

Subpart B—Licenses

PREAPPLICATION REVIEW

§ 60.15 Site characterization.

(a) Prior to submittal of an application for a license to be issued under this part DOE shall conduct a program of site characterization with respect to the site to be described in such application.

(b) Unless the Commission determines with respect to the site described in the application that it is not necessary, site characterization shall include a program of in situ exploration and testing at the depths that wastes would be emplaced.

(c) The program of site characterization shall be conducted in accordance with the following:

(1) Investigations to obtain the required information shall be conducted in such a manner as to limit adverse effects on the long-term performance of the geologic repository to the extent practical.

(2) The number of exploratory boreholes and shafts shall be limited to the extent practical consistent with obtaining the information needed for site characterization.

(3) To the extent practical, exploratory boreholes and shafts in the geologic repository operations area shall be located where shafts are planned for underground facility construction and operation or where large unexcavated pillars are planned.

(4) Subsurface exploratory drilling, excavation, and in situ testing before and during construction shall be planned and coordinated with geologic repository operations area design and construction.

[46 FR 13980, Feb. 25, 1981, as amended at 48 FR 28219, June 21, 1983. Redesignated and amended at 51 FR 27162, July 30, 1986; 54 FR 27871, July 3, 1989]

§ 60.16 Site characterization plan required.

Before proceeding to sink shafts at any area which has been approved by the President for site characterization, DOE shall submit to the Director, for review and comment, a site characterization plan for such area. DOE shall defer the sinking of such shafts until

such time as there has been an opportunity for Commission comments thereon to have been solicited and considered by DOE.

[51 FR 27162, July 30, 1986]

§ 60.17 Contents of site characterization plan.

The site characterization plan shall contain—

(a) A general plan for site characterization activities to be conducted at the area to be characterized, which general plan shall include:

(1) A description of such area, including information on quality assurance programs that have been applied to the collection, recording, and retention of information used in preparing such description.

(2) A description of such site characterization activities, including the following—

(i) The extent of planned excavations;

(ii) Plans for any onsite testing with radioactive material, including radioactive tracers, or nonradioactive material;

(iii) Plans for any investigation activities that may affect the capability of such area to isolate high-level radioactive waste;

(iv) Plans to control any adverse impacts from such site characterization activities that are important to safety or that are important to waste isolation; and

(v) Plans to apply quality assurance to data collection, recording, and retention.

(3) Plans for the decontamination and decommissioning of such area, and for the mitigation of any significant adverse environmental impacts caused by site characterization activities, if such area is determined unsuitable for application for a construction authorization for a geologic repository operations area;

(4) Criteria, developed pursuant to section 112(a) of the Nuclear Waste Policy Act of 1982, to be used to determine the suitability of such area for the location of a geologic repository; and

(5) Any other information which the Commission, by rule or order, requires.

(b) A description of the possible waste form or waste package for the

high-level radioactive waste to be emplaced in such geologic repository, a description (to the extent practicable) of the relationship between such waste form or waste package and the host rock at such area, and a description of the activities being conducted by DOE with respect to such possible waste form or waste package or their relationship; and

(c) A conceptual design for the geologic repository operations area that takes into account likely site-specific requirements.

[51 FR 27163, July 30, 1986]

§ 60.18 Review of site characterization activities.²

(a) The Director shall cause to be published in the FEDERAL REGISTER a notice that a site characterization plan has been received from DOE and that a staff review of such plan has begun. The notice shall identify the area to be characterized and the NRC staff members to be consulted for further information.

(b) The Director shall make a copy of the site characterization plan available at the Public Document Room. The Director shall also transmit copies of the published notice of receipt to the Governor and legislature of the State in which the area to be characterized is located and to the governing body of any affected Indian Tribe. The Director shall provide an opportunity, with respect to any area to be characterized, for the State in which such area is located and for affected Indian Tribes to present their views on the site characterization plan and their suggestions with respect to comments thereon which may be made by NRC. In addition, the Director shall make NRC staff

²In addition to the review of site characterization activities specified in this section, the Commission contemplates an ongoing review of other information on site investigation and site characterization, in order to allow early identification of potential licensing issues for timely resolution. This activity will include, for example, a review of the environmental assessments prepared by DOE at the time of site nomination, and review of issues related to long lead time exploratory shaft planning and procurement actions by DOE prior to issuance of site characterization plans.

available to consult with States and affected Indian Tribes as provided in Subpart C of this part.

(c) The Director shall review the site characterization plan and prepare a site characterization analysis with respect to such plan. In the preparation of such site characterization analysis, the Director may invite and consider the views of interested persons on DOE's site characterization plan and may review and consider comments made in connection with public hearings held by DOE.

(d) The Director shall provide to DOE the site characterization analysis together with such additional comments as may be warranted. These comments shall include either a statement that the Director has no objection to the DOE's site characterization program, if such a statement is appropriate, or specific objections with respect to DOE's program for characterization of the area concerned. In addition, the Director may make specific recommendations pertinent to DOE's site characterization program.

(e) If DOE's planned site characterization activities include onsite testing with radioactive material, including radioactive tracers, the Director's comments shall include a determination regarding whether or not the Commission concurs that the proposed use of such radioactive material is necessary to provide data for the preparation of the environmental reports required by law and for an application to be submitted under § 60.22 of this part.

(f) The Director shall publish in the FEDERAL REGISTER a notice of availability of the site characterization analysis and a request for public comment within a reasonable period, as specified (not less than 90 days). The notice along with copies of the site characterization analysis shall be available at the NRC Web site, <http://www.nrc.gov>, and copies of any comments received will also be made available there.

(g) During the conduct of site characterization activities, DOE shall report not less than once every six months to the Commission on the nature and extent of such activities and the information that has been developed, and on the progress of waste form and waste