MOL.20051206.0012

QA: N/A

Yucca Mountain Project

Site Environmental Report for the Yucca Mountain Project Calendar Year 2004

PGM-MGR-EC-000006
REV 00

November 2005

U.S. Department of Energy
Office of Civilian Radioactive Waste Management
Office of Repository Development
Las Vegas, Nevada

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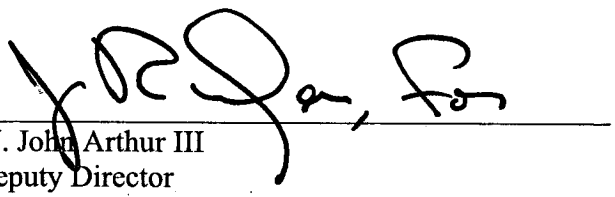
PREFACE

As an operating unit of the U.S. Department of Energy, it is the policy and practice of the Office of Repository Development to conduct its operations in a safe and environmentally sound manner. DOE Policy 450.4 requires the Department to systematically integrate safety into management and work practices so that missions are accomplished while protecting the public, the worker, and the environment. The Department has made it clear that protection of the public, the worker, and the environment is of paramount importance.

In accordance with DOE Order 231.1A and DOE Manual 231.1-1A, the status of the Yucca Mountain Project's 2004 environmental program is summarized in this annual site environmental report.



W. John Arthur III
Deputy Director
Office of Repository Development

11/30/05
Date

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This site environmental report describes the environmental program conducted during 2004 by the U.S. Department of Energy, Office of Repository Development. The report describes the environmental laws and regulations that were applicable to the Yucca Mountain Project in 2004, the actions taken to comply with those laws and regulations, and the Project's environmental program. The report also summarizes the data collected to monitor potential impacts of the Project on the environment.

Words and expressions that are underlined are defined in the Glossary at the end of report.

Mission and 2004 Accomplishments–In 1982, Congress enacted the Nuclear Waste Policy Act. The act specified that spent nuclear fuel from commercial nuclear reactors and high-level radioactive waste from national defense activities will be disposed of underground in deep geologic repositories. In 1987, the act was amended designating Yucca Mountain, Nevada, as the single candidate site for a repository. On July 23, 2002, the President signed into law a Congressional Joint Resolution designating Yucca Mountain as the site for the nation's first geologic repository per Section 115(c) of the Nuclear Waste Policy Act, as amended.

During 2004, the Department continued to prepare a license application that will be submitted to the U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission to construct and ultimately operate a geologic repository at Yucca Mountain, Nevada. The license application is expected to be submitted in 2006. Upon submittal, the Commission will have three years to review the application, conduct its licensing proceedings, and reach a decision on a construction authorization. Should the Commission grant the construction authorization, the Department will update the license application and request a license to receive and possess high-level radioactive waste as initial construction of the repository nears completion. If the Commission grants the license to receive and possess, the Department will begin placing waste into the repository. In the final phase of licensing, when the repository has stopped receiving waste for disposal, the Department will apply for a license amendment to permanently close the repository, which will address plans to decommission surface facilities.

Throughout 2004, the Office of Repository Development continued to conduct field and laboratory tests and studies to further refine the understanding of how a repository at Yucca Mountain would perform far into the future. Some of these efforts may continue indefinitely or until the repository is permanently closed. Repository design and operating decisions could be modified based on the results of these tests and studies, as well as other technological and policy developments. This ongoing learning process is designed to challenge current models and assumptions about Yucca Mountain and lead to continuous improvement.

Environmental Compliance–During 2004, the Yucca Mountain Project had no violations of environmental permits or noncompliance actions; no reportable occurrences that required notification of a regulatory agency; and no notices of violations, deficiencies, announcements of intent to sue for noncompliance with environmental regulations, or other types of enforcement actions. The following actions were taken during 2004 to maintain environmental permits and comply with environmental regulations:

- Actions were taken to further implement the requirements in Executive Order 13148 (65 FR 24595) and DOE Order 450.1 for an Environmental Management System, including a review by senior management.

- Revision 7 of the Stormwater Pollution Prevention Plan became effective in March 2003 and was adequate to meet compliance requirements through 2004. The Plan was reformatted from Revision 6 to meet the requirements of the new stormwater general permit, dated September 16, 2002.

- The Project continued preparing an 'Environmental Report' that will supplement the Final Environmental Impact Statement for the repository. The report is expected to be submitted to the Nuclear Regulatory Commission in 2006.

- Reports on the following subjects were prepared and submitted to federal and state regulatory agencies and other organizations in compliance with regulatory requirements:

  - Hazardous materials and chemicals
  - Wastes generated and recycled, including efforts to minimize waste generation
  - Purchase and use of recycled materials
  - Use of sand and gravel
  - Desert tortoises/biological surveys
  - Air emissions
  - Drinking water
  - Reclamation
  - Underground injections
  - Archaeological surveys and monitoring.

Environmental Programs–The following actions were taken as part of the environmental program conducted in 2004 to implement permit requirements, monitor for impacts, and protect the environment:

- Twelve requests for land access were reviewed by the Office of Repository Development in 2004. Seven of the 12 requests were approved and two were partially approved.

- One acre of land was cleared of vegetation or soil in 2004; the total amount of land disturbed by the Project since 1991 remained at 320 acres. This is 94 acres less than the total of 414 acres stipulated in the 'Biological Opinion' for the Yucca Mountain Project issued by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service.

- No desert tortoises were directly killed or injured by site activities during 2004. Three active tortoise burrows and three tortoises occupying the burrows were found during pre-activity surveys. One desert tortoise was found dead on an access road at Yucca Mountain during 2004. This was the second tortoise to have been killed on a road at Yucca Mountain since July 1997.

- Final reclamation was completed at three sites totaling 0.64 acres and 97 previously reclaimed sites were monitored. By the end of 2004, final reclamation had been completed on 89 acres.

- Seven archaeological pre-activity surveys were conducted in 2004. Sixty new archaeological sites and 84 isolated artifacts were identified during those surveys. Conditions at eight previously documented historical properties at Yucca Mountain were evaluated; no major disturbances were noted at these sites.

- The Project continued consultations and interactions with involved Native American tribes and organizations.

- Air quality was monitored at two sites at Yucca Mountain and meteorological measurements were taken at 12 sites. Concentrations of airborne particulate matter and other pollutants continued to be far below allowable maximum concentrations. Average precipitation in 2004 measured at the 12 meteorological sites exceeded 10 inches and was greater than any year since 1998. Annual precipitation from 1996 through 2004 averaged almost 7.5 inches. 2004 was the second year in a row that exceeded the long-term average.

- Groundwater levels were measured at 40 sites to monitor fluctuations in groundwater levels and evaluate potential regional effects from groundwater withdrawals at Yucca Mountain. Compared to the 1992 through 2003 baseline, 2004 median water levels have increased in all monitored wells except J-13, which has not changed compared to the baseline. The withdrawal of groundwater for Project activities has had no measurable effect on regional groundwater levels or spring flows.

- Compared to 2003, 2004 saw an increase of 517 pounds of hazardous waste generated by the Project. The primary reason for this increase was the identification of expired chemicals that required proper disposal. The total quantity of hazardous waste collected during 2004 was 2,481 pounds. Universal waste (mostly fluorescent lamps and nickel-cadmium batteries) totaling 1,607 pounds was also collected. 3,321 pounds of hazardous waste and 1,607 pounds of universal waste were shipped to a permitted Treatment, Storage, and Disposal facility in 2004.

- As part of the Project's pollution-prevention program, one assessment was conducted in 2004 to examine the costs of installing and using a photovoltaic system at three proposed office buildings. The assessment found that the cost of the system, the 10-year payback period, and the relatively low amount of energy that would be generated versus the amount required, made this option too costly at this time.

- The purchase of U.S. Environmental Protection Agency-designated recycled-content items was 94 percent in fiscal year 2004, down from 97 percent in fiscal year 2003. The three percent reduction is attributed to purchases of non-compliant binders.

- Nine assessments were conducted to evaluate compliance with environmental, safety, and health requirements.

- 166 environmental surveillances were conducted in 2004 to monitor compliance and track environmental performance. Noteworthy practices, or surveillances where no action was required, constituted 99 percent of the surveillances (165). This compares to 95 percent in 2003 (of a total of 178 surveillances) and 96 percent in 2002 (of a total of 352 surveillances). The one surveillance that required corrective action was for non-reportable hydrocarbon spills that required clean-up. There were no permit violations or reportable spills in 2004.

- Trends in environmental performance in 2004 were positive compared to 2003 and 2002.

- Project personnel working at Yucca Mountain are instructed on the environmental and safety requirements that must be followed for field activities. Additional job-specific training is offered commensurate with job responsibilities. New employees must take General Employee Training. This six-hour course covers, among other things, environmental protection requirements, hazard communication, pollution prevention, and safety and health requirements. A computer-based annual refresher of these topics also is required of employees. New employees who work unescorted at Yucca Mountain attend site-access training. A computer-based training module that addresses the environmental regulatory compliance program is available to all managers and supervisors.

- When appropriate, Project personnel are trained in the management and transportation of hazardous waste, and in requirements for detecting and responding to releases of hazardous materials.

- During 2004, the YMP had no violations of environmental permits or noncompliance actions; no reportable occurrences that required notification of a regulatory agency; and no notices of violations, deficiencies, or other types of enforcement actions concerning environmental compliance.

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ACRONYMS

BLM	Bureau of Land Management
BSC	Bechtel SAIC Company, LLC (Limited Liability Company)
CAPP	Chemical Accident Prevention Program
CERCLA	Comprehensive Environmental Response, Compensation, and Liability Act of 1980
DOE	U.S. Department of Energy
EIS	environmental impact statement
EMS	Environmental Management System
EPA	U.S. Environmental Protection Agency
EPCRA	Emergency Planning and Community Right-to-Know Act of 1986
ES&H	Environmental, Safety and Health
ISM	Integrated Safety Management
ISMS	Integrated Safety Management System
MSDS	Material Safety Data Sheet
NEPA	National Environmental Policy Act of 1969
NRC	U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission
NWPA	Nuclear Waste Policy Act of 1982
ODS	ozone-depleting substances
ORD	Office of Repository Development
RCRA	Resource Conservation and Recovery Act of 1976
ROWR	Right-of-Way Reservation
SHPO	State Historic Preservation Officer
UIC	underground injection control
YMP	Yucca Mountain Project

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1. INTRODUCTION

This is the fourteenth annual site environmental report prepared by the U.S. Department of Energy (DOE), Office of Repository Development (ORD). The purpose of this report is to describe the ORD environmental program, compliance with environmental standards and requirements, and the environmental activities conducted during calendar year 2004.

This report was prepared in accordance with DOE Order 231.1A, DOE Manual 231.1-1A, and guidance from the DOE Office of Air, Water and Radiation Protection (Wallo 2005). The guidance emphasizes reporting emissions of, and human exposure to, radionuclides and other pollutants and hazardous substances. The Yucca Mountain Project (YMP) has not caused any public exposure to non-naturally-occurring radionuclides, nor is the YMP a major source of pollutants or hazardous substances. Therefore, this report does not emphasize those topics and differs from the content suggested in the guidance in the following ways:

- This report does not contain a section describing the results of environmental radiological monitoring, radiological doses, or releases from operation of DOE facilities. The YMP does not manage radioactive materials except for a few sealed industrial sources. Moreover, there are no effluents that require monitoring. Thus, monitoring the environment or calculating potential doses to offsite or onsite populations is not applicable.

- Sections identified in the guidance as "Environmental Program Information" and "Environmental Non-Radiological Program Information" have been combined and are reported in Section 3 of this report (Environmental Programs). This was done because the monitoring and surveillance data, which the guidance suggests be included in the latter section, are brief and best understood in the context of the environmental programs.

- The YMP groundwater-monitoring program is included in Section 3 (instead of in a separate section as suggested by the guidance) because the Project does not release effluents into the groundwater. A description of the hydrology of Yucca Mountain and the surrounding region is contained in Section 1.1.3.

Yucca Mountain, which is the site for the repository, is in a sparsely populated part of southern Nye County, Nevada. The YMP operates other facilities in Nye and Clark Counties, Nevada, and one office building in Washington, DC. In Clark County, the ORD and its management and operating contractor, Bechtel SAIC Company, LLC (BSC), occupy 15 office buildings in a suburban business park in Las Vegas, Nevada. BSC also uses two warehouses in Las Vegas for receiving, storing, and distributing materials and equipment. A YMP Information Center is operated in Las Vegas to disseminate information on the YMP. Laboratory testing is conducted in two buildings at the DOE's National Nuclear Security Administration complex in North Las Vegas. Project activities conducted in offices in Las Vegas are primarily administration and technical support, management, scientific analyses and modeling, and engineering design. Similar activities are conducted by BSC in offices in Washington, DC. In Nye County, the YMP operates Information Centers in Pahrump and Beatty. All YMP facilities except those at Yucca Mountain are serviced by municipal utilities such as sewer, water, electrical,

telecommunications, and waste disposal. Utility services at Yucca Mountain are part of the operation and maintenance of that site and, therefore, the responsibility of the YMP.

Development of this report was not subject to the requirements of the YMP *Quality Assurance Requirements and Description* (DOE 2004a), as determined by the DOE. The report describes, however, the results of many activities that are subject to the YMP *Quality Assurance Requirements and Description* (DOE 2004a).

Finally, words and expressions that are underlined are defined in the Glossary at the end of report.

1.1 SITE DESCRIPTION

The Yucca Mountain site ("the site") formally encompasses about 30,000 acres of land administered by the federal government in a remote part of the northern Mojave Desert. The site is in Nye County, south-central Nevada, about 100 miles northwest of Las Vegas, Nevada (Figure 1). The site is defined in 10 CFR 63.202 as the area recommended to the President by the Secretary of Energy on May 27, 1986 [section 112(b)(1)(B) of the Nuclear Waste Policy Act of 1982 (42 U.S.C. 10132(b)(1)(B)]. Congress did not change the boundary of the site when it enacted the Yucca Mountain Development Act on July 23, 2002. If there is a Congressional land withdrawal for a repository prior to or at the time of licensing by the U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission (NRC), then the withdrawn land would become the "new" Yucca Mountain site (10 CFR 63.202).

Yucca Mountain is an irregularly shaped, north-trending, volcanic upland, 4-6 miles wide and 25 miles long. The crest of that portion of the mountain being investigated by the ORD has an elevation of 4,600-4,950 feet. The main ridge in this area slopes steeply to the west into Crater Flat (elevation 3,900 feet) and gently eastward to Jackass Flats on the Nevada Test Site (elevation 3,600 feet).

The following sections briefly describe the physical, biological, cultural, and demographic settings of the Yucca Mountain area. More information about the site is contained in the *Yucca Mountain Site Description* (CRWMS M&O 2000) and in the *Final Environmental Impact Statement for a Geologic Repository for the Disposal of Spent Nuclear Fuel and High-Level Radioactive Waste at Yucca Mountain, Nye County, Nevada* (DOE 2002).

1.1.1 Climate and Meteorology

Typical of southwestern deserts, the climate at Yucca Mountain is warm, and ranges from arid to semi-arid (CRWMS M&O 1999a; 2000, Section 2.3). Average minimum and maximum daily temperatures in Midway Valley near the Yucca Mountain site range from 72°F to 93°F in the summer and from 34°F to 51°F in the winter. Average annual precipitation at the network of Yucca Mountain meteorological stations ranges from 4 to 10 inches, depending on elevation and topography. Annual precipitation varies greatly among years because of differences in regional storm patterns. Occasional periods of persistent or heavy rains, particularly in the winter, have produced more than two inches of rain in a day. Summer thunderstorms can drop more than one inch of rain in a matter of hours, sometimes resulting in flash floods along the usually dry washes that drain Yucca Mountain. Potential evaporation is almost 66 inches per year.

Winds in the region are influenced by nearby mountains and valleys, as well as large-scale weather systems. Winds near Yucca Mountain generally blow to the south or southeast during the day and to the north or northwest at night. Average hourly wind speeds range from 5.8 to 9.6 miles per hour, and calm periods are rare and short-lived. The strongest winds typically occur on exposed ridges. Maximum wind gusts have been recorded at more than 85 miles per hour on exposed ridges, and more than 60 miles per hour in valleys.

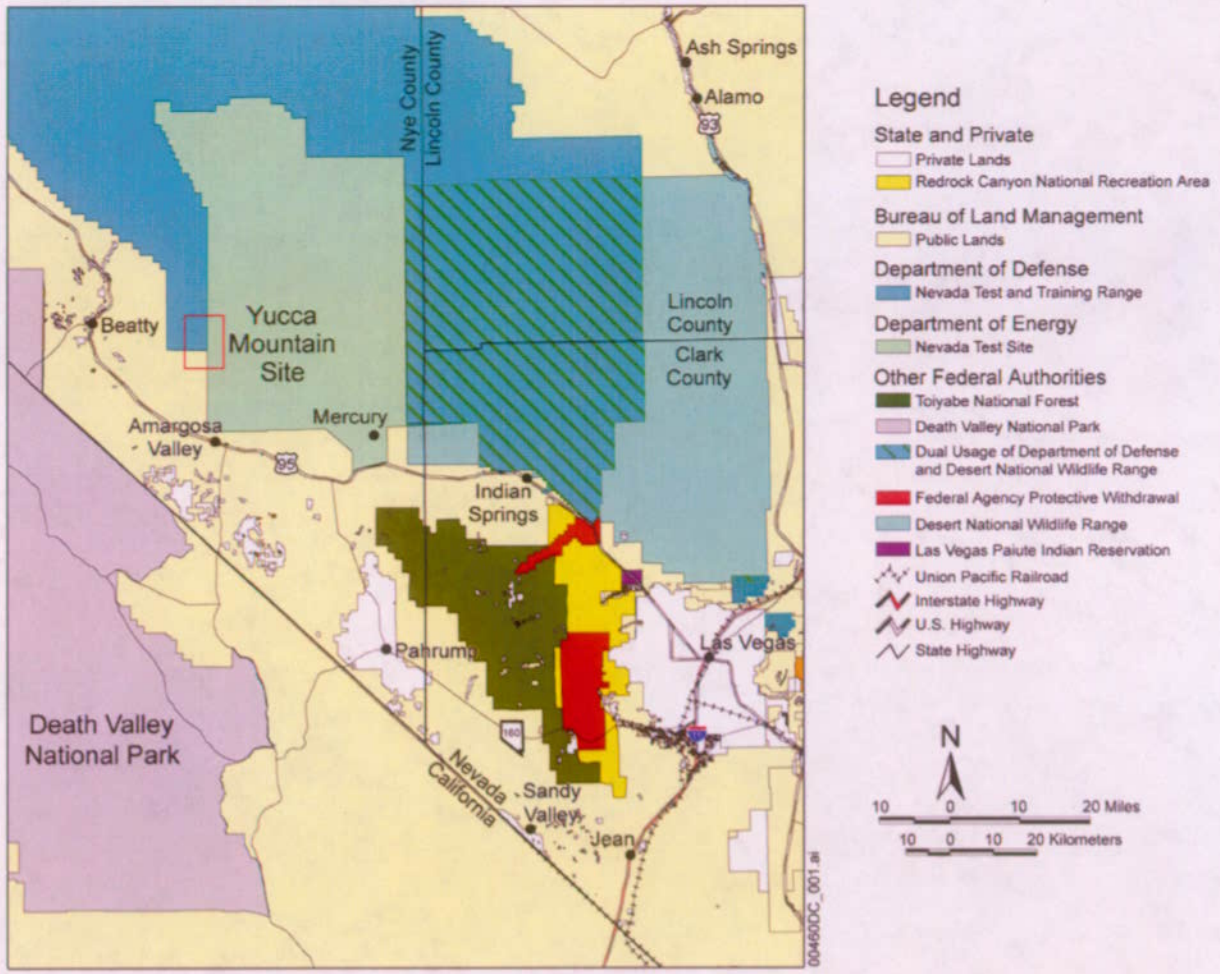


Figure 1. Land Use and Ownership Surrounding Yucca Mountain

1.1.2 Geology

The mountains and valleys visible today in the region of Yucca Mountain formed over the past 15 million years from movement along faults. Rock units in this region range in age from geologically old in some mountains (Precambrian era, or more than 570 million years old) to geologically recent in the valleys (Holocene epoch, or less than 10,000 years old). At Yucca Mountain, most rocks exposed at the surface originated from volcanic eruptions between 11.5 million and 14 million years ago.

