Testimony on the Yucca Mountain Draft EIS (DEIS)
Comments by: Melissa Muñoz, COPEEN Program Director
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I am here as a representative of COPEEN, The Colorado People's Environmental and Economic Network.

COPEEN is a statewide environmental justice organization with over 600 statewide allies and members. We work with grassroots communities of color and low-income communities to advocate for justice in areas of unfair and irresponsible environmental policy and decision-making. COPEEN's office is also located along the I-70 corridor.

1 As an environmental justice focused organization, COPEEN strongly encourages the Department of Energy to work closely with the Western Shoshone Tribe to address their environmental justice concerns.

2 The DEIS does not adequately detail proposed shipping routes or the training and equipment necessary for local emergency response personnel in communities along the routes. COPEEN is concerned about the number of shipments that would travel along the I-70 corridor. These shipments would pass through communities that are already overburdened by exposure to numerous hazardous and toxic materials. These Northeast Denver communities are lower-income communities of color who are exposed to higher than average environmental hazards- shipments to Yucca Mountain would only **increase** their exposure. COPEEN demands that the Department of Energy propose alternative transportation routes. Additionally, COPEEN expects to see detailed training and community education plans regarding the Yucca Mountain shipments. Local emergency response personnel **must** be adequately trained on how to handle a situation should one arise.

3 Under the "Impacts of Incident-Free Transportation", and the "Impacts of Transportation Accidents", the DEIS states that impacts from incident-free transportation would include those from external radiation emitted from transportation casks, and that over 24 years, an estimated 18 latent cancer fatalities could occur from legal-weight trucks, and from the number of latent cancer fatalities that would occur in the **hypothetically** exposed population residing within 80kilometers (50 miles) of a transportation accident site, again from legal-weight trucks, would result in about 5 latent cancer fatalities in the **hypothetically** exposed population and 31 latent cancer fatalities in the **hypothetically** exposed population from the mostly rail scenario.

Yet, the DEIS concludes that no environmental justice impacts were identified for Incident-Free Transportation and Transportation Accident scenarios.

COPEEN would like to offer that the **hypothetically exposed population** identified in the DEIS is not hypothetical at all. In fact, the exposed population is very real, exists along the I-70 corridor and along the Union Pacific Railroad, and is comprised of low-income

communities of color who's health and quality of life is already compromised daily as a result of being disproportionately impacted by unfair environmental decision-making.

3 continued

The **hypothetically exposed population** is us. It's the people in our neighborhoods, in our schools, and in our churches.....9,500 in the three neighborhoods along the Proposed Route who are located less than 50 feet from I-70 and the rail line.

The I-70 corridor that goes right through these neighborhoods is an elevated highway. It is our understanding that certain trucks are barred from traveling on elevated highways. This means they sometimes choose to go right through the neighborhoods, traveling less than 50 feet from residences and from the playground at Swansea Elementary School, where 700 children attend school. The Union Pacific Rail line also cuts through the neighborhoods, and in some instances is less than 50 feet from residential homes. This is what environmental justice means.

4 COPEEN believes there are significant environmental justice impacts that the DEIS does not address. COPEEN strongly insists that the Department of Energy re-visit and re-analyze their **two-stage assessment** of the impacts on low-income populations and communities of color that result form the Proposed Action.

Our communities also deserve to know what potential health and safety risks they will be exposed to.

(2)

Thank You.

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