

**Siting Challenges in the Context of Integrated Nuclear Waste Management  
Before the Blue Ribbon Commission on Nuclear Waste**

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I welcome this invitation to address the Commission because of the scope of this meeting's agenda<sup>1</sup>. This agenda sets the proper setting for what I have to say: Successful siting of nuclear waste management facilities in the US requires that siting 1) be a integral part of a fundamentally new and fully integrated nuclear waste management policy process that learns from what has happened in the 32 years since your predecessor commission, and 2) be guided by some quite straight forward ethical principles, whose effective implementation will require the work of a long-term Siting Commission similar in membership to this one. Those principles (safety, informed consent and equity) are meaningless unless carefully related to the effective policy resolution of the actual challenges involved in nuclear waste management today. Relevant, I believe, is work done by me and my academic colleagues in the Consortium for Risk Evaluation with Stakeholder Participation to understand 1) how complex technical work on nuclear environmental problems can be made transparent to stakeholder populations, 2) what stakeholder and regulators in different communities and parts of the country understand about nuclear waste management, storage and disposition, and 3) the extent to which NIMBY is a quite understandable response to those perceptions and what the current processes related to nuclear waste disposition have effectively miscommunicated to the public. I will share that CRESP experience. We have particularly misunderstood how to think about inter- rather than intra-generational issues and here I will expand on what the Commission will already have heard from Dr. Kadak.

Two of us from CRESP have attempted to draw together a summary of how current US policy – which generally continues to proceed quite directly from the factual assumptions and prescriptions made by your predecessor Commission – would need fundamental revision and what would be the several options available to this current Commission if those assumptions and prescriptions were altered by subsequent learning here and abroad. I have made available to the Commission a paper, “Making the Case for Integrated Nuclear Waste Management in the United State: Issues and Option”, co-authored with David Kosson. Although written in the late Fall of 2008, it anticipates some of the options for fundamental policy revision now made available by the current Administration to this Commission. The paper's suggestions for staged-development of SNF and HLW storage and evolved thinking about what repository requirements will be if the nation pursues reuse of energy from used nuclear fuel have, we believe, important consequences for the pace and locations of nuclear storage facilities and opens up fundamentally new ways of approaching communities and their regions about siting them.

I first looked at the plans for Yucca at the request of the President of EPRI in 1991. I reported to him within a month that absent there being found and established at least two other facilities in the country where long-term SNF-HLW storage would occur, I was convinced that Yucca would never open. I still think so – although as you will see from this paper, I now believe a better number for long-term (not permanent) storage facilities in the US is four. To break the misperceptions we created especially since 1987 and allow the voluntary acceptance of the actual risks most of us agree are associated with such storage - and to address the equity issues - there will must be more than one or several facilities. That is why the efforts David Leroy, with whom I worked briefly in 1991 when he was the Negotiator, are so germane. I look forward to a useful discussion of all these issues.

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<sup>1</sup> “nuclear waste program governance; international perspectives on and the implications of US decisions regarding the back-end of the nuclear fuel cycle; the ethical and societal foundations for nuclear waste management; and experiences and perspectives on the facility siting process including public and community”