.