The oldest and deepest rocks at Yucca Mountain are more than 570 million years old. They occur more than 4.7 miles below the surface. Overlying these rocks are Paleozoic sedimentary rocks between 225 and 570 million years old. The lower part of these Paleozoic rocks, which are three miles thick and more than 1.1 miles below the surface, are part of a regional carbonate aquifer.

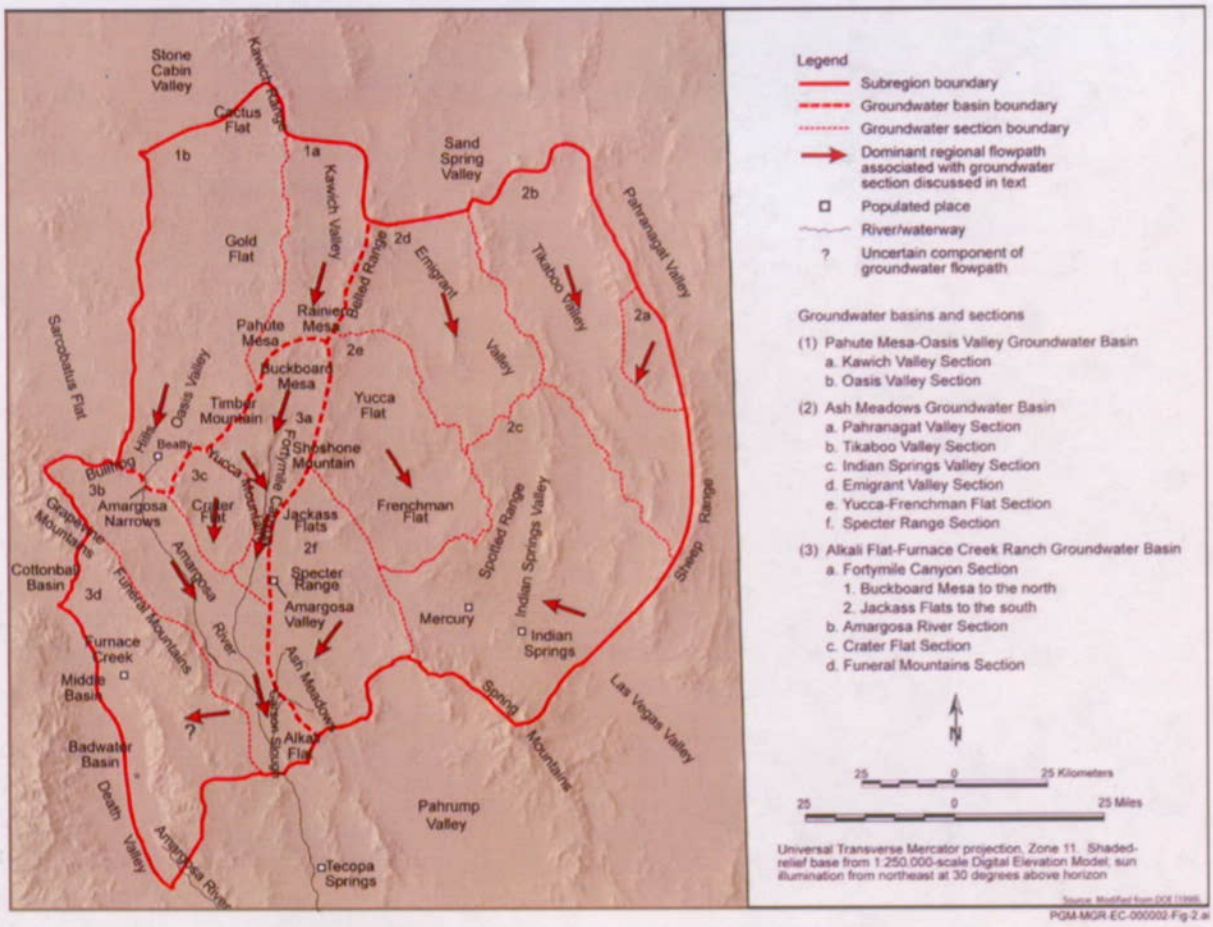
The Paleozoic rocks beneath Yucca Mountain are overlain by 1.6 miles of volcanic ash-flow tuffs and ashfalls that are widely exposed at the surface. These rocks originated between 11.5 million and 14 million years ago (during the Tertiary Period) from circular volcanic centers known as calderas. The eroded remnants of these calderas, some measuring many miles across, are still visible north of Yucca Mountain.

Overlying the Tertiary volcanic rocks at and surrounding Yucca Mountain are unconsolidated rocks known as alluvium and several small cinder cones and basaltic lava flows. These rocks are all younger than 1.6 million years old (Quaternary Period). The alluvial deposits developed from erosion of nearby highlands. The alluvium was then transported by water, wind, and gravity to lower elevations. Fans of alluvium form large aprons along the flanks of Yucca Mountain. Most of the alluvial deposits that are visible at the surface in the Yucca Mountain area probably formed within the last 100,000 years. In Crater Flat, west of Yucca Mountain, several small cinder cones and lava flows erupted between one million and 3.7 million years ago. The youngest volcanic center in the area is the Lathrop Wells cone, estimated to have erupted about 80,000 years ago. The cone is 9.3 miles southwest of Yucca Mountain.

Five earthquakes, with Richter magnitudes greater than 5.5, have been recorded within 60 miles of Yucca Mountain. Except for the Little Skull Mountain earthquake, all occurred near the Death Valley–Furnace Creek fault system more than 30 miles south of Yucca Mountain. The 1992 Little Skull Mountain earthquake occurred nine miles from Yucca Mountain and had a magnitude of 5.6 (CRWMS M&O 2000, Section 12.3).

1.1.3 Hydrology

Yucca Mountain is within the Alkali Flat–Furnace Creek Ranch Groundwater Basin of the Central Death Valley subregion (Figure 2). This groundwater system is closed, that is, water leaves the system only by evapotranspiration. Most recharge in this area is infiltration of precipitation on Pahute Mesa, Timber Mountain, and Shoshone Mountain in the central part of the subregion, and the Grapevine and Funeral Mountains in the southwestern part of the subregion (D'Agnese et al. 1997) (Figure 2).



Source: Modified from DOE 1999

Figure 2. Groundwater Basins in the Vicinity of Yucca Mountain

Groundwater in the saturated zone beneath Yucca Mountain occurs at a depth of 1,600 to 2,500 feet below the surface in volcanic aquifers and in a much deeper carbonate aquifer. This groundwater discharges naturally more than 50 miles south of Yucca Mountain at Alkali Flat (Franklin Lake Playa) and in Death Valley (Figure 2) (D'Agnese et al. 1997). Water used by the YMP is pumped from the volcanic aquifers in Crater Flat and Jackass Flats.

There are no springs, wetlands, or other natural sources of surface water at Yucca Mountain (Hansen et al. 1997). The usually dry washes in the area may contain flowing water after very heavy, sustained rain or snow. On rare occasions, water in the washes flows to the Amargosa River more than 25 miles to the south. Although referred to as a "river," the Amargosa is dry along most of its length. Exceptions include short stretches of the river near Beatty, Nevada; Tecopa, California; and southern Death Valley, California, where the river ends in the Badwater Basin, 260 feet below sea level (DOE 2002, Section 3.1.4.1.1).

1.1.4 Biological Resources

Plants typical of the Mojave Desert are most abundant at elevations below 4,000 feet. Common shrubs include white bursage *(Ambrosia dumosa)*, creosotebush (*Larrea tridentata)*, Nevada

jointfir (*Ephedra nevadensis*), littleleaf ratany (*Krameria erecta*), pale wolfberry (*Lycium pallidum*), California buckwheat (*Eriogonum fasciculatum*), and spiny hopsage (*Grayia spinosa*) (CRWMS M&O 1998a).

Species typical of the Great Basin Desert and the transition zone between the Great Basin Desert and Mojave Desert are most abundant at elevations above 4,000 feet, primarily in the northern part of the Project area. Blackbrush (*Coleogyne ramosissima*) is the most abundant shrub at mid- to high-elevations growing on gentle slopes. Steep slopes at high elevations are dominated by California buckwheat, heathgoldenrod (*Ericameria teretifolius*), Nevada jointfir, broom snakeweed (*Gutierezzia sarothrae*), and green ephedra (*Ephedra viridis*). Big sagebrush (*Artemisia tridentata*) is common on some steep north-facing slopes (CRWMS M&O 1998a).

Thirty-six species of mammals have been recorded at Yucca Mountain, none of which are classified as threatened or endangered. Rodents are the most abundant mammals, with 17 documented species (CRWMS M&O 1997). Seven species of bats have been recorded at Yucca Mountain (CRWMS M&O 1998b); two of these, the long-legged myotis (*Myotis volans*) and fringed myotis (*Myotis thysanodes*), are considered sensitive species in Nevada by the Bureau of Land Management (BLM). Three species of rabbits, seven carnivores, and two ungulates (mule deer [*Odocoileus hemionus*] and feral burros [*Equus asinus*]) also have been seen at Yucca Mountain (CRWMS M&O 1999b).

Twenty-seven species of reptiles have been found at Yucca Mountain, including 12 species of lizards, 14 species of snakes, and 1 species of tortoise (CRWMS M&O 1998c). The desert-tortoise (*Gopherus agassizii*) is listed as threatened under the Endangered Species Act of 1973 (Section 2.3.1), and the western chuckwalla (*Sauromalus obesus*) is classified as a sensitive species in Nevada by the BLM.

More than 120 species of birds have been seen in the Yucca Mountain region, including 15 species of raptors (CRWMS M&O 1998d). Western burrowing owls (*Speotyto cunicularia hypugaea*), which are uncommon at the site, are classified as sensitive in Nevada by the BLM.

1.1.5 Cultural Resources

Archaeological resources discovered at and near Yucca Mountain indicate past use by small, mobile hunter-gatherer societies. This use may have lasted for several thousand years, followed by about 150 years of sporadic and transitory occupation by people of European extraction for limited prospecting and, possibly, ranching. The region was inhabited by Native American populations for at least 12,000 years. At first, most settlement seems to have centered along major drainages, which presumably were corridors for wild game and food plants. By 7,000 years ago, a second settlement pattern is discernible, with the establishment of temporary camps in the uplands of Yucca Mountain, some distance away from major drainages. A third shift in the pattern of settlement occurred about 1,500 years ago, indicated by the presence of sites, often with grinding stones, on alluvial fans or in small rock shelters in uplands. By that time, sites were no longer being established along major drainages, perhaps indicating that these waterways were dry. Instead, sites were located near small, seasonal water sources such as tanks or depressions in rock outcrops. A fourth and most recent period of settlement is associated with Euroamerican settlers and prospectors, indicated by rock cairns (piles of rock), tin cans, and

temporary camps. At the time of the first recorded arrival of Euroamericans in 1849, the area was inhabited by Southern Paiute and Western Shoshone Indians (Stoffle et al. 1990).

Many archaeological surveys have been conducted at Yucca Mountain. As a result, more than 900 archaeological and historic sites, ranging from single fragments of lithic stone scatters (sherds) to campsites and quarries, have been identified in the main Yucca Mountain Archaeological Management Area.

1.1.6 Demography

Nye County and adjoining parts of neighboring counties is a rural, sparsely populated region where most residents are concentrated in a few small communities. County populations, as determined by the U.S. Census Bureau during the census of April 2000, were as follows: Nye County, Nevada, 32,485 residents; Lincoln County, Nevada, 4,165 residents; Esmeralda County, Nevada, 971 residents; and Inyo County, California, 17,945 residents (U.S. Census Bureau 2001a, 2001b). The estimated population within each of these Nevada counties in July 2004 was as follow: 38,181 in Nye County, 3,822 in Lincoln County, and 1,176 in Esmeralda County (NSDO 2005). The July 2004 population of Inyo County, California, is estimated at 18,636 (California State Department of Finance 2005).

Near the Yucca Mountain site are the Nevada communities of Beatty, Amargosa Valley, and Pahrump in Nye County, and Indian Springs in Clark County. The July 2004 estimated populations of these communities are 981, 1,211, 30,465, and 1,661, respectively (NSDO 2005). There are no official population estimates for the small communities in and near Death Valley, California. These small communities are about 35 miles from Yucca Mountain.

1.1.7 Land Use

Land within the Yucca Mountain site is controlled by the DOE, the U.S. Air Force, and the BLM (Figure 1). Public access to DOE and U.S. Air Force lands is restricted. Some off-highway driving and other recreational activities occur on the BLM portion of the site.

Because of a lack of surface water and very deep groundwater, there is little agriculture in the region surrounding Yucca Mountain. The nearest farms are in the Amargosa Valley, 15 miles to the south. The Pahrump Valley, 47 miles to the southeast, also has some farming operations. There are a limited number of BLM-issued grazing leases for southern Nye County, and none have been issued for lands at or surrounding the site. Several mining operations occur near Yucca Mountain; the closest is a cinder mine about nine miles southwest of the site.

Areas to the south and southwest of Yucca Mountain are popular throughout the year for recreational activities such as camping, hiking, hunting, and nature study. Two that are particularly well known are Ash Meadows National Wildlife Refuge (about 25 miles south) and Death Valley National Park (about 20 miles southwest).

1.2 MISSION AND CURRENT ACTIVITIES

In 1982, Congress enacted the Nuclear Waste Policy Act of 1982 (NWPA). The act specified that spent nuclear fuel from commercial nuclear reactors and high-level radioactive waste from

national defense activities will be disposed of underground in deep geologic repositories. In 1987, the act was amended to designate Yucca Mountain, Nevada, as the single candidate site for a repository. On July 23, 2002, the President signed into law the Congressional Joint Resolution designating Yucca Mountain as the site for the nation's first geologic repository per Section 115(c) of the NWPA, as amended.

For the past several years, the Department has been preparing a license application that will be submitted to the NRC to construct and ultimately operate the repository. It was reported in last year's Site Environmental Report that the license application would be submitted in December 2004. Because of delays in the project, the Department now expects that the license application will be submitted in 2006. Upon submittal, the NRC will have three years to review the application, conduct its licensing proceedings, and reach a decision on a construction authorization. Should the NRC grant the construction authorization, the Department will update the license application and request a license to receive and possess high-level radioactive waste as initial construction of the repository nears completion. If the Commission grants the license to receive and possess, the Department will begin placing the waste into the repository. In the final phase of licensing, when the repository has stopped receiving waste for disposal, the Department will apply for a license amendment to permanently close the repository, which will address plans to decommission surface facilities.

During 2004, DOE interactions with the NRC continued to focus on addressing and resolving topics that the NRC considers important to evaluating the performance of a repository at Yucca Mountain. The DOE also continued to create and maintain a nuclear safety culture and to rigorously comply with quality-assurance procedures, which are two key elements necessary for successful licensing and safe operation of the repository.

During 2004, the ORD continued testing at Yucca Mountain to further refine an understanding of how a repository would perform far into the future. Some of these studies may continue indefinitely or until the repository is permanently closed. Design and operating decisions could be modified based on the results of these studies and tests, as well as other technological and policy developments. The ongoing learning process is designed to challenge current models and assumptions about Yucca Mountain and lead to continuous improvement.

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2. ENVIRONMENTAL COMPLIANCE

This section briefly describes the laws and regulations that applied to YMP activities conducted in 2004 (see the *Project Requirements Document* for more information [BSC 2003]). This section also summarizes actions taken by the ORD to comply with those laws and regulations, lists the environmental permits that were applicable to YMP activities in 2004 (Table 1), and summarizes permit-associated litigation (Section 2.10). Also included is a description of laws and regulations listed in the DOE guidance for preparing site environmental reports (Wallo 2005) that were not applicable to YMP activities in 2004 and an explanation of why they were not applicable.

During 2004, the YMP had no violations of environmental permits or noncompliance actions; no reportable occurrences that required notification of a regulatory agency; and no notices of violations, deficiencies, or other types of enforcement actions concerning environmental compliance.

2.1 GENERAL REQUIREMENTS

2.1.1 Nuclear Waste Policy Act of 1982

The NWPA established a federal policy for the disposal of spent nuclear fuel and high-level radioactive waste in geologic repositories and assigned to the DOE the responsibility for carrying out that policy. The NWPA directs the DOE to determine, through site characterization, whether Yucca Mountain is a suitable site for a repository. On February 14, 2002, the Secretary of Energy recommended the Yucca Mountain site to the President, thereby ending the site characterization phase of the project. The recommendation process set forth in the NWPA, as amended, was followed, culminating in the enactment of the Yucca Mountain Development Act on July 23, 2002.

During the remainder of 2002 and through 2003 and 2004, the ORD continued scientific studies at Yucca Mountain to further refine the understanding of how a repository at Yucca Mountain would perform far into the future. These studies and tests were conducted in a manner that minimizes, to the maximum extent practicable, adverse environmental impacts. To accomplish this, the ORD continued its comprehensive and integrated environmental program to ensure compliance with applicable laws and regulations, collect data and monitor impacts of site activities, and minimize those impacts. The program is described in the YMP *Environmental Management Plan* (YMP 2000).

2.1.2 National Environmental Policy Act of 1969

The National Environmental Policy Act of 1969 (NEPA), and the regulations that implement the act (40 CFR Parts 1500-1508), establish a process that federal agencies must follow to evaluate and document the potential benefits and consequences of proposed major federal actions on human and natural environments. Those evaluations are conducted to assist agencies in making informed decisions about their proposed actions. The DOE has developed regulations (10 CFR Part 1021) for implementing NEPA requirements and to ensure compliance with Executive Order 11514, Protection and Enhancement of Environmental Quality (35 FR 4247).

