Strategic Assessment of NRC's Low-Level Radioactive Waste Regulatory Program

Division of Waste Management and Environmental Protection

Office of Federal and State Materials and Environmental Management Programs

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Introduction

- Purpose: To provide the events contributing to the need for, the process used to develop actions, and the results of the NRC's LLW Strategic Assessment

- Scope
  - National LLW program
  - NRC's role
  - NRC Strategic assessment

- Outcome: Provide the background and status of the NRC's strategic assessment activities

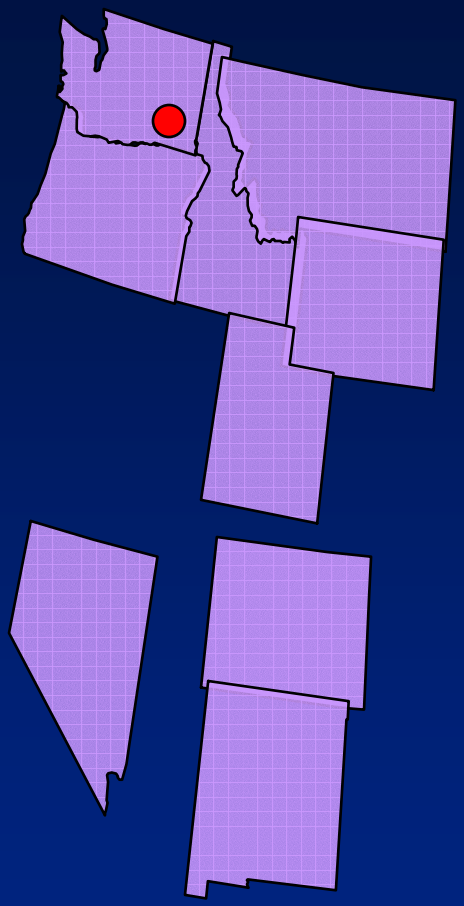
Commercial LLW Sites in U.S.

Operating facility

Proposed facility

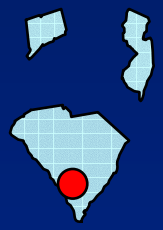
Facility	Waste	Compact Restrictions
Hanford, WA	Class A, B, C	11 western states in 2 LLW Compacts only
Clive, UT	A only	None, all US generators OK (NW and RM Compacts must approve)
Barnwell, SC	A, B, C	SC, NJ, CT only beginning mid-2008 (Atlantic Compact)
Andrews Cty, Texas	A, B, C	Texas and VT only (Texas Compact)

Class B/C Disposal Access in U.S. (as of June 30, 2008)



Northwest and Rocky Mountain Compacts (AK and HI not shown)

Other Compacts and Unaffiliated States



Atlantic Compact

Why did NRC Initiate the LLW Strategic Assessment?

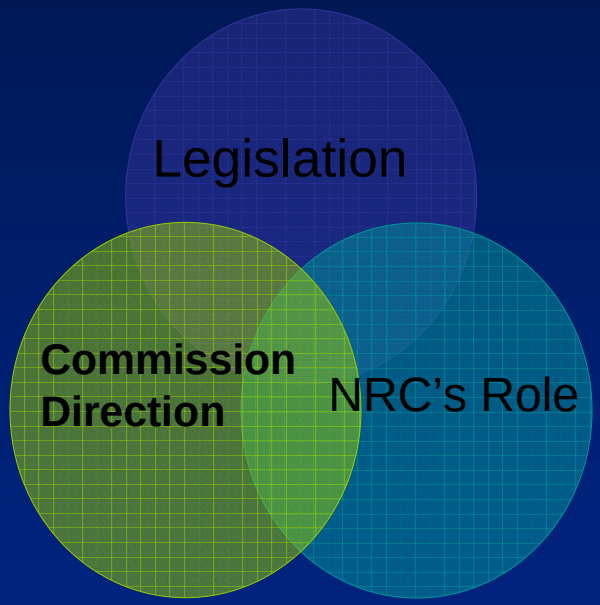
- Current Issues
  - Flexibility
  - Extended storage of waste
  - Waste from new reactors
  - Security
  - New waste streams

