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NEWS RELEASE

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Shoshone appointed to Nuclear Regulatory Commission Licensing Support Network Advisory Review Panel

As a tribal community stakeholder group, the Native Community Action Council (NCAC) continues to advocate on behalf of the land the people of the Great Basin. Today, the US Nuclear Regulatory Commission appointed two Shoshone to the Yucca Mountain Licensing Support Network Advisory Review Panel. NCAC board member, Joe Kennedy Shoshone from Timbisha in Death Valley commented:

“The Department of Energy has failed to protect Native Americans leaving us unprotected, if not for the Native Community Action Council intervening in 2008, and now, against the Nuclear Regulatory Commission to protect the land and people of the Great Basin.”

Last year the NRC admitted that radiation will be discharge into the groundwater from the proposed Yucca Mountain high level nuclear waste repository currently undergoing licensing. The NRC Staff were directed to consider disproportionate impact to low income and minority populations such as the Shoshone at Poohabah in Tecopa and Death Valley Shoshone Indian Village at Furnace Creek. Without adequate investigation the NRC found that impacts to Native Americans will be minimal.

The Shoshone experience is as down-winders, victims of testing of WMD's, and as stakeholders in the siting of the proposed Yucca Mountain high level nuclear waste repository. The DOE cannot meet the requirement of ownership, a *“significant legal encumbrances,”* disqualifying the site under the NRC regulation, 10 CFR 63 Land Ownership. Yucca Mountain is Indian country defined by the 1863 Treaty of Ruby Valley and the US cannot prove ownership.

“The proposed repository is Indian country and we believe that the pattern and practice of the US in the siting of Yucca Mountain to be legislative malpractice and institutional racism,” said Ian Zabarte, Secretary of the NCAC.

The NCAC is the only non-federally funded party to the Yucca Mountain proceedings asserting ownership under aboriginal occupancy. Since selection of Yucca Mountain in 1987 by Congress, the DOE has not considered any argument made by the Shoshone that does not support licensing by the NRC.

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