Table 1. Permits Applicable to Project Activities in 2004

Regulation Permit Type	Permit Number or Case File	Permit Period	Comments
Materials Act of 1947 Free Use Permit	N-63370, Borrow Pit #1 N-51530, Coyote Wash Borrow Pit	12/3/99 - 1/6/08 10/26/90 - N/A	Expires when construction ends
Federal Land Policy and Management Act of 1976 Right-of-Way Reservation[a]	N-47748	1/6/88 - 1/6/08	Renewed January 2001
	N-48602	10/10/89 - 1/6/08	Renewed January 2001 (and again on April 8, 2004).
Public Land Withdrawal	N-50250	9/17/90 - 1/31/10	Withdrawal extended in August 2002
Endangered Species Act of 1973 Biological Opinion	1-5-96-F-307R	7/23/97 - N/A	Covers scientific testing and site confirmation investigations before repository construction.
Biological Opinion	1-5-00-F-518	8/28/01 - N/A	Covers effects of construction, operation, and monitoring of a geologic repository at Yucca Mountain.
NAC 503 Scientific Collection Permit	S24382	3/1/04 - 12/31/05	New permit obtained every two years.
Clean Air Act/NAC 445B Air Quality Operating Permit	AP9199 - 0573.01	7/23/01 - 7/23/06	
Clean Water Act of 1977/NAC 445A General Discharge Permit	NVR100000-35258, Construction Stormwater General Permit	9/16/02-9/15/07	
	GU9201 - 40037, Large Capacity Septic Tank General Permit to Operate and Discharge	7/22/04 - 7/22/09	
Safe Drinking Water Act/ NAC 445A Public Water System Permit Underground Injection Control Permit	NY-0867-12NCNT	9/30/03 – 9/30/04 9/30/04 – 9/30/05	Permit renewed annually
	UNEV89031	1/30/96 - 1/26/01	Renewal application filed July 2000; existing permit remains in effect until state issues a new permit

Table 1. Permits Applicable to Project Activities in 2004 (Continued)

Regulation Permit Type	Permit Number or Case File	Permit Period	Comments
NRS 533 Water Appropriation Permits	63262-63267	na	Permit applications for permanent water rights: applications denied. Decision is being appealed.
	J-12 and J-13 - Joint Stipulation agreement between the DOE and the State of Nevada	Undefined	Potable and non-potable water for ongoing site maintenance, operations and testing. Withdrawals for potable water are limited to 420,000 gallons per year; withdrawals of non-potable water are as necessary to maintain the status quo of the site.
	57375, VH-1	4/2/92 - N/A	Permanent water right. Proof of Application of Water to Beneficial Use for 2.3 acre-feet submitted April 5, 2002
NAC 477 Hazardous Materials Storage Permit	1403/2796	3/1/04 – 2/28/05	Permit reissued annually

[a]List does not include five Right-of-Way Reservations (ROWRS) for small sites in Nevada and California.

As required by section 114(f) of the NWPA, the Final Repository Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) (DOE 2002) was submitted with the Secretary of Energy's site recommendation to the President on February 14, 2002. The preferred alternative was to proceed with the Proposed Action, which is to construct, operate and monitor, and eventually close a geologic repository at Yucca Mountain. The Final Repository EIS also found that the use of mostly rail, both nationally and in Nevada, was the preferred way to transport spent nuclear fuel and high-level radioactive waste to the repository. Major conclusions of the Final Repository EIS were that the construction, operation, and closure of a repository at Yucca Mountain would cause small, short-term impacts to public health. These impacts would occur primarily from nonradiological traffic fatalities during transport of the waste to the repository from existing commercial and DOE sites. The Final Repository EIS found that long-term impacts to public health from the repository would be very small. On April 8, 2004, the DOE issued a Record of Decision on the Final Repository EIS (69 FR 18557). It announced the DOE's selection, both nationally and in the State of Nevada, of the mostly rail scenario as the method for transporting waste to the repository. Under this scenario, the DOE would rely on a combination of rail, truck and possibly barge to transport up to 70,000 metric tons of radioactive waste to Yucca Mountain. Most of the waste, however, would be transported by rail. The DOE's decision to select the mostly rail scenario in Nevada would require the construction of a rail line to connect Yucca Mountain to an existing rail line in the State of Nevada. To that end, in the same Record of Decision for the Final Repository EIS (69 FR 18557), the DOE also selected the Caliente corridor to study possible alignments for a rail line. On the same day, the DOE also issued a Notice of Intent to prepare an EIS for the alignment, construction, and operation of a rail line from the vicinity of Caliente, Nevada, to Yucca Mountain (69 FR 18565). As part of its planning process, the DOE has considered how to proceed if a new rail line in Nevada were not completed by the time a repository at Yucca Mountain were licensed by the NRC to begin operation. In 2004, the DOE published a Supplement Analysis that examined the potential environmental

impacts of shipping nuclear waste to Yucca Mountain by legal-weight trucks from an intermodal transfer station (rail siding) in Nevada (DOE 2004b). The analysis concluded that the impacts had already been adequately examined in the Final Repository EIS (DOE 2002).

As described in the Final Repository EIS, the design of the repository continues to evolve. To determine whether environmental impacts from these design enhancements were adequately considered in the Final Repository EIS, the DOE developed a procedure to review all design enhancements developed after February 2002 to determine the possible need for additional NEPA review. In addition, Section 114 of the NWPA requires that the NRC adopt, to the extent practicable, the DOE's Final Repository EIS. Therefore, the procedure also addresses provisions of the NRC regulations regarding supplementing the repository final EIS (10 CFR 63.24). During 2004, the DOE continued to work on an Environmental Report that will supplement the Final Repository EIS and will summarize the findings of the aforementioned impact determinations. The Environmental Report will be submitted to the NRC in 2006.

In accordance with DOE Order 451.1B, an annual summary of NEPA activities conducted by the DOE during 2004 and planned for 2005 was completed in 2005 (Lanthrum 2005).

2.1.3 Atomic Energy Act of 1954

The Atomic Energy Act of 1954 gives authority to the DOE and to the NRC to regulate the use of nuclear materials by the government and by commercial entities. The act ensures proper management, production, possession, and use of radioactive materials. It grants to the DOE the authority to develop generally applicable standards for protecting workers, the public, and the environment from radioactive materials. In accordance with the Atomic Energy Act of 1954, the DOE has established a system of requirements issued as DOE directives and codified federal regulations.

There are no work processes on the YMP that require monitoring of radioactive effluents. The Project maintains an inventory of sealed-instrument check sources and moisture/density tools for moisture/density measurements and some limited well-logging activities.

2.1.4 Executive Order 13148, Greening the Government through Leadership in Environmental Management

Executive Order 13148 (65 FR 24595) requires federal agencies to integrate environmental accountability into day-to-day decision-making and long-term planning. One goal of Executive Order 13148 (65 FR 24595) is to ensure that strategies are established that support environmental leadership programs, policies, and procedures by requiring the implementation of Environmental Management Systems (EMSs) at applicable federal facilities by December 31, 2005.

In 2001, the Secretary of Energy issued DOE Notice 450.4 (subsequently cancelled by DOE Order 450.1), which established applicability, requirements, and responsibilities for implementing Executive Order 13148 (65 FR 24595) within the DOE. The provisions of DOE Notice 450.4 applied to all DOE elements responsible for oversight of contracts for the management and operation of DOE facilities and to all contractors. The Notice established the requirements for implementing an EMS at DOE facilities as part of an Integrated Safety

Management System (ISMS). In January 2003, the DOE issued DOE Order 450.1 that incorporated the requirements of DOE Notice 450.4.

Several actions were taken in 2004 to implement the EMS requirements in Executive Order 13148 (65 FR 24595) and DOE Order 450.1. The ORD is implementing an EMS based on ISO 14001; which is the international EMS standard developed by the International Organization for Standards (ISO 2004). A senior management review of the EMS was conducted as part of the annual ISMS review in August.

The review found that the EMS could be improved by formally establishing environmental objectives and targets. The process to establish environmental objectives and targets was initiated in December 2004 after the annual review of the environmental aspects baseline (BSC 2005); it will be completed in 2005.

In 2004, an EMS web-based system was developed to describe the elements of the EMS. The EMS documentation is in electronic format with links to implementing documentation. This approach was chosen because it was more efficient to revise electronic documents than to revise hardcopy documents, and the electronic documents were more accessible to project staff.

Other parts of the YMP environmental program comply with other requirements of Executive Order 13148 (65 FR 24595). For example, all requests for authorization to purchase and use chemicals are reviewed to ensure that the least hazardous materials are selected for use and that the possibility of releases of toxic chemicals is reduced or eliminated. Whenever possible, wastes are reduced using recycling and source reduction (Section 3.8.2). Environmental compliance is evaluated through formal assessments (Section 3.9) and surveillances (Section 3.10). Environmental accountability is integrated into daily functions and planning as part of the YMP ISMS and by instilling environmental and pollution-prevention awareness during training (Section 3.11) and presentations (Section 3.8.3). Protection of resources while conducting ORD activities is achieved through land-access reviews (Section 3.1), biological surveys and reclamation (Sections 3.2 and 3.3), identification and conservation of cultural resources (Section 3.4), environmental regulatory compliance (Sections 3.5 through 3.8), and assessment and surveillance programs (Sections 3.9 and 3.10).

2.1.5 Executive Order 13101, Greening the Government through Waste Prevention, Recycling, and Federal Acquisition

Executive Order 13101 (63 FR 49643) establishes purchasing guidelines and reporting requirements for federal agencies. It expands and strengthens the federal government's commitment to recycling and requires that, whenever possible, federal agencies procure environmentally preferable products and services and purchase recycled-content products identified by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA). The YMP Environmentally Preferable Purchasing program is described in Section 3.8.3.

2.1.6 Executive Order 13123, Greening the Government through Efficient Energy Management

Executive Order 13123 (64 FR 30851) requires federal facilities to reduce emissions of greenhouse gases, improve energy efficiency and water conservation, and expand the use of

renewable energy. This Executive Order requires that sustainable-design principles be applied to the siting, design, and construction of new facilities. The Project's efforts to comply with this Executive Order are described in Section 3.8.3.

2.1.7 Executive Order 13149, Greening the Government through Federal Fleet and Transportation Efficiency

Executive Order 13149 (65 FR 24607) requires federal facilities to reduce the consumption of petroleum fuels by using alternative fuels and by acquiring vehicles that are fuel efficient. Efforts to implement Executive Order 13149 (65 FR 24607) on the YMP include the purchase of fuel-efficient and alternative-fuel vehicles (see Section 3.8.3 for additional information).

2.2 LAND USE

2.2.1 Federal Land Policy and Management Act of 1976

The Federal Land Policy and Management Act of 1976 establishes federal policy for government-owned lands administered by the BLM. The Act mandates that these lands be managed in a way that will protect environmental quality, preserve certain lands in their natural condition, and provide for outdoor recreation and human occupancy and use. Because some YMP activities are conducted on BLM-administered public land, the ORD must comply with BLM requirements for access to and use of that land.

Access for site characterization activities and, later, for performance confirmation activities, on BLM-administered land and U.S. Air Force-administered BLM land at Yucca Mountain was originally granted in Right-of-Way Reservations (ROWRs) issued in January 1988 and October 1989, respectively (BLM 1988, 1989). Each of these ROWRs has been subsequently renewed, and both expire in January 2008 (BLM 1994; Wells 2001a, 2001b, 2001c). In 1990, the BLM withdrew 4,256 acres of public land at Yucca Mountain from the mining and mineral-leasing laws, including the filing of new mining claims. This withdrawal was set to expire in September 25, 2002 (55 FR 39152), but was extended in 2002 until January 31, 2010, by Public Land Order 7534 (67 FR 53358). Over the years, the ORD has acquired 46 ROWRs from the BLM for scattered sites throughout Nevada and southern California for seismic, radiation, and stream-flow monitoring stations and for pits to study volcanism and faulting. Most of these sites are less than 0.3 acres. Five of the ROWRs were still active at the end of 2004. The other 40 ROWRs were either transferred to other agencies or the equipment was dismantled, the site reclaimed, and the ROWR identified to the BLM for relinquishment.

All BLM ROWRs require that the YMP comply with applicable environmental laws and regulations. Environmental program activities described in Section 3 are, therefore, conducted on all ROWRs, as applicable. BLM also requires the DOE to recontour and revegetate disturbed sites before relinquishing them, and to monitor the growth of vegetation on those sites until reclamation is successful. As described in Section 3.3, the YMP conducted reclamation when applicable and as agreed upon with the BLM at sites relinquished in 2004.

On December 29, 2003, the DOE requested that the BLM segregate more than 300,000 acres of land in parts of Lincoln, Nye, and Esmeralda Counties, Nevada, from surface entry and mining

to evaluate the land for a rail line (68 FR 74965). The segregation period ends on December 29, 2005, at which time the Secretary of the Interior may issue a land withdrawal for up to 20 years.

2.2.2 Materials Act of 1947

The Materials Act of 1947 authorizes the BLM and other land management agencies to issue free-use permits to federal and state agencies for use of common varieties of sand, stone, and gravel on public lands. Since 1990, the BLM has issued the ORD three free-use permits to excavate sand and gravel. One of the permits is for a borrow pit in Coyote Wash that has not been developed. The second permit, for a borrow pit near Fortymile Wash, was allowed to expire in 2001 after recontouring and reclamation had been completed. The third, for Borrow Pit #1 east of Fran Ridge, was to expire in 2001; the ORD applied to the BLM for a renewal in 1999. A renewal of that permit was granted in February 2000 and is valid until January 6, 2008 (Drais 2000). About 446 cubic yards of material were removed from this pit in 2004.

2.3 BIOLOGICAL RESOURCES

2.3.1 Endangered Species Act of 1973

The Endangered Species Act of 1973 requires federal agencies to consult with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service to ensure that their actions do not jeopardize the continued existence of threatened or endangered species, or destroy or adversely modify their critical habitats. This act also prohibits killing, injuring, or otherwise taking a threatened or endangered species, unless that taking is incidental to an otherwise lawful act and conducted in accordance with an incidental-take provision issued by the Service. The desert tortoise is the only threatened or endangered species at Yucca Mountain. The Yucca Mountain site is not classified as critical habitat for this threatened species.

In 1989, the DOE consulted with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service about the effects of site characterization activities on desert tortoises. The Service concluded in a 1990 biological opinion that it was unlikely that site characterization and related activities would jeopardize the desert tortoise (McNatt 1990). In 1996, the ORD reinitiated formal consultation to allow the Service to clarify its interpretation of take, revise the incidental-take limit, and reevaluate terms and conditions for relocating tortoises. In a 1997 biological opinion, the Service again concluded that it was unlikely that completion of site characterization and related activities would jeopardize the desert tortoise. Consequently, the Service revised the terms and conditions the YMP must follow to legally and incidentally take desert tortoises (Buchanan 1997). That biological opinion and the incidental-take provision were applicable to all YMP activities conducted during 2004.

The 1997 incidental-take provision requires the YMP to (1) minimize harm to tortoises by conducting pre-activity and clearance surveys, (2) remove tortoises and tortoise nests from construction sites, (3) design and monitor escapable trenches, (4) control litter, (5) set speed limits, (6) reclaim habitat, and (7) implement a worker-education program. Many parts of the integrated environmental program described in Section 3 are conducted to comply with these requirements. For example, litter control, design of trenches, and other requirements are

incorporated into projects during land access evaluations (Section 3.1). Surveys are conducted to find and protect tortoises (Section 3.2). Reclamation of desert tortoise habitat is conducted as described in Section 3.3. The training program described in Section 3.11 includes information about the conservation and protection of desert tortoises.

One desert tortoise was found dead on an access road at Yucca Mountain during 2004. This was the second tortoise to have been killed on a road at Yucca Mountain since July 1997. The incidental-take provision allows an unlimited number of tortoises to be incidentally killed on access roads.

No desert tortoises were directly killed or injured by site activities during 2004. The incidental-take provision allows no more than eight tortoises to be accidentally injured or killed on-site during all Project activities. An annual report of activities conducted to comply with the incidental-take provision was submitted to the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service in February 2005 (Wade 2005a).

The ORD also consulted with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service on the effects of construction, operation, monitoring, and closure of a geological repository at Yucca Mountain. The Service concluded that those actions are not likely to jeopardize the continued existence of the desert tortoise (Williams 2001). Meanwhile, the YMP will follow the 1997 biological opinion (Buchanan 1997) to comply with the Endangered Species Act of 1973 for future scientific testing, site confirmation, and similar activities.

2.3.2 Migratory Bird Treaty Act

The Migratory Bird Treaty Act implements various treaties and conventions between the U.S. and Canada, Japan, Mexico, and the former Soviet Union for the protection of migratory birds. Taking, killing, or possessing migratory birds is unlawful under this act unless permitted by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service.

Surveys at Yucca Mountain are conducted before clearing vegetation (Section 3.2), in part to ensure that migratory birds are not harmed during those activities. In addition, facilities such as water tanks are inspected during surveillances (Section 3.10) to ensure that migratory birds are not being trapped or otherwise harmed.

2.3.3 Nevada State Wildlife Statutes

The NAC 503 prohibits capturing or harming species classified as protected by Nevada without a permit. The desert tortoise is classified in Nevada as threatened with extinction and has been placed on the state list of fully protected species. Because the YMP is required to remove desert tortoises that may be harmed by Project activities, BSC maintains a permit issued by the Nevada Department of Wildlife for the capture and relocation of desert tortoises (Nevada Department of Wildlife 2004). That permit also allows BSC to capture and possess other species for wildlife monitoring studies at Yucca Mountain. One desert tortoise was found dead on an access road at Yucca Mountain during 2004. No other tortoises or other wildlife were captured or possessed under this permit in 2004. An annual report was submitted to the Nevada Department of Wildlife in January 2005 (Green 2005).

2.3.4 Executive Order 13112, Invasive Species

Executive Order 13112 (64 FR 6183) was developed to prevent and control the introduction of invasive, nonnative species to minimize economic, ecological, and human-health impacts. Applicable portions of the Executive Order require the YMP to prevent the introduction of invasive species, monitor and control those species, restore native species, and exercise care when taking actions that could promote the introduction or spread of invasive species.

In part to implement this Executive Order, disturbed sites are revegetated as soon as possible after decommissioning to reduce the time available for invasive plant species to become established. Native perennial species are seeded or planted during reclamation to reduce colonization of invasive plants. The abundance of nonnative species on reclaimed sites is then monitored periodically, and control efforts such as weeding and reseeding of native perennials may be implemented to reduce the abundance of invasive species. As mentioned in Section 3.3.3, 3 sites totaling 0.64 acres were reclaimed and 6 sites totaling 2.8 acres were re-seeded in 2004. 97 previously reclaimed sites were monitored.

