



# Community Advisory Board for Nevada Test Site Programs

September 19, 2007

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Mr. Stephen A. Mellington  
Assistant Manager for Environmental Management  
U.S. Department of Energy – Nevada Site Office  
P. O. Box 98518  
Las Vegas, NV 89193-8518

RE: Community Advisory Board for Nevada Test Site Programs  
(CAB) Recommendation for Proposed Well Locations in the  
Pahute Mesa Area at the Nevada Test Site – Technical  
Summation and Stakeholder Summation

Dear Mr. Mellington:

The Community Advisory Board for Nevada Test Site (NTS) Programs (CAB) would like to present the Technical and Stakeholder Summations of our Recommendation for Proposed Well Locations in the Pahute Mesa Area at the Nevada Test Site.

In 2002, Mr. Carl Gertz, former Assistant Manager for the U.S. Department of Energy Nevada Site Office Environmental Management (DOE NSO EM), presented the CAB with the opportunity to select a location for a monitoring well. After initial study of the Underground Test Area (UGTA) sub-project, the Committee decided to make recommendations for three wells, which are outlined in the CAB letters to DOE NSO EM dated February 9, 2005 and February 10, 2006.

The Committee has spent five years of extensive study and in-depth review of the DOE NSO EM UGTA project. The Committee worked closely with expert hydrologists, geologists, academia, and regulators; reviewed technical reports and maps; attended numerous meetings with DOE NSO staff, which included State of Nevada and Nye County representatives; listened to numerous briefings by DOE scientists; and conferred with the UGTA Technical Working Group (TWG).

Mr. Stephen A. Mellington  
September 19, 2007  
Page 2

Additionally, to ensure that potentially-affected stakeholders were aware of this effort, the CAB conducted formal public information meetings in Las Vegas, Pahrump, Amargosa Valley, and Beatty; participated in several meetings with Nye County representatives; sponsored informational groundwater workshops; and presented informational briefings to the town boards in rural communities that would most likely be impacted if radionuclides were detected in groundwater outside the NTS boundaries.

The purpose of the Technical Summation is to summarize groundwater issues that the CAB UGTA Committee studied, identify groundwater uncertainties, and provide justification for our recommended well sites. The committee strongly supports continued research in this area and recommends that DOE make every effort to secure added resources to collect additional hard data. This would demonstrate their commitment to the protection of public health, safety, and the environment for residents living down-gradient of the Nevada Test Site.

The Stakeholder Summation is less technical and designed for readability for the general public. This report summarizes the UGTA project, the Federal Facility Agreement and Consent Order (FFACO) and the State of Nevada Division of Environmental Protection (NDEP) agreement, and highlights the geologic, hydrologic, geochemical, structural, and underground nuclear testing considerations taken to make the well recommendations. The report also addresses additional stakeholder concerns and the need for more community outreach and information.

The CAB wishes to express its appreciation to the DOE NSO EM staff, State regulators, engineers and scientists, the UGTA TWG, and the CAB technical and support staff, who have been extremely helpful and patient with our many questions and requests.

We recognize that the UGTA sub-project is a monumental task requiring a great deal of work toward the goal of gaining a better understanding of NTS geology and groundwater system. We appreciate the opportunity we've been given to delve into the details of the project and have a deeper understanding and appreciation of the effort involved. The CAB UGTA Committee looks forward to participation and review of subsequent phases of the UGTA project as they develop.

Sincerely,



David Hermann, Chair  
Community Advisory Board  
for Nevada Test Site Programs

Mr. Stephen A. Mellington  
September 19, 2007  
Page 3

cc: U.S. Senator John Ensign  
U.S. Senator Harry Reid  
U.S. Congresswoman Shelley Berkley  
U.S. Congressman Dean Heller  
U.S. Congressman Jon Porter  
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