2.4 CULTURAL RESOURCES

The National Historic Preservation Act is the principal law regulating the protection of historic properties and cultural resources at Yucca Mountain. Others include the Archaeological Resources Protection Act of 1979; Antiquities Act of 1906; American Indian Religious Freedom Act (as amended), and Native American Graves Protection and Repatriation Act. In addition, the YMP operates to Executive Order 11593 (36 FR 8921), Executive Order 13007 (61 FR 26771), Executive Order 13084, (63 FR 27655), and the *American Indian and Alaska Native Tribal Government Policy* (DOE 2000). Many of these Executive Orders and policies address cultural values and beliefs of Native Americans, and protect and preserve their religious rights and practices. The goal of these laws and policies is to ensure that historic properties and cultural and religious values are considered when planning and conducting federal activities, and to consult with Native Americans when appropriate.

Compliance with most of these statutes, implementing regulations, and executive orders is through DOE Policy 141.1. The YMP provides all survey reports, data recovery plans, and annual reports to the State Historic Preservation Officer (SHPO) for comment and review. In 2004, representatives of the SHPO actively participated in oversight and review of the YMP program, commenting on numerous survey reports and participating in discussions of future work plans at Yucca Mountain.

The Programmatic Agreement requires the YMP to develop and implement a comprehensive research plan for recovering, documenting, and interpreting data from historical properties. YMP has developed and implemented a comprehensive program for recovering, documenting, and interpreting data from historical properties. Activities conducted in 2004 to implement that program are described in Section 3.4.1.

All personnel working at Yucca Mountain are informed of their responsibilities for protecting archaeological resources. That training is described in Section 3.11.

The ORD consults with certain Native American tribes and organizations regarding religious and cultural concerns about historical properties. The ORD conducts a Native American Interaction Program with 16 tribes and one Native American organization that have traditional ties to the Yucca Mountain area. Interactions conducted during 2004 are described in Section 3.4.3.

Finally, the YMP provides the SHPO and the Advisory Council on Historic Preservation an annual summary of the YMP Cultural Resources Management Program.

2.5 AIR QUALITY

Activities affecting air quality at Yucca Mountain are regulated by the Clean Air Act of 1977, as amended. That act requires, among other things, compliance with national air-quality standards, permits for operating air pollution sources, and limits on emissions of certain hazardous air pollutants.

40 CFR Part 63 did not apply to YMP activities conducted in 2004. These federal regulations set forth emission limits and other requirements for activities that generate emissions of certain types of hazardous air pollutants. No pollutants covered by these regulations have been emitted by YMP activities to date.

The Nevada Division of Environmental Protection is responsible for implementing and enforcing most other requirements of the Clean Air Act of 1977 in Nevada. State regulations (NAC 445B) require an air-quality operating permit for large generators and other point sources of air pollution and for activities that are projected to disturb more than five acres. The ORD has held an operating permit for land disturbances since 1991 and has obtained permits, as needed, for the operation of generators and other emission sources. In mid-1995, the state consolidated those permits into a single Class-II air-quality operating permit (Johnson 1995). A new Class-II air-quality operating permit was issued to the Project on July 23, 2001 (Elges 2001).

On August 17, 2004, the DOE submitted a revision to the Class-II permit. The revision was submitted to increase hours on three backup generators and remove six permitted sources from the permit. The sources removed included air compressors, generators, and the cement batch plant. On September 21, 2004, the State of Nevada revised the Class-II permit to reflect the requested changes (Regan 2004).

Four systems were permitted under the revised Class-II air-quality operating permit. As required, an annual report summarizing emissions during 2004 was submitted to the Nevada Division of Environmental Protection in February 2005 (Wade 2005b).

Because of a reduction in site activities, less than 1 ton of reportable air pollutants were emitted from the 4 permitted systems during 2004. The maximum amount of air pollutants that is allowed under a Class-II permit is 100 tons.

The air-quality operating permit requires the YMP to control fugitive dust. This was done throughout 2004 by applying water to disturbed areas. In addition, disturbed areas no longer required for the YMP were reclaimed (Section 3.3).

Before 1999, the air-quality operating permit stipulated that the DOE must sample ambient air for respirable particulate matter 10 micrometers or less in diameter (known as PM_{10}). Although no longer required by the permit, the YMP continues to monitor PM_{10} because of its importance in establishing trends and detecting changes in air quality. The number of monitoring sites remained at 2 during 2004. Section 3.5 describes the results of monitoring in 2004.

The Clean Air Act of 1977 also regulates the service, maintenance and repair, and disposal of appliances and air conditioning systems from motor vehicles that contain Class I and Class II ozone-depleting substances (ODS) (40 CFR Part 82). YMP technicians who service these systems are certified and follow procedures to minimize releases of ODS.

2.6 WATER QUALITY AND AVAILABILITY

2.6.1 Clean Water Act of 1977

The Clean Water Act of 1977, as amended, establishes federal policy for restoring and maintaining the chemical, physical, and biological integrity of the nation's waters. Regulations that implement the act address effluent discharges, water quality standards, and discharges of oil and hazardous substances into surface water. Only those parts of the act that regulate discharge of liquid effluents to the surface (including stormwater) and discharge of dredged or fill material were applicable to the YMP in 2004.

Permits to discharge liquid effluents are issued under the National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (40 CFR Part 122). Implementation and enforcement of this part of the Clean Water Act of 1977 are delegated to the Nevada Division of Environmental Protection (NAC 445A). During 2004, the YMP operated under general discharge permits issued in September 2002 for stormwater discharges from construction sites (Lawson 2002) and in July 1995 and July 2004 for sanitary sewage discharges to a septic tank and leachfield (Saunders 1995 and Leger 2004). The current large-capacity septic tank permit was issued by the State of Nevada on July 22, 2004 and expires on July 22, 2009.

Revision 7 of the Stormwater Pollution Prevention Plan (ORD 2003) became effective in March 2003 and was adequate to meet compliance requirements through 2004. The Plan was reformatted from Revision 6 to meet the requirements of the new stormwater general permit, dated September 16, 2002.

Section 404 of the Clean Water Act of 1977 requires that a permit from the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers is required before placing dredge or fill materials into washes that are classified as waters of the United States (33 CFR Part 320). To ensure compliance with this requirement, all new surface-disturbing activities are evaluated as part of the land access process (Section 3.1). No activities were conducted in 2004 that required the placement of dredge or fill materials into washes that may be classified as waters of the United States.

2.6.2 Safe Drinking Water Act of 1974

The Safe Drinking Water Act gives the EPA responsibility and authority to regulate public drinking water supplies. The EPA does this by establishing drinking water standards, delegating

to states the authority for enforcing those standards, and protecting aquifers from such things as injection of wastes and other materials into wells.

The Nevada Bureau of Health Protection Services, Division of Health, enforces drinking water standards (NAC 445A). The water supply system at Yucca Mountain is classified as a public water supply, and an annual permit to operate that system was first granted in April 1996. The permit is renewed annually (Nevada State Division of Health 2004).

All drinking water for the site comes from Wells J-12 and J-13. In 2004, by agreement with the State of Nevada, water was pumped periodically from Wells J-12 and J-13 to replenish the water in the distribution system.

As required by the public water system permit, quarterly results of sampling for coliform bacteria were submitted to the state; all samples were negative. The results of annual sampling for nitrate and fluoride were submitted to the state in 2004. Sampling and other activities conducted during 2004 were summarized in an annual report submitted to the Nevada Division of Health in February 2005 (Wade 2005c).

Another component of the Safe Drinking Water Act of 1974 that is applicable to the YMP in 2004 is the underground injection control (UIC) program (40 CFR Part 144). This program was established to prevent contamination of underground sources of drinking water from improper design, construction, and operation of injection wells. The State of Nevada has EPA-granted authority to administer this program (NAC 445A), which requires a permit before tracers can be injected into drill holes or used in infiltration studies. To comply with this program, the YMP has a permit issued by the Nevada Division of Environmental Protection (Land 1998). This permit authorizes (1) the injection of water and various tracers, including gas, into 103 boreholes; (2) discharges from the concrete batch plant to a lined pond; (3) discharges to an infiltration basin; and (4) the use of filtered waste water from the Exploratory Studies Facility for dust suppression.

As required by the UIC permit, quarterly reports were submitted to the Nevada Division of Environmental Protection. These reports list the volume of fluid produced or discharged per month; the type, quantity, and concentration of tracer(s) injected per month; summaries of tracer tests; the results of chemical analyses from the oil-water separator; and the results of semiannual sampling of drinking water from Wells J-12 and J-13. An annual report summarizing all 2004 activities for this permit was submitted in January 2005 (Wade 2005d).

The UIC permit expired on January 26, 2001. An application to renew the permit was submitted in 2000 (Wade 2000) and was deemed complete by the Nevada Division of Environmental Protection. As provided in Nevada regulations, the YMP will continue to operate legally under the expired permit until a new permit is issued.

2.6.3 Nevada Statute for Appropriation of Public Waters

Use of water in Nevada requires a permit from the Nevada State Engineer. The Nevada State Engineer reviews permit applications to determine whether the requested water is available at the source, whether the proposed use conflicts with existing water rights, and whether the proposed use threatens to prove detrimental to the public interest (NRS 533).

In March 1992, the Nevada State Engineer issued temporary water-appropriation permits to the DOE for up to 430 acre-feet per year from Wells J-12 and J-13 (Turnipseed 1992a, 1992b, 1992c). On July 22, 1997, the DOE applied for permanent rights for this water to meet the DOE's responsibilities under the NWPA for possible construction and operation of a repository at Yucca Mountain. The DOE's application was denied on February 2, 2000, based on a finding by the State Engineer that the requested use threatened to prove detrimental to the public interest (Turnipseed 2000). In April 2002, the temporary permits for the 430 acre-feet per year expired. To avoid harming ongoing operations and scientific testing, the DOE and the State of Nevada entered into joint agreements in 2002 and 2003 to allow the DOE to pump a specified amount of water per year for potable and non-potable purposes, including dust control, maintenance, and scientific testing. During 2004, the DOE pumped 1,629,600 gallons from these wells. Meanwhile, legal actions by the DOE are proceeding over the Nevada State Engineer's denial of the DOE's water-appropriation request (see Section 2.10 for additional information).

A permanent water-appropriation permit was issued to the DOE in October 1992 for Well VH-1 for approximately 61 acre-feet per year (Turnipseed 1992d). During 2004, no water was pumped from Well VH-1. According to a stipulation in the Well VH-1 permit documentation; the DOE had 10 years to prove beneficial use of the water. On April 5, 2002, a Proof of Application of Water to Beneficial Use for 2.3 acre-feet was submitted to the State Engineer (Wade 2002). To date, no response has been received from the State.

2.6.4 Executive Order 11988, Floodplain Management

Executive Order 11988 (42 FR 26951) requires that federal agencies develop regulations to evaluate the potential effects of their actions on flood hazards and floodplain management and avoid floodplain impacts to the extent practicable. The DOE has developed regulations to implement this Executive Order (10 CFR Part 1022). These regulations require a public notice of all activities that are proposed within a floodplain, an evaluation of practical alternatives and design changes, a floodplain assessment, and a published statement of findings.

The DOE published a Notice of Floodplain/Wetlands Involvement for site characterization activities in 1989 (54 FR 6318). Two floodplain assessments for YMP activities at Yucca Mountain were then prepared (YMP 1991, 1992), and the associated statements-of-finding were published in the Federal Register (56 FR 49765 and 57 FR 48363). These actions meet the requirements of Executive Order 11988 (42 FR 26951) for all activities that occurred at Yucca Mountain during 2004.

In June 1999, the DOE published 64 FR 31554 for activities associated with construction of a geologic repository at Yucca Mountain. A "Floodplain/Wetlands Assessment for the Proposed Yucca Mountain Geologic Repository" was included as Appendix L of the final EIS (DOE 2002).

2.6.5 Executive Order 11990, Protection of Wetlands

Executive Order 11990 (42 FR 26961) requires federal agencies to develop regulations for considering wetlands protection during the decision-making process for their proposed actions. The DOE's regulations for implementing this Executive Order are at 10 CFR Part 1022.

There are no wetlands at Yucca Mountain (DOE 2002, Appendix L); therefore, the regulations in 10 CFR Part 1022 do not apply to site activities conducted during 2004.

2.7 HAZARDOUS MATERIALS

This section describes the various federal and State of Nevada regulations that pertain to hazardous-material release reporting; planning, notification, reporting, and permitting; and registration and certification. The term hazardous materials, as it is used in this section, includes hazardous substances, extremely hazardous and highly hazardous substances, oil, hazardous chemicals, toxic chemicals, regulated substances, and pesticides.

2.7.1 Release Reporting

- **Comprehensive Environmental Response, Compensation, and Liability Act of 1980**

The Comprehensive Environmental Response, Compensation, and Liability Act of 1980 (CERCLA) establishes a framework for the cleanup of sites containing hazardous wastes that present a substantial danger to the public. As amended in 1986 by the Superfund Amendments and Reauthorization Act, it also requires emergency notification and response for release of a hazardous substance that exceeds threshold quantities. Executive Order 12580 (52 FR 2923), delegates to heads of executive departments and agencies the responsibility for undertaking remedial actions for releases or threatened releases that are not on the National Priority List. It also requires removal actions other than emergencies where the release is from any facility under the jurisdiction or control of executive departments and agencies. The release reporting regulations that implement CERCLA are promulgated in 40 CFR Part 302. The YMP did not have any releases subject to the requirements of this section in 2004.

- **Emergency Planning and Community Right-to-Know Act of 1986**

Section 304 of the Emergency Planning and Community Right-to-Know Act of 1986 (EPCRA) requires owners/operators of facilities at which a hazardous substance, an extremely hazardous substance, and/or a CERCLA hazardous substance, is produced, used, or stored, to notify the State Emergency Response Commission and the Local Emergency Planning Committee within 24-hours of a release that exceeds the substance's reportable quantity. These emergency-release notification requirements do not apply to releases that are federally permitted or result in exposures to persons solely within the boundaries of the facility, such as pesticide and fertilizer applications. Regulations implementing Section 304 are promulgated in 40 CFR 355.40. The YMP did not have any releases subject to the requirements of this section in 2004.

- **Clean Water Act of 1977**

Section 311 (b)(3) of the Clean Water Act of 1977 prohibits, among other things, the discharge of oil or hazardous substances into or upon navigable waters of the United States. Section 311 (b)(5) requires that, among other things, any person in charge of an onshore facility to notify the appropriate agency of the United States Government as soon as he/she has knowledge of a discharge of oil or a hazardous substance in violation of (b)(3). The Federal agency shall immediately notify the appropriate State agency of the discharge. Regulations implementing

Sections 311 (b)(3) and (5) are promulgated in 40 CFR Part 110. The YMP did not have any releases subject to the requirements of this section in 2004.

- **Nevada Administrative Code 445A.345 to 445A.348**

NAC 445A requires facility owners/operators to notify the Nevada Division of Environmental Protection by telephone as soon as possible after a release, but not later than the end of the first working day after the release. The following releases are subject to the notice requirements: (1) a release in a quantity equal to or greater than that which is required to be reported to the National Response Center pursuant to 40 CFR Part 302; (2) a release consisting of any quantity of pollutants, hazardous waste, or contaminants not listed in 40 CFR Part 302.4; and (3) releases of 25 gallons or more of a petroleum product to the soil or other surfaces of land; or is discovered on or in the groundwater or in at least three cubic yards of soil during excavation of soil, subsurface exploration, monitoring of groundwater or any other subsurface activity. The YMP did not have any releases subject to the requirements of this section in 2004.

2.7.2 Planning, Notification, Reporting, and Permitting

- **Emergency Planning and Community Right-to-Know Act of 1986**

EPCRA Sections 302, 311, and 312, and NAC 477, establish the planning, notification, reporting, and permitting requirements for hazardous materials that are produced, used, stored, handled, or transported by the YMP. To alleviate duplication of reporting requirements, the State Emergency Response Commission and the State Fire Marshal consolidated their reporting format into the Nevada Combined Agency Hazardous Materials Facility Report package. All information on hazardous materials contained in the package is submitted to the Nevada State Fire Marshal, State Emergency Response Commission, Local Emergency Planning Committee, and local fire department.

EPCRA Section 302 is designed to assist state and local officials to prepare for and respond to emergencies involving extremely hazardous substances. The emergency planning sections of EPCRA cover any facility that has an extremely hazardous substance in an amount equal to or greater than the substance's threshold planning quantity. These "covered" facilities must notify the State Emergency Response Commission and the Local Emergency Planning Committee. The information obtained and submitted to these agencies identifies potential chemical hazards, which in turn allows them to plan for the protection of vulnerable areas and to prepare for accidental releases in the community and environment. Regulations implementing Section 302 are promulgated in 40 CFR 355.30. In 2004, the YMP had extremely hazardous substances on site in excess of threshold planning quantities and reported this information through submittal of the Nevada Combined Agency Hazardous Materials Facility Report.

EPCRA Sections 311 and 312 require owners/operators of facilities that are required to maintain a Material Safety Data Sheet (MSDS) to submit the MSDS to state and local agencies if the chemical is present in an amount equal to or greater than its established threshold level. In addition, if a hazardous chemical is present at a facility in an amount equal to or greater than its established threshold level, the facility is required to prepare and submit an inventory form to state and local agencies. Regulations implementing Sections 311 and 312 are promulgated in

40 CFR Part 370. In 2004, the YMP had hazardous chemicals on site in excess of threshold quantities and reported this information through submittal of the Nevada Combined Agency Hazardous Materials Facility Report.

NAC 477 (subpart 323) states that a person shall not store a hazardous material in excess of the amount specified in the *International Fire Code*, as adopted by NAC 477 (subpart 281), unless the person has been issued a permit by the State Fire Marshal to store the material. Each permit must be renewed annually. In 2004, the YMP exceeded specified storage amounts for certain hazardous materials and therefore obtained the required permit from the Nevada State Fire Marshal's Office through submittal of the Nevada Combined Agency Hazardous Materials Facility Report.

EPCRA Section 313 requires the owner/operator of a facility to complete a toxic chemical release form for each toxic chemical manufactured, processed, or otherwise used at the facility in quantities that exceed the annual Toxic Chemical Activity Threshold. The toxic-chemical release reports are prepared for the preceding calendar year and are submitted annually to the EPA and designated state agencies by 1 July. Reports must contain information on toxic chemicals released to the air, land, and/or water. Section 313 also requires the reporting of information on offsite transfers of toxic chemicals for proper treatment, recycling, or disposal. Regulations implementing EPCRA Section 313 are promulgated in 40 CFR Part 372. In 2004, the YMP did not manufacture, process, or otherwise use toxic chemicals subject to this section in excess of activity thresholds.

- **NAC 459, Hazardous Materials**

The State of Nevada Chemical Catastrophe Act of 1991, codified in NAC 459, requires facility owners and operators that produce, use, store, or handle highly hazardous substances in amounts that equal or exceed threshold quantities to register with the Nevada Division of Environmental Protection and develop a management program for these substances. The requirements for a Chemical Accident Prevention Program (CAPP) fall into one of three categories: accident prevention, emergency response, or public right-to-know.

Through the accident prevention program of the CAPP, facilities are required to: evaluate and mitigate hazards; understand the design parameters of their processes and operate within the appropriate design limits; prepare comprehensive operating procedures; thoroughly train operators in those procedures; and maintain the facility equipment and instruments to prevent premature failure. Through the emergency response program of the CAPP, facilities are required to develop an action plan for dealing with potential emergency situations and they are further required to coordinate emergency response activities with local responders, to ensure that the responders are prepared to deal with the emergencies appropriately. Through the public right-to-know program of the CAPP, all information disseminated by the facilities is available to the public, as are all site inspection reports generated by CAPP staff. There are provisions to protect trade secrets under the CAPP, but submission requirements have been structured to generally preclude the need to submit such information. The YMP did not exceed a threshold quantity for any highly hazardous substances subject to this section in 2004.

- **Clean Air Act Amendments of 1990**

When Congress passed the Clean Air Act Amendments of 1990, it required EPA to publish regulations and guidance for chemical accident prevention at facilities using extremely hazardous substances. The Risk Management Program Rule was written to implement Section 112(r) of these amendments. The rule requires companies that use certain flammable and toxic substances to develop a Risk Management Program, which includes a(n):

1. Hazard assessment that details the potential effects of an accidental release, an accident history of the last five years, and an evaluation of worst-case and alternative accidental releases;

2. Prevention program that includes safety precautions and maintenance, monitoring, and employee training measures; and

3. Emergency response program that spells out emergency health care, employee training measures and procedures for informing the public and response agencies if an accident occurs.

By June 21, 1999, a summary of the regulated facility's risk management program was to be submitted to EPA. The plans must be revised and resubmitted every five years.

The List of Regulated Substances under Section 112(r) of the Clean Air Act is in 40 CFR Part 68 and includes their synonyms and threshold quantities. The YMP did not exceed a threshold quantity for any regulated substance subject to this section in 2004.

- **Toxic Substances Control Act of 1977**

The Toxic Substances Control Act of 1977 authorizes the EPA to require testing of new chemical substances that enter the environment and to regulate those chemicals when necessary. This act complements and expands existing toxic substance laws such as Section 112 of the Clean Air Act and Section 307 of the Clean Water Act of 1977. This act also regulates certain toxic substances, specifically polychlorinated biphenyls, chlorofluorocarbons, asbestos, dioxins, certain metal-working fluids, and hexavalent chromium. In 2004, there were no YMP activities subject to this act.

2.7.3 Registration and Certification

- Federal Insecticide, Fungicide, and Rodenticide Act and NRS 586, Pesticides

The primary focus of this law and the Nevada statute is to provide federal and state control of pesticide distribution, sale, and use. EPA was given authority under the act not only to study the consequences of pesticide usage but also to require users such as farmers and utility companies to register when purchasing pesticides. Pesticide users, those that commercially apply pesticides, also must take exams for certification as applicators of pesticides. All pesticides used in the United States must be registered (licensed) by EPA. Registration assures that pesticides will be properly labeled and that if in accordance with specifications, will not cause unreasonable harm to the environment. The YMP did not purchase any pesticides in 2004 and pesticide applications

for the YMP site were performed by the Management and Operating contractor for the Nevada Test Site in accordance with the Act.

2.8 HAZARDOUS AND NON-HAZARDOUS WASTES

2.8.1 Federal Facility Compliance Act of 1992

The Federal Facility Compliance Act of 1992 amends parts of the Resource Conservation and Recovery Act of 1976 (RCRA) to require compliance by federal facilities with federal, state, and local laws and regulations related to solid and hazardous wastes. In addition, the Federal Facility Compliance Act of 1992 waives the federal government's sovereign immunity for violations of federal, state, and local laws and regulations related to solid and hazardous wastes. The YMP complies with all applicable laws and regulations related to solid and hazardous wastes, as described in Section 2.8.

2.8.2 Resource Conservation and Recovery Act of 1976

The RCRA is a comprehensive program for regulating and managing hazardous wastes (Subtitle C), nonhazardous solid wastes (Subtitle D), and underground storage tanks (Subtitle I), and promoting the use of recycled and recovered materials (Subtitle F). The RCRA's primary goals are to protect human health and the environment from the potential hazards of waste disposal, to conserve energy and natural resources, to reduce the amount of waste generated, and to ensure that wastes are managed in an environmentally sound manner. The RCRA sets a federal policy of restricting land disposal of untreated hazardous wastes in favor of environmentally preferred alternatives such as treatment, source reductions, and recycling. Regulations promulgated under the RCRA define hazardous wastes and specify requirements for their transport, handling, treatment, storage, and disposal. Section 6001 of the RCRA requires federal agencies to comply with all federal, state, interstate, and local requirements relating to the control and abatement of solid- and hazardous-waste disposal.

Subtitle C–In 1985, the EPA authorized Nevada to administer Subtitle C of the RCRA (managing hazardous waste). The Nevada Division of Environmental Protection is the agency responsible for administering this part of the RCRA (NAC 444). Activities at the Yucca Mountain site generate more than 220 pounds, but less than 2,204 pounds per month of RCRA-defined hazardous wastes; therefore, the site is regulated under the act as a small-quantity generator. The YMP submitted a "Notification of Hazardous Waste Activity" to the Nevada Division of Environmental Protection for the generation of hazardous waste at the Yucca Mountain site in 1989 and received EPA identification number NV7890090023. Activities at the YMP's Las Vegas office facilities generate less than 220 pounds per month of RCRA-defined hazardous wastes; therefore, the site is regulated under the act as a conditionally exempt small-quantity generator.

State of Nevada regulations require small quantity generators to complete a biennial hazardous waste report. The report identifies the types and quantities of hazardous waste generated and transported offsite for treatment, storage, or disposal by the YMP and is used to track national trends in waste management practices. A biennial hazardous waste report was not required to be submitted to the State of Nevada for waste management activities on the YMP during 2004.

Subtitle D–Nonhazardous solid waste is regulated by Nevada under Subtitle D of the RCRA (NAC 444). Refuse, along with salvageable, industrial, and special non-hazardous waste, were recycled or disposed of during 2004 in accordance with these regulations (Section 3.8.2, Table 5).

Subtitle F–Subtitle F of the RCRA requires that federal agencies comply with all federal, state, interstate, and local requirements stemming from the RCRA, unless exempted by the President. The YMP complies with the requirements of the RCRA as described above. Subtitle F also encourages the federal government to institute a procurement policy that encourages the purchase of recoverable materials which, because of their performance, can be substituted for virgin material at a reasonable price. YMP compliance with the procurement policy is discussed in Section 3.8.3.

Subtitle I–Management of the RCRA underground-storage-tank program has been delegated to Nevada (NAC 459). Because YMP activities do not require the use of underground storage tanks regulated by Subtitle I, this section is not applicable.

2.9 DOE DIRECTIVES

The following DOE Directives were directly applicable to the environmental program conducted by the ORD during 2004.

DOE Order 231.1A establishes requirements to ensure that Environmental, Safety and Health (ES&H) information required by law or regulation, or essential for evaluating operations and identifying opportunities for improvements, is collected and reported. This site environmental report and an annual NEPA planning summary (Section 2.1.2) are the reporting requirements of this Order that are applicable to the YMP environmental program.

DOE Order 450.1 implements sound stewardship practices that protect the air, water, land, and other natural and cultural resources affected by DOE operations. It also requires DOE to meet or exceed compliance with applicable environmental; public health; and resource protection laws, regulations, and DOE requirements in a cost-effective manner. These objectives must be accomplished by implementing EMSs at DOE sites. An EMS is a continuing cycle of planning, implementing, evaluating, and improving processes and actions undertaken to achieve environmental goals. These EMSs must be part of ISMSs established pursuant to DOE Policy 450.4.

DOE Order 451.1B describes DOE's requirements and responsibilities for implementing the NEPA, the Council on Environmental Quality Regulations Implementing the Procedural Provisions of the NEPA (40 CFR Parts 1500-1508), and the DOE NEPA Implementing Procedures (10 CFR Part 1021). Section 2.1.2 includes a summary of actions taken by the ORD to comply with the NEPA and this Order.

DOE Order 5400.5 establishes limits and requirements for a variety of scenarios involving potential exposure to radiation. Also covered are the radiological monitoring requirements for the sale or release of equipment or material potentially contaminated by radioactive material. Project equipment that was historically transferred from the Nevada Test Site or other DOE sites with no documented radiation survey, and which is scheduled for release to the general public, is

surveyed in accordance with this Order. In 2004, the Project did not release any item having levels of residual radioactive contamination greater than those listed in this Order. Consequently, the requirement in the guidelines for the preparation of site environmental reports (Wallo 2005) to discuss approved release limits, dose estimates, radionuclide concentrations, and expected end-use scenarios are not applicable.

DOE Order 5480.4 specifies requirements for mandatory ES&H standards applicable to all DOE and DOE-contractor operations, lists reference ES&H standards, and identifies the sources of the mandatory environmental standards. The mandatory standards listed in this Order that were applicable to the YMP during 2004 are the laws and regulations described in this section.

DOE Policy 450.4 describes objectives, guiding principles, and core functions of an ISMS to be implemented throughout the DOE complex. DOE acquisition regulations (48 CFR Part 970) require contractors to manage and perform work in accordance with a documented ISMS. BSC documents its processes and mechanisms for implementing ISMS in an *Integrated Safety Management Description Document* (Anderson 2003). That document describes the implementation of ISMS objectives throughout BSC operations. In 2004, BSC conducted an independent corporate review of the ISMS led by senior managers from Bechtel and Science Applications International Corporation and composed of subject matter experts from corporate and subcontractor resources (Metta 2004). Findings and recommendations from the review were consolidated in condition reports and entered into the ORD's corrective action program for tracking.

DOE Policy 450.5 is for line-management oversight of ES&H and for the use of contractor self-assessment programs to implement that oversight. Section 3.9 describes the YMP environmental assessment program.

3. ENVIRONMENTAL PROGRAMS

This section describes the YMP environmental program conducted during 2004 to implement the requirements of the environmental permits described in Section 2, monitor impacts of the Project, and protect the environment at Yucca Mountain. The organization, responsibilities, and requirements of this program are described in the *Environmental Management Plan* (YMP 2000).

All aspects of the YMP environmental program are conducted in accordance with the YMP ISMS. During the planning stage for all Project activities, potential impacts to the environment are identified and measures to mitigate those impacts are developed. These measures, including clear roles and responsibilities for conducting work and ensuring compliance, as well as environmental training, are incorporated into written procedures (i.e., work instructions) that describe how the work must be conducted. For maintenance and other ongoing projects, environmental review is conducted during planning and development of work instructions. For new activities at Yucca Mountain, a review also occurs as part of the land-access review and control process (Section 3.1). Assessments (Section 3.9) and surveillances (Section 3.10) are conducted to ensure that work is performed within controls and to provide feedback for improvement.

3.1 LAND-ACCESS REVIEW AND CONTROL

All new YMP activities, as well as all ongoing activities that are to be substantially modified or require access to additional land, must undergo a review before being approved. This process is initiated when principal investigators or responsible managers submit a land access request. The request is evaluated to determine whether the activity (1) is covered under existing ROWRs; (2) will result in land use conflicts; (3) will be in compliance with applicable federal, state, and local environmental laws and regulations; (4) will require any new regulated or hazardous materials; and (5) will require additional environmental permits or modifications to existing permits. If new permits are required, they are applied for at this time. Reviews or pre-activity surveys for biological and cultural resources (Sections 3.2 and 3.4) are conducted to identify potential impacts to those resources and prepare for future reclamation. Surveys for radiological hazards and residual radiological contamination also are conducted for activities planned in certain areas on the Nevada Test Site.

If the activity can be conducted in compliance with environmental regulations and is acceptable to the ORD, a land-access approval letter is issued. The letter contains permit requirements and other stipulations that must be incorporated into planning and implementation procedures as part of the YMP ISMS.

Clearance surveys for tortoises are conducted before the start of any ground-disturbing activity that would remove vegetation (Section 3.2). Topsoil, if it exists in sufficient quantities, is then removed and stored onsite or at one of the Project's existing topsoil stockpiles. During activities, surveillances are conducted to evaluate compliance with environmental stipulations (Section 3.10). After activities are completed, the amount of land disturbed is measured to track compliance with the biological opinion for the YMP (Buchanan 1997). If the site is no longer required, a reclamation plan is developed (Section 3.3).

During 2004, 12 land-access requests were received. The requests were evaluated with respect to land access authorization; cultural, biological, and radiological impacts; and compliance with environmental regulations. Of the 12 requests, 1 was canceled, 7 were approved, 2 received partial approval, and 2 were awaiting approval. Biological evaluations, which included 6 field surveys, were conducted for all 12 sites. Archaeological evaluations, which included 7 field surveys, were conducted for all 12 sites. No environmental permits were required for any of these activities. Radiological evaluations were conducted at all 12 sites. No radiological issues were identified.

In 2004 the following 3 surface-disturbing activities required clearing of vegetation or removal of topsoil from about 1 acre of previously undisturbed desert tortoise habitat.

- Upgrading the communications system for the University of Nevada Seismological Laboratory (0.05 acres)
- Blading an access road to conduct spectral analysis of surface waves for repository facilities (0.89 acres)
- Relocation of the Project Accumulation Area for hazardous wastes (0.05 acres).

The total amount of land disturbed at Yucca Mountain since 1991 is now 320 acres. This is 94 acres less than the total of 414 acres stipulated in the biological opinion for the YMP (Buchanan 1997). Of the 320 acres disturbed since 1991, 271 acres were disturbed before 1996. The amount of land disturbed over the past 7 years has generally decreased, with 12.4 acres disturbed in 1998; 5.9 acres in 1999; 2 acres in 2000; 0 acres in 2001; 0.4 acres in 2002; 0 acres in 2003; and 1 acre in 2004.

3.2 BIOLOGICAL SURVEYS

Biological surveys are conducted to comply with the Endangered Species Act of 1973 (Section 2.3.1); the Migratory Bird Treaty Act (Section 2.3.2); Section 404 of the Clean Water Act of 1977 (Section 2.6.1), and to develop methods for minimizing the impacts of YMP activities on plants and animals.

The biological opinion for the YMP (Buchanan 1997) requires pre-activity surveys for desert tortoises prior to clearing vegetation. During these surveys, biologists evaluate potential impacts to tortoises from the proposed activity and, if necessary, identify ways to modify the activity to avoid harming tortoises and their burrows. Project biologists also evaluate potential impacts to migratory birds and other plant and animal species classified as sensitive by the BLM (or other land management agencies). In addition, biologists determine whether activities will need a permit to place dredged or fill material into waters of the United States. The biological opinion also requires clearance surveys to move tortoises or tortoise nests if they are in danger. Those surveys must be conducted before ground-disturbing activities, off-road driving, or trench filling can commence.

Pre-activity and clearance surveys were conducted for 6 activities in 2004:

- Upgrades to the communications system for the University of Nevada Seismological Laboratory
- Spectral analysis of surface waves for repository facilities
- Relocation of Project Accumulation Area for hazardous wastes
- Borehole drilling for repository investigations
- Construction of tortoise burrows near drill sites for the repository facility
- Reclamation and remediation of disturbed sites.

Approximately 28 acres were surveyed. Seventeen inactive tortoise burrows were found during the clearance surveys. Two were avoided during subsequent work. The remaining 15 burrows were flagged and will be avoided when surface-disturbing activities begin. Three active burrows and three tortoises occupying the burrows were also found. Six potential areas for relocation of tortoises and nests were identified. If necessary, the tortoises and nests will be relocated when work begins at these sites. None of these or other activities conducted at Yucca Mountain during 2004 required placement of fill material into waters of the United States, or posed a threat to migratory birds.

3.3 HABITAT RECLAMATION

Habitat is reclaimed for a variety of reasons:

- Comply with the terms and conditions of the biological opinion for site characterization (Buchanan 1997)
- Meet requirements in the Project's ROWRs (e.g., BLM 1988, 1989)
- Implement requirements in the Project's air-quality operating permit (Elges 2001)
- Reduce the spread of exotic plant species as required by Executive Order 13112 (64 FR 6183) (see Section 2.3.4)
- Implement commitments in the environmental assessment for site characterization (DOE 1986, Sections 4.1.1.4 and 4.1.2.6)
- Minimize impacts of site characterization, as required by Section 113 of the NWPA (Section 2.1.1).

Reclamation is conducted in accordance with the *Reclamation Implementation Plan* (YMP 2001a). The long-term goal of the reclamation program is to reestablish processes on disturbed sites that will eventually lead to self-sustaining plant communities. Planning inventories, reclamation surveys, implementation, monitoring, remediation, and site-release

evaluations are conducted to accomplish this goal. The planning process includes pre- and post-disturbance surveys and evaluations of past reclamation trials at Yucca Mountain. This information is used to identify implementation techniques for establishing structural and physical plant-community components, controlling soil erosion, and facilitating the establishment of native vegetation. After implementation, monitoring is conducted to evaluate plant growth, identify remediation needs, and make a final determination regarding reclamation success so that sites can be released from further DOE input.

3.3.1. Reclamation Inventories

Reclamation inventories are conducted to identify methods for reducing the impact of construction activities and to assess site conditions and resources for final reclamation. Vegetation associations, plant species and their abundance, and the presence of exotic species are measured during these inventories. Stipulations may be developed for depth and location of topsoil stockpiles, chemical or vegetative stabilization of stockpiles, plant salvage, and practices to reduce wind or water erosion. Stipulations from the inventories are incorporated into approval letters for land access.

During 2004, reclamation inventories were conducted at 4 sites where surface disturbances were proposed.

- Upgrades to the communications system for the University of Nevada Seismological Laboratory
- Spectral analysis of surface waves for repository facilities
- Relocation of Project Accumulation Area for hazardous wastes
- Borehole drilling for repository investigations.

Recommendations were made for salvaging topsoil during construction of the road and drill pad for the borehole drilling for repository investigation, which will be completed in 2005. Topsoil salvage was not required for the remaining activities due to their small size or the nature of the disturbance.

3.3.2 Reclamation Surveys

Reclamation surveys are conducted to assess reclamation requirements at disturbed areas no longer needed for the YMP. Survey information is gathered on slope, aspect, disturbance area, disturbance severity, site preparation need for revegetation, and intensity of reclamation required. Based on this information, a final reclamation plan is written, which describes the actions needed for site preparation and reclamation. Site decommissioning is completed before reclamation, including the removal of waste and aboveground man-made structures, filling of trenches, and the closing and sealing of boreholes.

In 2004, no reclamation surveys were required.

3.3.3 Reclamation Implementation

Reclamation is considered short-term when topsoil that is removed from disturbed sites is stockpiled for less than one year, and trenches or pits are backfilled outside of the usual planting season (October through December). Chemical stabilization of surface soil is commonly used in these circumstances. Final reclamation is implemented on long-term topsoil stockpiles and on sites that are no longer needed for the YMP and have been decommissioned. Final reclamation includes spreading and contouring topsoil; creating erosion-control structures; ripping, seeding, spreading and anchoring mulch; and fencing to reduce loss of new vegetation to herbivores.

Final reclamation was completed at 3 sites in 2004. These sites totaled 0.64 acres. Sites were ripped to reduce soil compaction and seeded in January with a mixture of native plant species. After seeding, straw matting was applied to all sites to help reduce surface evaporation, protect seeds, and reduce establishment of exotic species. To date, final reclamation has been implemented on 89 acres of former YMP disturbances.

3.3.4 Reclamation Monitoring and Remediation

To evaluate reclamation progress, sites are monitored periodically. If progress is not satisfactory, remediation is conducted (e.g., re-seeding, transplanting, erosion-control efforts). During the spring and early summer of 2004, 97 reclaimed sites were monitored, including soil pits, trenches, boreholes, and access roads. Twenty-eight percent of the sites were in good condition, 33 percent were in fair condition, 23 percent were in failing condition, and 16 percent were not assigned a rating because plant density was too low. Germination on unrated sites was probably poor because the sites were recently seeded or because of dry soil conditions; germination is expected when soil conditions become more favorable.

Six sites (2.8 acres) that were reclaimed more than three years ago, but were in failing condition, were remediated again. The sites were re-seeded and mulched with straw matting. On most sites, a seedbed was prepared using a subsoiler to alleviate compaction. Sites in failing condition that were reclaimed less than three years ago will be remediated as necessary in the future.

Vegetation cover and soil erosion were monitored on 40 topsoil stockpiles. Three of the stockpiles exhibited erosion and were stabilized using straw matting and rip-rap as needed. No action was required to maintain the remaining stockpiles. Soil from these stockpiles will be respread over sites during final reclamation.

Standards used to determine the success of reclamation are contained in the *Reclamation Implementation Plan* (YMP 2001a, Section 6.1). Reclamation is considered successful if plant cover, density, and species richness of native perennial vegetation are equal to, or exceed, 60 percent of the value of the same parameters in undisturbed reference areas. If reclaimed sites meet these criteria, they can be released from further monitoring. During 2004, one 5.5-acre site met the success standards for release. A report summarizing the monitoring results will be prepared in 2005. To date, 95 disturbed sites totaling 27 acres have been successfully reclaimed and released from monitoring.

3.4 CULTURAL RESOURCES AND NATIVE AMERICAN INTERACTIONS

Surveys for archeological resources, educational initiatives, and interactions with Native Americans were conducted to meet the requirements of the laws and regulations described in Section 2.4.

3.4.1 Survey, Data Recovery, and Research

The YMP conducts pre-activity surveys for cultural resources before sites are disturbed. Survey activities, findings, and related data-recovery efforts are reported to various state and federal agencies. In addition, the condition of known archaeological sites is monitored periodically. Artifact inventories are submitted to the U.S. Department of the Interior in compliance with reporting requirements of the Native American Graves Protection and Repatriation Act. Artifacts are maintained in a curation facility in Las Vegas, Nevada, in accordance with 36 CFR Part 79.

Seven archaeological pre-activity surveys were conducted during 2004 in areas proposed for site activities. Sixty new archaeological sites and 84 isolated artifacts were identified during these surveys. Five survey reports were submitted to the SHPO and the Advisory Council on Historic Preservation. Several other reports were prepared for ORD review prior to submittal to the SHPO and the Advisory Council on Historic Preservation. Conditions at eight previously documented historical properties at Yucca Mountain were evaluated, and no major disturbances were noted. No new data-recovery plans were developed during 2004.

3.4.2 Educational Initiatives

The Project has developed educational displays to inform YMP workers and the public about the YMP archaeological program and the kinds of historical properties at the site. These displays are located at the Yucca Mountain Information Centers in Las Vegas, Beatty, and Pahrump, and at the Site Information Center at Yucca Mountain for use during public tours. Items displayed include maps of southern Nevada depicting areas historically occupied by various tribes; biographical sketches of local Native Americans; artifacts and written explanations of their manufacture; examples of basket weaving and animal traps; traditional stories about plants and animals; and descriptions of plants as religious objects and sources of food, clothing, and medicine. A portable display and slide show has been developed for other presentations.

3.4.3 Native American Interactions

The ORD continued interactions with involved Native American tribes in 2004, as directed by the laws and regulations summarized in Section 2.4. Currently, the YMP Native American Interaction Program involves 17 concerned tribes and organizations (comprised of Western Shoshone, Southern Paiute, and Owens Valley Paiute and Shoshone) located in Nevada, California, Utah, and Arizona.

During 2004, the DOE tribal liaison continued to work to become familiar with the tribes and Native American issues associated with the YMP Native American Interaction Program. Support was given to DOE headquarters throughout the year to insure continued implementation of the DOE American Indian and Alaska Native Tribal Government Policy. In addition, the

DOE sponsored educational workshops, speaking engagements, and site tours at which the YMP Native American program was explained to the public.

The ORD has a standing offer to continue consultations required by the Native American Graves Protection and Repatriation Act with any tribe that was not able to participate during the 1998/1999-consultation process. To date, the DOE has not received any additional requests for consultation, or any formal requests for repatriation of artifacts that meet the criteria of the Native American Graves Protection and Repatriation Act.

3.5 AIR QUALITY

Ambient air-particulate matter has been sampled since 1989 using standard methods. From 1991 to 1999, the Project's air-quality operating permit required the DOE to measure PM_{10}-inhalable particulate matter 10 micrometers or less in diameter at Yucca Mountain. Monitoring has continued since then to demonstrate continued compliance with federal (40 CFR Part 50) and Nevada (NAC 445B) ambient air-quality standards.

Air quality was monitored at 2 sites during 2004. Site 1 is in Midway Valley near the Exploratory Studies Facility (Figure 3); it represents conditions near most of the surface-disturbing activity at Yucca Mountain. Site 9 is at Gate 510 on the Nevada Test Site about 13 miles south of the Exploratory Studies Facility. This site, located near the community of Amargosa Valley, is used as an indicator of "ambient" air quality. Two PM_{10} samplers were operated simultaneously at Site 1 to assess the precision of measurements for quality assurance requirements. PM_{10} has been sampled at Site 1 since April 1989 and at Site 9 since October 1992.

As in previous years, 24-hour sampling was scheduled every sixth day during 2004. Site 1 and Site 9 had valid sampling results for 59 and 60 days, respectively, out of 61 possible scheduled days. The sampling and analysis program was conducted in accordance with EPA and Nevada standards, monitoring requirements, and guidance.

Concentrations of airborne particulate matter were generally low in 2004. Summaries of the last five years of sampling are shown in Table 2. The highest 24-hour concentrations of PM_{10} in 2004 at Sites 1 and 9 were 24 and 27 micrograms per standard cubic meter ($\mu g/m^3$), respectively. All measurements in 2004 were much lower than the maximum allowable 24-hour concentration of 150 $\mu g/m^3$. Arithmetic mean concentrations were 8 and 9 $\mu g/m^3$ at Sites 1 and 9, respectively, which are about 80 percent lower than the maximum allowable annual arithmetic mean of 50 $\mu g/m^3$. These annual average concentrations are similar to those from previous years (Table 2).

Table 2. Summary of Ambient Particulate Matter PM_{10} Sampling, 2000 through 2004 ($\mu g/m^3$)

Site	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004
Highest 24-hour average					
1	38	19	52	33	24
9	36	22	43	38	27
Second-highest 24-hour average					
1	34	18	37	17	19
9	33	19	39	35	21
Arithmetic mean of 24-hour average					
1	11	8	10	8	8
9	11	9	10	9	9

3.6 METEOROLOGICAL MONITORING

Local meteorology has been monitored at Yucca Mountain since 1986 to characterize environmental conditions, study mechanisms of airborne transport of contaminated materials, and provide input to the design of surface facilities (per the data-collection requirements of DOE 2004a).

Meteorological parameters, including wind, temperature, humidity, precipitation, barometric pressure, and atmospheric stability, were measured at 4 sites during 2004 (Sites 1, 2, 4, and 9) (Figure 3). Precipitation, air temperature, and humidity were measured at 5 other sites (Sites 3, 5, 6, 7, 8) around Midway Valley and in Jackass Flats. Rain and snow also were measured at 3 other locations (Sites 401, 405, and 415) on the crest of Yucca Mountain. Precipitation measurements at storage gauges are made at all sites, and are the basis of the data summarized in this report.

Precipitation during 2004 was greater than any year since 1998, and was the second year in a row that exceeded the long-term average for these sites (Table 3). The annual totals from the last 5 years, averages from both the last 5 years (2000-2004), and the average from the nine full years of measurements (1996-2004) are shown in Table 3. Precipitation varies among sites in a similar pattern to previous years, with Sites 5 and 9 in Jackass Flats and Amargosa Valley having the least amount each year, and Sites 3 and 6 on the east and north sides of Yucca Mountain generally having the greatest average amounts.

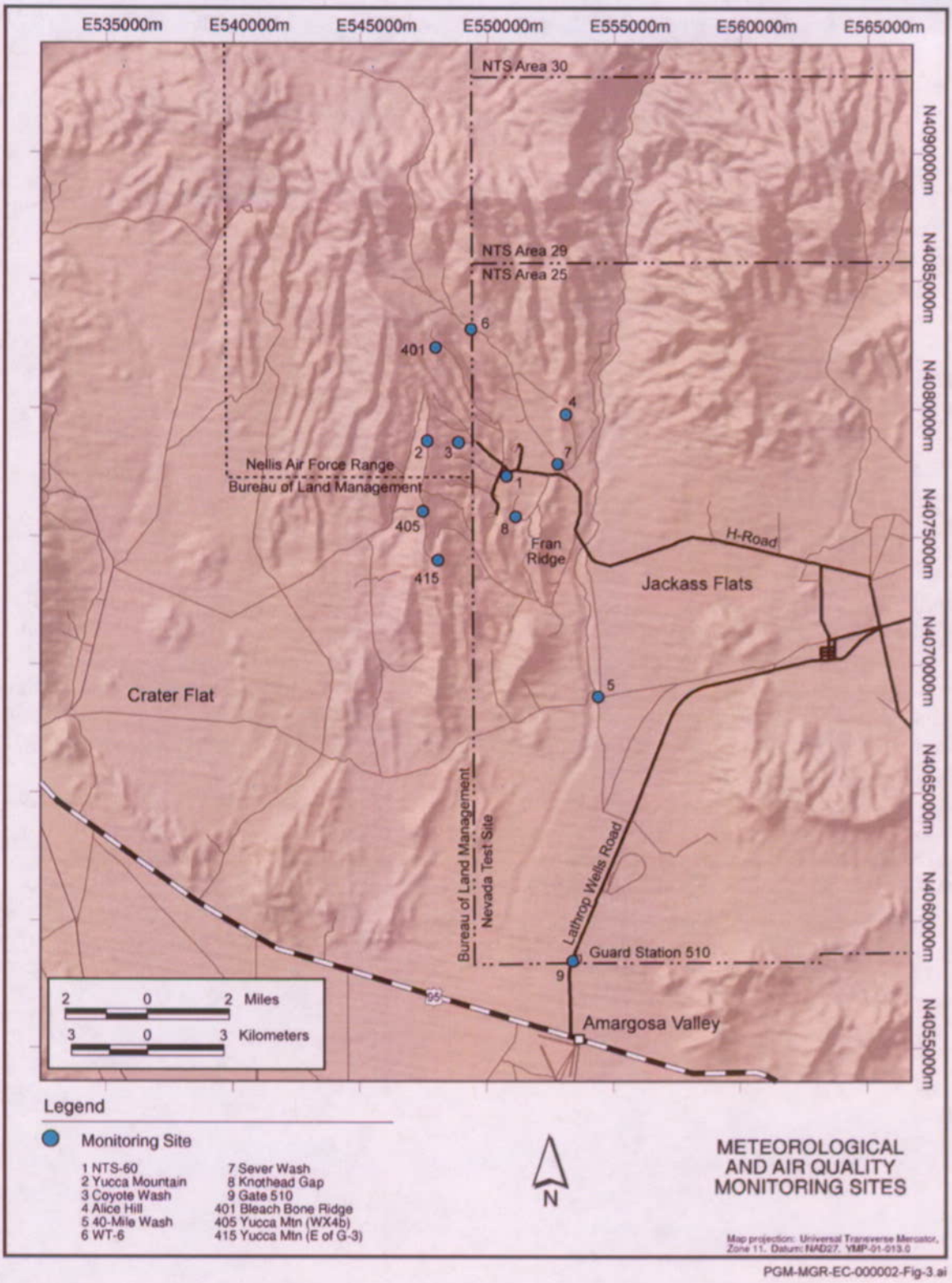


Figure 3. Air Quality and Meteorology-Monitoring Sites

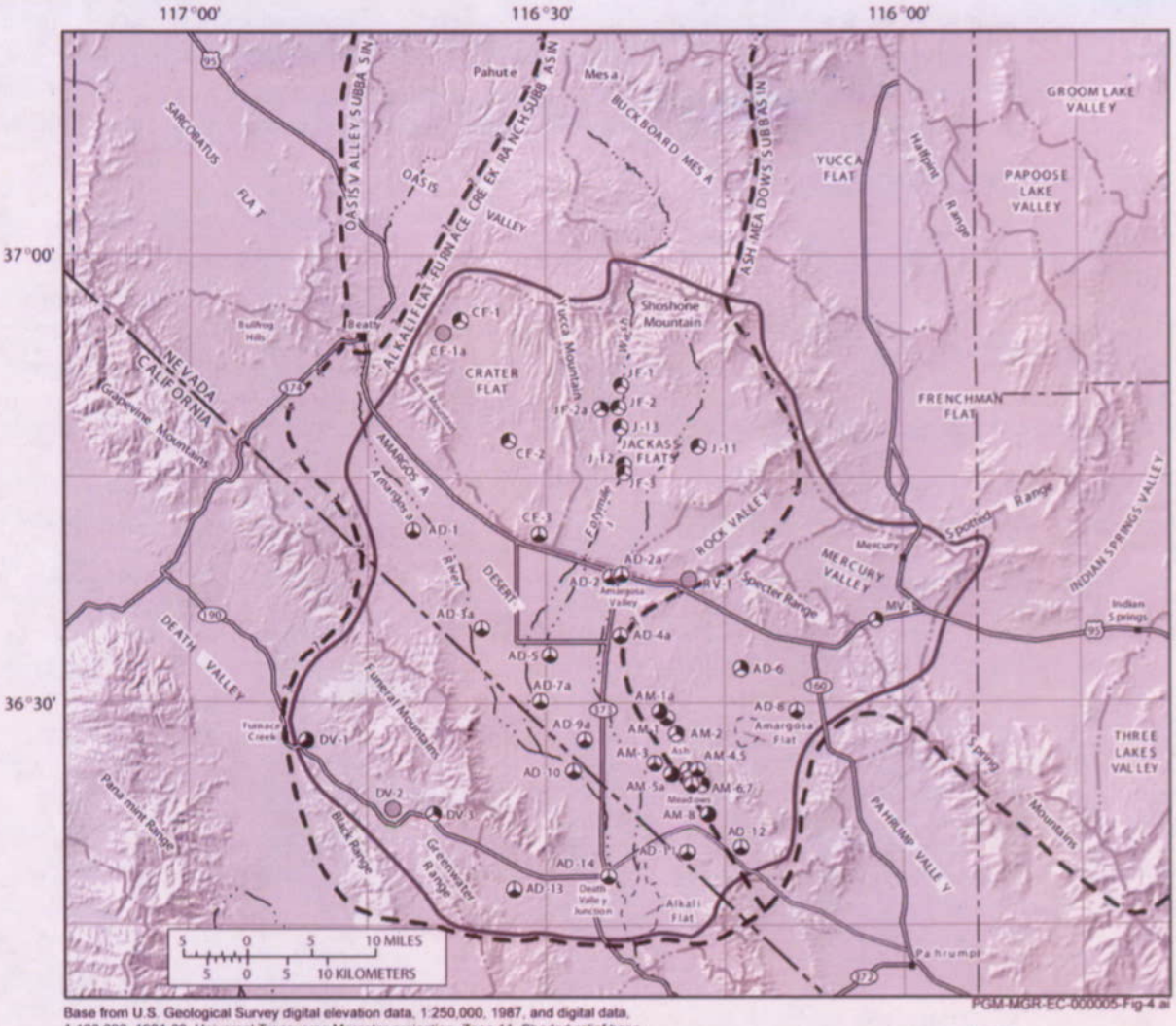
Table 3. Annual Precipitation at Meteorological Sites, 2000 through 2004

Site	Elevation (feet)	Precipitation (inches) 2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	Average 00-04	Average 96-04
1	3,750	9.69	7.07	1.56	9.65	11.25	7.84	8.03
2	4,849	8.73	7.82	1.26	10.94	12.63	8.28	7.86
3	4,196	10.26	8.63	1.33	11.59	12.46	8.85	8.76
4	4,049	8.61	7.31	1.31	9.03	11.23	7.50	7.77
5	3,127	5.36	5.03	1.32	8.44	9.11	5.85	5.95
6	4,315	10.70	8.83	1.16	8.95	12.81	8.49	8.57
7	3,547	9.91	6.74	1.26	9.50	11.25	7.73	7.95
8	3,711	9.71	6.87	1.06	10.03	11.10	7.75	7.72
9	2,749	4.09	4.51	0.74	6.03	7.26	4.53	4.55
401	5,125	9.65	8.10	1.20	8.79	12.23	6.51	--
405	4,882	8.31	5.96	0.99	8.34	10.37	5.98	--
415	4,725	7.36	6.26	1.11	9.12	10.06	5.90	--

3.7 WATER MONITORING

Groundwater levels and spring flows in the Yucca Mountain region have been monitored since 1992. The monitoring is designed to detect and document background fluctuations in regional groundwater levels and spring flows, and to identify potential effects of groundwater withdrawals from YMP-permitted wells on regional groundwater levels and spring flows. Because the YMP does not release effluents into groundwater or otherwise affect the quality of that water, water quality is monitored only to meet permit requirements described in Section 2.6.

During 2004, groundwater levels and spring flows were monitored at 34 wells, 1 flowing well, and 5 springs (Figure 4). Water levels were measured monthly at wells, and discharge rates at springs were measured quarterly. Annual estimates of groundwater withdrawals were obtained primarily from the U.S. Geological Survey and the Nevada Division of Water Resources. In May 2004, the Nevada Department of Transportation plugged and abandoned Well AD-2a in the Amargosa Desert and constructed a new well (AD-2b) nearby (not shown on Figure 4). The U.S. Geological Survey selected well AD-2b as a replacement well for monitoring.



Base from U.S. Geological Survey digital elevation data, 1:250,000, 1987, and digital data, 1:100,000, 1981-89; Universal Transverse Mercator projection, Zone 11. Shaded-relief base from 1:250,000-scale Digital Elevation Model; sun illumination from northwest at 30 degrees above horizon

PGM-MGR-EC-000005-Fig-4.ai

EXPLANATION

- Study-area boundary
- Ground-water subbasin boundary – From Laczniak and others (1996, pl. 1). Queried where location uncertain
- Hydrographic-area boundary

Data-collection site – Site number (table1) and primary contributing unit are indicated

- AD-6 Carbonate rock
- CF-2 Volcanic rock
- AD-1 Valley fill
- DV-2 Undifferentiated sedimentary rock
- DV-1 Combined carbonate rock and valley fill

Source: Modified from DOE 1999

Figure 4. Groundwater Monitoring Wells and Springs

The potential effects of water withdrawals from YMP wells are assessed by comparing current conditions to historical and baseline conditions. Additionally, measurements of spring flow provide data on the status of water availability in the environmentally sensitive areas of Ash Meadows, Devils Hole, and Death Valley. Results of this monitoring program through 2000 are described in Fenelon and Moreo (2002). That report analyzed YMP water-monitoring data and other regional data for trends or fluctuations in water levels and rates of discharge. The analysis showed that between 1992 and 2000, water levels in Jackass Flats, where YMP withdraws the majority of its water, either had slight upward trends or were unchanged. Changes in groundwater levels and spring flows elsewhere in the region were attributed to factors such as climatic change, local and regional groundwater withdrawals, and earthquakes (Fenelon and Moreo 2002). YMP groundwater withdrawals had no measurable effect on regional groundwater levels or spring flows. Calendar year 2004 groundwater-level data for wells in Jackass Flats are compared to established baseline data in Table 4.

Table 4. Water Level Altitudes in Wells in Jackass Flats (in feet)

	2004[a]			Previous Years – Median Value				
Well	Min	Max	Median	2003[b]	2002[b]	2001[b]	2000[b]	Baseline[c]
JF-1	2393.1	2393.6	2393.4	2393.3	2393.1	2393.1	2392.8	2392.5
JF-2	2392.5	2392.8	2392.7	2392.7	2392.1	2392.8	2392.7	2392.1
JF-2a	2471.1	2473.1	2471.8	2471.9	2470.8	2471.0	2470.6	2468.6
J-13	2389.2	2390.8	2390.0	2390.8	2389.7	2390.5	2390.2	2390.0
J-11	2402.2	2402.7	2402.5	2402.6	2402.3	2402.7	2402.4	2402.2
J-12	2388.6	2389.0	2388.9	2388.8	2388.6	2388.5	2388.4	2388.3
JF-3	2388.5	2389.0	2388.8	2388.7	2388.5	2388.5	2388.4	2388.3

[a] Wade 2004a; Wade 2004b; Wade 2004c; Wade 2005e
[b] See previous *Site Environmental Reports* (YMP 2004; YMP 2003; YMP 2002; YMP 2001b)
[c] Locke 2001. Table 10 (baseline years are 1985-1991 for JF-2, JF-2, and JF-2a; 1989-1991 for J-13; 1990-1991 for J-1 and J-12; and 1992-1993 for J-3)

Well JF-3 was installed in 1992 and has been routinely measured since then to monitor the effects of groundwater withdrawals from Wells J-12 and J-13 (Figure 4). The depth to water in Well JF-3 and most other YMP monitoring and water-supply wells in Basin 227A (Wells J-11, J-12, J-13, JF-1, and JF-2) was slightly higher in 2003 than baseline water levels (Table 4). Compared to the baseline, 2004 median water levels have increased in all monitored wells except J-13, which has not changed compared to the baseline. Prior to April 2002, Well J-13 was the primary water-supply well at Yucca Mountain (see Section 2.10 for additional information). Since April 2002, water withdrawals from this well decreased from about 40 acre-feet per year to about 5 acre-feet in 2004.

3.8 HAZARDOUS MATERIALS, HAZARDOUS AND NON-HAZARDOUS WASTES, AND POLLUTION PREVENTION

3.8.1 Management of Hazardous Materials

To minimize potential hazards to personnel and the environment, review and approval of each hazardous material is required before it can be purchased or used on the Project. General information on the amount of hazardous materials to be stored and used, storage locations, and a

description of how the material will be used, along with a copy of the MSDS, is submitted for review. The review comprises environmental, industrial hygiene, safety, and fire-protection disciplines. When available, suitable less-hazardous or environmentally friendly substitutes are discussed with the requester. If no substitute is available, authorization to use the material may be denied, or requirements are developed for use of the material to minimize risks (e.g., storage methods, personal protective equipment and handling requirements, training, spill prevention methods, and waste disposal).

All chemicals stored at Yucca Mountain and other sites operated by the Project are inventoried and tracked. This information is used to comply with the requirements identified in Section 2.7.2.

3.8.2 Management of Hazardous and Non-Hazardous Wastes

Hazardous and Universal Wastes–To meet the requirements of the RCRA (Section 2.8.2), all hazardous and universal wastes are accumulated, packaged, transported, and disposed of offsite in accordance with federal and state requirements. These wastes were generated from sources such as laboratory studies, routine cleaning and maintenance, construction, expired chemicals, and excess supplies from discontinued equipment. There were 2 offsite shipments of these wastes during 2004.

Non-Hazardous Waste–During 2004, refuse, industrial, salvageable, and other non-hazardous waste were recycled, reused, or disposed (Table 5) in accordance with federal and state requirements (Section 2.8.2). As part of the YMP pollution-prevention program (Section 3.8.3), efforts were made to recycle rather than dispose of waste whenever possible.

Table 5. Types and Amounts of Wastes Recycled, Reused, or Disposed of in 2004

Material	Method	Amount[a]
Debris (hydrocarbon-contaminated)	Disposed	0
Industrial solid waste	Disposed	0
Refuse (Las Vegas)	Disposed	292 metric tons
Refuse (Site)	Disposed	10 metric tons
Tires (non-recyclable)	Disposed	0
Aluminum cans	Recycled	0.08 metric tons
Antifreeze	Recycled	440 gal
Cardboard	Recycled	0
Copy machine and printer toner cartridges	Recycled	0
Ferrous and non-ferrous metals (does not include aluminum cans)	Recycled	7.65 metric tons
Lead-acid batteries	Recycled	3.8 metric tons
Paper	Recycled	307.85 metric tons
Soil (hydrocarbon-contaminated)	Recycled	12 yd^3
Tires (truck and heavy-equipment)	Recycled	0

Table 5. Types and Amounts of Wastes Recycled, Reused, or Disposed of in 2004 (Continued)

Material	Method	Amount[a]
Used oil from equipment maintenance	Recycled	1,050 gal
Used oil from oil/water separator	Recycled	25 gal
Used oil total	Recycled	1,075 gal
Used computers[b]	Recycled	23.87 metric tons
Water (oil/water separator)	Recycled	47,000 gal
Water (mine waste water)	Recycled	20,430 gal
Used computers and other electronic desktop equipment[b]	Reused	406 items

[a]Values for solid materials are presented in the unit of measure reported to regulatory agencies.
[b]Represents fiscal year values.

3.8.3 Pollution Prevention

The YMP's pollution prevention program is described in the *Waste Minimization and Pollution Prevention Awareness Plan* (YMP 2001c). The plan establishes a pollution prevention committee, reporting and record-keeping requirements, and requirements for pollution-prevention opportunity assessments.

- **Reporting and Record-Keeping Requirements**

Executive Order 13101 (63 FR 49643) (see Section 2.1.5) requires that each federal agency purchase, to the greatest extent practicable, EPA-designated products containing recycled materials (40 CFR Part 247). The YMP has an environmentally-preferable purchasing program that supports the federal goal to purchase 100 percent of such items by 2005, except when the items are not readily available, not competitively priced, or do not meet performance specifications. During fiscal year 2004, the YMP affirmative procurement program attained about 94 percent compliance with this goal. This is down from the 97 percent compliance for fiscal year 2003. The three percent reduction is attributed to purchases of non-compliant binders. A report summarizing this information was prepared as required by Executive Order 13101 (Sullivan 2004a).

Executive Order 13148 (65 FR 24595) (see Section 2.1.4) requires an annual fiscal-year progress report on pollution prevention. YMP has a strong recycling program that includes office items, automotive fluids, industrial wastewater, and construction debris. Data on recycling are tracked and reported monthly and quarterly. These data are then compiled and submitted each fiscal year through the DOE Pollution Prevention Website.

The annual "DOE Order 450.1 Evaluation Status Report" (Sullivan 2004b) describes how the YMP's environmental management program implements the objectives and requirements of DOE Order 450.1. The report also summarizes progress on meeting the 1999 Secretarial Goals, progress on development and implementation of Sustainable Design, conduct of Pollution Prevention activities that go beyond compliance, and award nominations.

- **Pollution Prevention Opportunity Assessments**

Pollution Prevention Opportunity Assessments are conducted annually on existing processes. The purpose of a Pollution Prevention Opportunity Assessment is to identify opportunities to eliminate or minimize the release of hazardous and non-hazardous wastes and to conserve natural resources. Opportunities for implementation are evaluated using a life-cycle assessment approach.

One Pollution Prevention Opportunity Assessment was conducted in 2004 to evaluate options for generating solar power. The purpose of the assessment was to determine if a photovoltaic system should be installed at three proposed office buildings in the BSC Summerlin Office Complex. Based on the results, the use of photovoltaics for the proposed buildings was not recommended. Although there is enough sunshine, the cost of the systems, the 10-year payback period, and the relatively low amount of energy that would be generated versus the amount required makes this an unreasonable option at this time.

- **Employee Awareness Initiatives**

Numerous initiatives were undertaken in 2004 to raise employee awareness and increase participation in pollution prevention efforts.

- The pollution prevention web site was improved by periodically updating the existing information and related links; adding more data on pollution prevention programs; and clarifying the "allowable" and "unallowable" items for BSC's recycling program based on employee questions and concerns.

- Pollution prevention articles were published in the YMP's *BSC Today, The Crest,* and the *Porcelain Press* on subjects ranging from the "green purchasing" program; the purchase, storage and use of hazardous materials; Earth Day 2004; distribution of new recycling bins; double-sided printing reminder; the "Reuse a Shoe" recycling challenge, and a grassroots effort to "green" property management.

- An interactive pollution-prevention booth was developed for BSC's Diversity Day that introduced the concept of "Sustainable Development" that meets the needs of the present, while preserving cultural and environmental diversity and conserving natural resources. The booth's goal was to depict achieving harmony between the environment, society, and the economy.

- An employee award program recognized both small and large efforts in pollution prevention.

Three pollution-prevention awards were developed and submitted for consideration by the ORD. ORD identified best-in-class nominations for 2004 pollution prevention initiatives and forwarded the selections to DOE Headquarters for consideration in the White House Closing-the-Circle awards.

Continuous effort was made in 2004 to reduce and reuse paper on the YMP, as an on-going pollution-prevention initiative for the Project.

- **Environmentally Preferable Purchasing Program**

This program requires that goods and services be reviewed for compliance with EPA's Energy Star program, EPA's Consumer Products Guidelines (40 CFR Part 247), other procurement guidelines that stress environmentally-preferable products and services, and hazardous-materials purchasing requirements.

- **Sustainable Design**

Sustainable design is a set of principles to ensure that the design, construction, operation, and eventual decommissioning of facilities are safe, energy efficient, and environmentally responsible. DOE Order 413.3 requires that sustainable-design principals be applied to new facilities. DOE Order 430.2A identifies the reporting requirements of sustainable design.

An evaluation conducted in 2004 of planned repository facilities and support buildings concluded that more than 30 facilities will be able to meet criteria for "green" buildings. The BSC energy- and water-management plan (being development) will address the requirements of DOE Order 430.2A and will include sustainable design principles.

- **Secretarial Pollution Prevention and Energy Efficiency Goals**

The YMP's Pollution Prevention Program supports the 1999 Secretarial Pollution Prevention and Energy Efficiency Leadership Goals (Richardson 1999). The YMP initiated and continued numerous activities in 2004 to reduce pollution, recycle, increase energy efficiency, reduce energy use, increase vehicle efficiency, use alternative vehicle fuels, and phase out the use of ODS. Measuring each of these goals is the responsibility of the YMP's Engineering, Facilities, Environmental Compliance, and Fleet Services groups. Work on an energy-consumption baseline was initiated during 2004.

Develop Baselines–The development of meaningful baselines for the YMP is challenging because of the cyclical nature of work and scattered work locations. The YMP work force in Las Vegas occupies leased facilities, and the YMP site workforce occupies temporary structures. Site generation of waste and use of resources varies greatly based on funding and the type and duration of activities. Although data necessary to support development of baselines are not available as far back as 1993, some data, such as energy consumption, can be extrapolated from industry experience elsewhere.

Reducing Waste and Recycling–The YMP 2004 recycling rate for non-hazardous waste averaged 47 percent. The recycling program is supported by awareness campaigns, grassroots recycling efforts and formal assessment processes. The goal of these efforts is to minimize the generation of waste and increase recycling. Recycling and waste-generation data are available back to 1995. The 1995 recycling and sanitary-waste generation baseline was established in a 2001 Pollution Prevention Opportunity Assessment (Sorensen 2002).

The YMP is classified as a small-quantity generator of hazardous wastes and the amount generated from year to year can vary widely. Hence, the frequency of shipments to permitted disposal facilities also varies widely from year to year.

Buying Items with Recycled Content–Procurement of EPA-designated recycled-content items was 94 percent in fiscal year 2004 (Sullivan 2004a), down from 97 percent in fiscal year 2003 (Sullivan 2003). The three percent reduction is attributed to purchases of non-compliant binders. EPA-designated items and Energy Star items must be procured unless they are not readily available, not cost competitive, or do not meet specifications.

Minimizing the Use of Energy and Water Conservation–The BSC Facilities Management group is responsible for tracking and reporting data on energy use for the Summerlin facilities. Energy use for facilities at Yucca Mountain is not tracked and reported, although this situation is being reviewed. Low-standby-power devices and other office equipment are evaluated for conformity with the EPA Energy Star rating system, and are required to be procured unless cost prohibitive.

Energy- and water-conservation requirements are incorporated into repository-design requirements documents. In 2004, the ORD completed an *Energy and Water Conservation Management Plan* (ORD 2004) that addresses the requirements of DOE Order 430.2A, *Department Energy and Utilities Management*. This Order has been incorporated into the BSC contract. Therefore, a BSC energy management coordinator was identified. Numerous meetings were conducted with BSC representatives from ES&H, Facilities and Design and Engineering to determine the responsible organization for each requirement.

Reducing Ozone-Depleting Substances and Greenhouse Gases–Class I ODS are expected to be eliminated from reserves by 2010. New equipment uses safer alternatives to Class I ODS. There are no chillers greater than 150 tons of cooling capacity on the YMP. Annual reductions in emissions of greenhouse gases have not been evaluated. Requisitions for ODSs and equipment that maintains or uses ODSs are evaluated by the Environmental Compliance organization prior to purchase.

Increasing Vehicle Fleet Efficiency and Use of Alternative Fuels–Fuel efficient vehicles are available for use on the YMP. The YMP fleet no longer uses compressed natural gas or other alternative-fuel vehicles due to lack of accessible refueling stations and difficulty with the operation of refueling equipment. Moreover, the vehicles themselves had limited passenger and cargo space. At the end of their lease, the DOE Fleet Manager replaced these vehicles with E-85 (85 percent ethanol and 15 percent gasoline) alternative-fuel vehicles due to their greater cargo capacity and passenger space.

Reduce the Use and Generation of Hazardous and Toxic Substances–The hazardous-materials approval process (Section 3.8.1) is followed to reduce the use and generation of hazardous and toxic substances. In 2004, the YMP did not manufacture, process, or otherwise use any chemicals regulated under Section 313 of EPCRA in excess of threshold quantities. Compared to 2003, 2004 saw an increase of 517 pounds of hazardous waste generated by the Project. The primary reason for this increase was the identification of expired chemicals that required proper disposal. The total quantity of hazardous waste collected during

2004 was 1,964 pounds. Universal waste (mostly fluorescent lamps and nickel-cadmium batteries) totaling 1,607 pounds was also collected. 3,321 pounds of hazardous waste and 1,607 pounds of universal waste were shipped to a permitted Treatment, Storage, and Disposal facility in 2004. As part of the Project's pollution prevention program, numerous materials were recycled or reused.

3.9 ENVIRONMENTAL, SAFETY, AND HEALTH ASSESSMENTS

The ES&H assessment program is conducted to fulfill certain requirements of DOE Order 450.1, as described in the *Environmental Management Plan* (YMP 2000), and the GM-BC-1, *Organization and Management Policy* (BSC 2004). The assessments provide programmatic oversight of YMP activities to ensure full compliance with regulations and excellence in the ES&H and ISMS programs. This is accomplished through independent evaluations of YMP ES&H activities and programs for compliance with applicable federal and state laws; DOE policy; permit stipulations; and YMP plans, policies, and procedures. The assessment process, which includes verification of completed corrective actions, enhances the effectiveness and implementation of ES&H roles and responsibilities among YMP organizations.

Assessment topics are selected based on requirements for periodic program reviews, the potential for noncompliance conditions, management requests, or the need to evaluate newly implemented or changed programs. Assessments are conducted through document reviews, observation of work practices, and interviews to evaluate compliance with the governing regulatory and procedural requirements. Assessment results are documented in an assessment report. Any adverse and/or opportunity-for-improvement conditions noted from the assessment are tracked via the Corrective Action Program. Assessment items are closed when completed corrective actions have been verified by the lead assessor in accordance with the Corrective Action Program.

During 2004, nine assessments were conducted to evaluate compliance with ES&H and Integrated Safety Management (ISM) program requirements (Table 6). These assessments covered ES&H surveillance-program activities, contractor services for waste management, implementation of an underground emergency and rescue program, requirements for transportation and packaging safety, hazard communications processes, and calibration and maintenance of air-sampling equipment. An assessment of underground airborne hazards and the annual review of ISM program implementation were performed by external teams as supplemented by ES&H staff.

3.10 ENVIRONMENTAL SURVEILLANCE PROGRAM

Environmental surveillances are conducted to confirm that activities are planned, managed, and implemented in a manner that protects environmental quality, minimizes threats to the environment, and complies with programmatic requirements and permit stipulations. Surveillances may investigate, among other things, procedural requirements (e.g., DOE directives, YMP plans and procedures), permit conditions, land access stipulations, and environmental regulations. Most surveillances are planned in advance; however, surveillance reports and associated corrective actions also are written whenever an environmental compliance issue is noted or reported.

Table 6. Calendar Year 2004 BSC Assessment Results

Assessment	Results
Environmental, Safety, and Health Surveillance Program (04-01)	This assessment examined BSC processes for conducting ES&H surveillances of work activities and providing feedback on mitigation of adverse conditions. Assessment results identified needed improvements in clarification of roles and responsibilities, feedback processes, and use of the surveillance form.
Due Diligence of Waste Management Contractor (04-02)	A due diligence assessment was conducted jointly with the DOE to verify, through an off-site visit to the facility receiving YMP hazardous wastes, that the operating contractor was handling and managing these wastes in accordance with applicable federal and state requirements. It was concluded that facility operations were well managed. No compliance issues or concerns were identified.
Underground Emergency and Rescue Program (04-03)	This assessment evaluated BSC's program for implementing and maintaining underground rescue and recovery operations. Assessment results indicated a need to improve the interface between this program and requirements of the respiratory protection program and to more clearly define roles, responsibilities, and training requirements.
Hazard Communications (04-06)	This assessment evaluated the effectiveness of BSC processes in providing personnel with information and knowledge necessary to control chemicals, reduce exposures, and establish proper work practices for current work activities. Results indicated that the Hazard Communications procedure required clearer delineation of organizational responsibilities and additional information to address implementation of regulatory requirements. Needed improvements were also noted for the hazardous communication training and processes for documenting chemical inventory updates.
Environmental Sample Management (04-07)	The purpose of this assessment was to evaluate regulatory compliance of BSC processes and protocols for managing field collection of water, waste, and air samples. Minor conditions were noted with regard to clarifying sampling methods as described in the implementing procedure and transmitting records to the Records Processing Center.
Corporate ISMS Assessment (04-10)	BSC planned, coordinated, and augmented the conduct of the annual ISM review that was performed by an external team of subject matter experts. This team concluded that work was performed safely but noted that process improvements were needed in identification and implementation of standards/requirements, work planning, and integration of ISM and other BSC program management initiatives.
Industrial Hygiene Evaluation of Potential Airborne Hazards in the YMP Exploratory Studies Facility Underground Environment (04-12)	BSC planned, coordinated, and supported an assessment conducted by an external team of subject matter experts that evaluated the effectiveness of current Occupational Safety and Health and Industrial Hygiene programs for protecting personnel from exposure to airborne hazards in the underground environment of the Exploratory Studies Facility. This team concluded that these programs were adequate for current activities but noted that improvements were needed in strategic planning, clarification of roles and responsibilities, use of engineering controls, dust housekeeping, identification of dust hazards in work control procedures, training, and health-hazard risk communication.
Transportation and Packaging Safety (04-13)	Activities associated with BSC's hazardous material transportation program were assessed in preparation for a DOE National Transportation Program assessment using DOE Transportation Compliance Evaluation/Assistance checklists. This assessment noted that roles and responsibilities needed to be defined for ensuring compliance with transporter driving time and speed limitation requirements.
Calibration and Maintenance of Air Sampling Equipment (05-01)	This assessment evaluated BSC processes for maintaining and calibrating air-sampling equipment for particulate matter. Opportunities for improvement were noted with regard to record keeping, certification documentation, and review of the results of audits of performance systems.

One hundred and sixty-six (166) environmental surveillance reports were completed in 2004. Noteworthy practices, or surveillances where no action was required, constituted 99 percent of the surveillances (165). This compares to 95 percent in 2003 (of a total of 178 surveillances) and 96 percent in 2002 (of a total of 352 surveillances). The 1 surveillance that required corrective action in 2004 was for non-reportable hydrocarbon spills that required clean-up. There were no permit violations or reportable spills in 2004.

Trends in corrective actions for permit compliance, spills and waste management, and procedural deficiencies are tracked as measures of environmental performance of the YMP. Trends in environmental performance in 2004 were positive compared to 2003 and 2002. The relatively small number of surveillance reports requiring action during the past few years (see preceding paragraph) suggests that changes in the process for planning and implementing work have been successful in recent years. Closer attention to compliance with procedures and work instructions, and greater worker involvement in the planning and conduct of the work, have also helped reduce the need for corrective actions.

3.11 TRAINING

Worker training on environmental compliance, pollution prevention, and all other aspects of ISMS is an important part of the YMP environmental program. All Project personnel working at Yucca Mountain are instructed on the environmental and safety requirements that must be followed for field activities. Additional job-specific training commensurate with job responsibilities is also offered.

All new employees must take General Employee Training. This six-hour course covers, among other things, the Project's environmental protection requirements, hazard communication, pollution prevention, and safety and health requirements. A computer-based annual refresher of these topics is also required of all employees.

All new employees who work unescorted at Yucca Mountain must take Site Access Training. This three-hour class describes the employees' responsibilities for land access, protecting biological and cultural resources, hazardous and non-hazardous waste management, and environmental permit compliance. Computer-based, annual refresher training is also required.

Environmental Compliance Awareness for Managers and Supervisors is required for all BSC managers and supervisors. This computer-based training program informs managers and supervisors of their responsibilities for maintaining environmental compliance and protecting the environment, and the consequences of not taking environmental concerns seriously. Managers are instructed to minimize environmental impacts; comply with environmental regulations; and mitigate impacts through prevention, corrective action, reclamation, and other measures.

Employees whose work involves the transport of hazardous materials are required to attend a three-day training class on the basics of hazardous materials transport and to attend additional job-specific classes. Personnel also are required to attend a three-day advanced class if their work involves the certification of shipping papers for hazardous and radioactive materials and hazardous waste.

A class in Leak Detection and Mitigation is required for employees whose work involves control and reporting of spills of hazardous material. This two-hour class covers oil and hazardous materials in work areas; spill and release scenarios; spill response stations, equipment and materials; and procedures for spill and release response, including health, safety containment, cleanup, notification, and reporting requirements.

Additionally, informal training on environmental issues is disseminated to Project employees to improve the YMP safety program and protect the environment. This training consists of "safety

or quality topics" at meetings, topical briefings at quarterly departmental staff meetings, articles published in electronic media such as *The Crest* and *BSC Today*, articles published and strategically posted Project-wide in *The Porcelain Press*, and via Project web sites on BSC*connect* such as "Environmental Management System," "Environmental Compliance," "ES&H Electronic Manual," and "Zero Accident Philosophy."

3.12 PERMIT-ASSOCIATED LITIGATION

In February 2000, the Nevada State Engineer denied DOE's water-appropriation request for permanent rights to 430 acre-feet per year for use at Yucca Mountain (Turnipseed 2000). Shortly thereafter, the DOE filed suit to overturn the State Engineer's ruling. In September 2000, the U.S. District Court granted the State's motions to dismiss the DOE's suit. The DOE appealed, and in October 2001, the Ninth U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals ordered a federal judge to hear the DOE's suit.

While this court case proceeded, in December 2002 the State of Nevada and the DOE agreed to a joint stipulation that allowed DOE to re-supply the potable water-storage tanks at Yucca Mountain, as needed.

In July 2003, the State of Nevada agreed to let the DOE pump water from Wells J-12 and J-13 for non-potable purposes, including dust suppression and continuing scientific studies.

In November 2003, following a remand from the Federal District Court, the State Engineer again denied DOE's water-appropriation request for 430 acre-feet per year for use at Yucca Mountain (Ricci 2003). In December 2003, the DOE appealed the State Engineer's ruling.

In May 2004, the DOE informed the State of Nevada that it needed additional non-potable water for road repairs, permit obligations, and obligations under the NWPA.

The DOE continues to pursue its water-appropriation request to obtain permanent rights to 430 acre-feet per year for use at Yucca Mountain.

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4. QUALITY ASSURANCE

The quality of environmental data and results presented in this report were ensured through quality assurance practices. Appropriate industry standards and accepted laboratory and field monitoring practices were used to establish quality assurance practices. These practices are compliant with permit requirements applicable to collection and analysis of environmental data. The quality assurance practices were applied to the appropriate aspects of monitoring, sampling, analysis, data reduction, and reporting operations to produce data of known quality. Some aspects of the environmental program described in this report also were subject to the requirements of the *Quality Assurance Requirements and Description* (DOE 2004a) (e.g., radiological monitoring program support; meteorological monitoring and data analysis; tracers, fluids, and material reporting for reclamation [BSC 2001a, 2001b, and 2001c]).

The quality assurance practices were implemented through the systematic application of quality assurance policies, standardized procedures, and independent assessments. Quality assurance controls included the following:

- Personnel training was conducted and documented before work was initiated.
- Work instructions and procedures were developed and reviewed before they were approved for use.
- A verbatim compliance policy for work performance, in accordance with approved procedures, was mandated for all work.
- Standards traceable to the National Institute of Standards and Technology were used to calibrate and check measuring and test equipment.
- Equipment used for monitoring, sampling, analysis, and counting was regularly calibrated at prescribed intervals.
- Operational status and accuracy of equipment were independently and routinely checked by trained personnel.
- Discrepancies and nonconforming conditions were documented and evaluated in accordance with a structured and approved corrective action process.
- Technical data were reviewed before data reduction and analysis and reporting.
- Computer software used for data reduction and analysis were evaluated and controlled.
- Monitoring, sampling, analysis, and subsequent data reduction were periodically evaluated to verify effective implementation.
- Compliance with quality assurance procedures for meteorological monitoring was verified by independent assessments.

4.1 SAMPLE CONTROL

All environmental samples were controlled in accordance with approved work instructions and procedures. These controlled procedures specified approved methods and processes for sample collection, sample handling, chain-of-custody control, and analysis and data reporting.

Technicians were trained to ensure that samples were properly labeled, stored, and protected against loss or contamination. Samples were uniquely identified by markings on either the sample or its packaging. Sample transactions were documented on either a Chain-of-Custody form for external transfers or a Sample Transfer form if transferred internally. Transfer recipients were required to verify that proper conditions and identification of samples were provided and maintained before accepting custody of the samples.

4.2 SAMPLE ANALYSIS

Analyses of samples were conducted in accordance with approved protocols, based on standard and approved methods. Personnel performing analyses and measurements were specifically trained for these work assignments before initiating work.

As prescribed by a scope of work, analysis programs selectively used sample blanks, spikes, and replicates to better determine accuracy and precision of methods and to eliminate bias. Subcontractors who measured or analyzed samples were required to establish an equivalent quality assurance control system. Results of measurements and analyses were reviewed and approved by qualified personnel.

4.3 INSTRUMENT CONTROL

Instruments used to measure, monitor, test, or sample environmental conditions were procured, calibrated, controlled, and maintained in accordance with approved procedures. Equipment and calibration standards used to ensure instrumentation accuracy were traceable to the National Institute of Standards and Technology. Frequency of equipment calibration and maintenance were prescribed in approved procedures, based on manufacturers' recommendations.

Performance of all calibrated equipment was periodically checked to verify its adherence to operational specifications. Calibrated equipment was routinely checked by field technicians, and adjustments were made to optimize its performance. Out-of-tolerance conditions were documented, and resolution was determined by recalibration, rework, or replacement. Data affected by out-of-tolerance conditions were reported and identified as "indeterminate" until resolution of the condition had been evaluated to determine if the data could be validated.

4.4 DATA MANAGEMENT

To preserve data integrity, monitoring and sampling data were recorded and handled in accordance with approved procedures. The efficiency of data reduction software was verified through formal acceptance tests before use.

During data reduction and compilation, data were validated to identify inconsistencies and anomalies. Data validation was performed by comparing the data to expected or predetermined ranges and past results. Decisions to include or eliminate suspect or unverifiable data were determined during technical reviews by qualified personnel.

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6. GLOSSARY

(NOTE: Several terms in this Glossary emphasize their specific relationship to the Yucca Mountain Project.)

alluvial fan	A relatively flat to gently sloping mass of loose rock, shaped like an open fan, deposited by a stream or streams on a plain or broad valley.
alluvium	Unconsolidated rock debris deposited by flowing water during relatively recent geologic time; generally unsorted to semi-sorted.
ambient	Undisturbed, natural conditions, such as ambient temperature caused by climate; surrounding conditions. In addition, the geographic area in which the public has free access and where the ambient air quality standards apply.
aquifer	Subsurface saturated rock of sufficient permeability to transmit groundwater and yield usable quantities of water to wells and springs; a rock formation, group of formations, or part of a formation with these characteristics.
arid	Areas where mean annual evaporation exceeds mean annual precipitation. Arid regions typically have high rainfall variability, with annual amounts ranging between four and 12 inches.
ashfall	The descent through the atmosphere of ash from a volcanic eruption; volcanic ash resulting from an ash fall and lying on the ground surface.
ash-flow tuff	A tuff deposited by a turbulent blend of unsorted volcanic debris and high-temperature gas ejected explosively from fissures or a crater.
basaltic lava flow	Fine-grained, dark-colored volcanic rocks erupted onto or near the land surface from a volcano or fissures.
borehole	A hole drilled into the earth's crust to collect hydrologic and geologic data.
borrow pit	An excavated area where earth materials such as sand and gravel are obtained.
caldera	A large, basin-shaped volcanic depression formed by violent eruptions and collapse of the crust.
carbonate aquifer	An aquifer in limestone and/or dolomite. Carbonate aquifers typically produce hard water, that is, water containing relatively high concentrations of calcium and magnesium.

chain-of-custody	A form that documents collection, transport, and analysis of samples (e.g., water, rock).
cinder cone	A conical hill formed by the accumulation of cinders and other ejected debris around a volcanic vent.
clearance survey	A survey conducted to find and remove desert tortoises prior to land-disturbing activities.
coliform bacteria	Bacteria that originate as organisms in soil or vegetation and in the intestinal tract of warm-blooded animals (fecal coli). This group of bacteria has long been an indicator of the contamination of water and possible presence of intestinal parasites and pathogens.
decommission	The process of removing from service a facility in which nuclear materials are handled. This usually involves decontaminating the facility so that it can be dismantled or dedicated to other purposes.
effluent	A liquid or gaseous waste that is discharged to the environment.
Euroamerican	A person whose ancestry can be traced to Europe, but who immigrated to the United States and became either a naturalized or a legal citizen.
evapotranspiration	The combined processes of evaporation and plant transpiration that remove water from the soil and return it to the air.
fault	A fracture or zone of fractures along which there has been displacement.
fault system	Two or more sets of faults that are mostly parallel and that developed during a particular deformational episode.
floodplain	The strip of relatively smooth land adjacent to a river or stream channel or dry wash that is covered by water when the river or stream overflows its banks.
fugitive dust	Airborne particulate matter, emitted into the atmosphere from wind erosion of exposed soils or from vehicles traveling over unpaved roads
geologic repository	A facility for the long-term isolation of spent nuclear fuel and high-level radioactive waste in excavated geologic media.
germination	The process whereby seeds or spores sprout and begin to grow.

greenhouse gases	Greenhouse gases are natural and man-made substances that trap outgoing infrared energy emitted by the earth, warming the atmosphere and the earth. Common examples include water vapor, carbon dioxide, methane, some hydrofluorocarbons and perfluorocarbons.
Groundwater	Water contained in pores or fractures in either the unsaturated zone or saturated zone below the surface.
high-level radioactive waste	(1) The highly radioactive material that is produced from the reprocessing of spent nuclear fuel, including liquid waste produced directly in reprocessing, and any solid material derived from such liquid waste that contains fission products in sufficient concentrations. (DOE would vitrify liquid high-level radioactive waste before shipping it to the repository.), and (2) other highly radioactive material that the NRC, consistent with existing law, determines by rule requires permanent isolation.
Holocene epoch	The most recent epoch of geologic time that extends from the end of the Pleistocene to the present, or approximately the past 10,000 years; also the rocks and deposits formed during this time.
human exposure	The condition of a human being subject to some effect or influence from a hazardous material, pollutant, or ionizing radiation generally considered as potentially resulting in an adverse physical response.
hydrology	The study of the occurrence, distribution, movement, and chemistry of water.
injection well	A deep well into which water, pressurized gas, or other material is pumped to test specific properties of the rock through which groundwater flows.
invasive species	An alien plant or animal species whose introduction does or is likely to cause economic or environmental harm or harm to human health.
leachfield	A component of a sanitary sewage system that uses soil for the disposal of effluent discharged from a septic tank. The leachfield consists of a series of perforated pipes buried in trenches that distribute the effluent below the surface.
Material Safety Data Sheets	A manufacturer's summary of the chemical characteristics of a material, including information about the material's toxicity, storage, handling, first aid procedures, cleanup of spills, and disposal.

Native American	A person having origin in any of the original peoples of North America and who maintains cultural identification through tribal affiliation or community recognition.
native species	Plant or animal species that occur naturally (without introduction by humans) in the region.
ozone-depleting substances	Ozone is the triatomic form of oxygen. In the stratosphere (6 - 12 miles to about 33 miles above the surface), natural ozone protects the Earth from the sun's ultraviolet radiation. Ozone-depleting substances are certain compounds that contribute to the depletion of this protective ozone layer.
Paleozoic	A geologic era extending from the end of the Precambrian to the beginning of the Mesozoic, dating from between 570 and 225 million years ago.
particulate matter	Small airborne solid particles such as dust, smoke, fumes, or smog, that occur naturally or from human activities.
perennial	A plant that lives or continues more than two years, whether it retains its leaves in winter or not.
pre-activity surveys	A biological, archaeological, and/or radiological survey conducted before granting approval to use land by Project participants. These surveys are designed to identify, preserve, and protect biological and archaeological resources, and identify and protect personnel from radiation sources.
Precambrian	All geologic time, and its corresponding rocks, before the Paleozoic. It is equivalent to about 90 percent of geologic time and marked by the appearance of primitive forms of life.
quality assurance	All those planned and systematic actions necessary to provide adequate confidence that a program or item will perform satisfactorily.
radiation	The emitted particles or photons from the nuclei of radioactive atoms. Some elements are naturally radioactive; others are induced to become radioactive by irradiation in a reactor. Naturally-occurring radiation is indistinguishable from induced radiation.
radionuclide	A radioactive atom with an unstable nucleus that spontaneously decays, emitting ionizing radiation in the process.
recharge	The movement of water from an unsaturated zone to a saturated zone.

reclamation	The conversion of disturbed land to a pre-disturbed condition.
recontour	Grading soil or loose rock debris on a disturbed site to match the natural slope and drainage of the surrounding landscape.
remediation	Action taken to permanently remedy a release or threatened release of a hazardous substance to the environment.
sample transfer	A form used on the Yucca Mountain Project for documenting the transfer of samples (e.g., water, rock) from one person to another.
saturated zone	The area below the water table where all spaces (fractures and rock pores) are completely filled with water.
sedimentary rocks	Rock resulting from the consolidation of loose sediment that has accumulated in layers.
site characterization	All activities associated with the determination of the suitability of the Yucca Mountain site for a geologic repository. On February 14, 2002, the Yucca Mountain site was recommended by the Secretary of Energy to the President as a suitable site for a repository.
spent nuclear fuel	Fuel that has been withdrawn from a nuclear reactor following irradiation, the component elements of which have not been separated by reprocessing. For this Project, this refers to: (1) intact, nondefective fuel assemblies; (2) failed fuel assemblies in canisters; (3) fuel assemblies in canisters; (4) consolidated fuel rods in canisters; (5) nonfuel assembly hardware inserted in pressurized-water reactor fuel assemblies; (6) fuel channels attached to boiling-water reactor fuel assemblies; and (7) nonfuel assembly hardware and structural parts of assemblies resulting from consolidation in canisters.
Tertiary	The first of two geologic periods of the Cenozoic Era extending from the end of the Mesozoic Era to the beginning of the Quaternary Period, covering a time span approximately from 65 million to two million years ago.
tracer	A substance (liquid or gas) usually injected through a well to determine the direction and speed of groundwater flow, as well as the characteristics of the rock through which the tracer travels.
verbatim compliance policy	Compliance with all procedures to the letter.
volcanic aquifer	A water-bearing unit of volcanic rock or volcanic sediment that yields water in a useable quantity to a well or spring.

well-logging	All operations involving the lowering and raising of measuring devices or tools into wells for the purpose of obtaining information about the well or adjacent formations.