- Stakeholder Suggestions
  - ACNW,GAO, NAS, HPS views
  - Establish risk-based rather than origin-based system
  - Examples:
    - Revise/rescind LLRWPAA
    - Allow use of DOE sites by commercial generators
    - Low activity waste disposal
    - Realistic scenarios

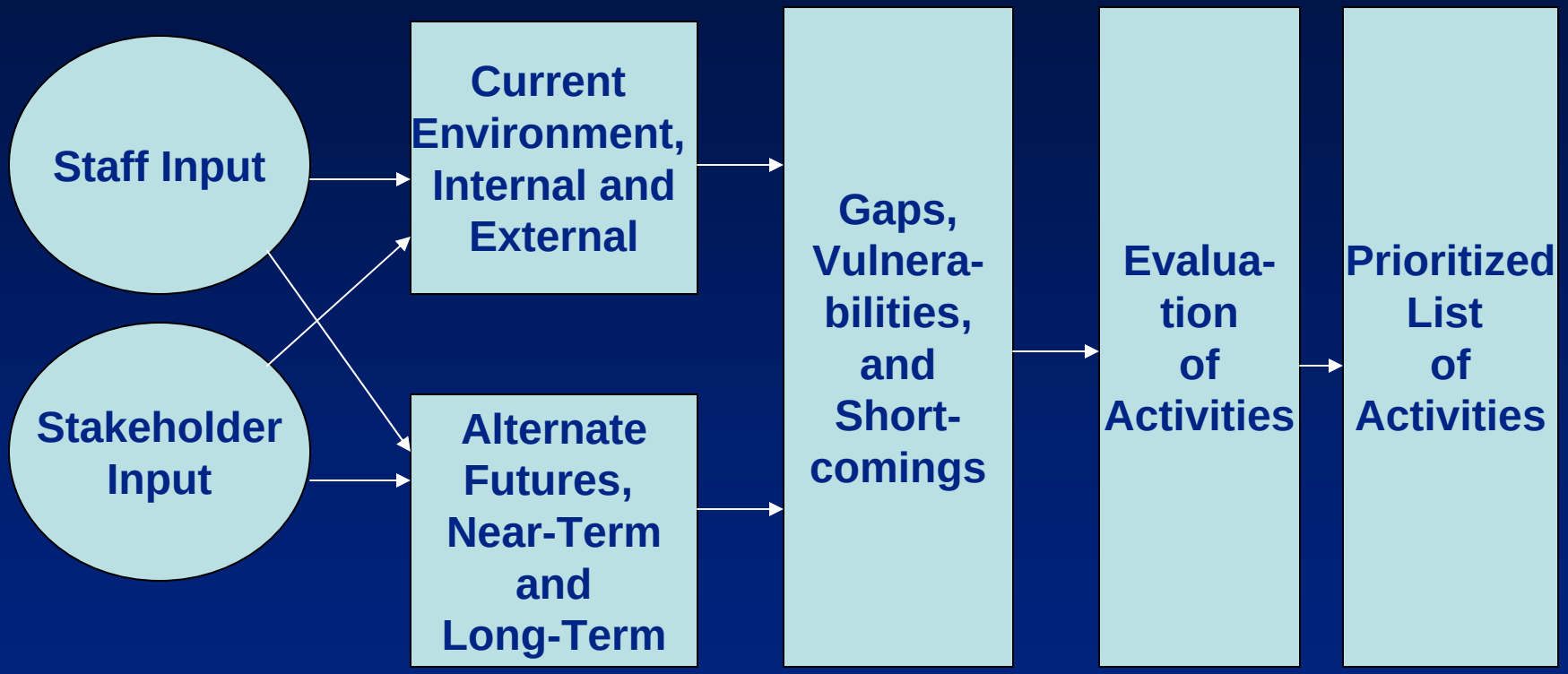
➢The need to take a range of actions

NRC's Role

- Atomic Energy Act and Low Level Radioactive Waste Policy Amendments Act
- March 1997 Commission Direction to Staff: Maintain LLW Program at Current Level (5-10 FTE)
- NRC's role is limited to activities that have a direct bearing on the agency's mission to protect public health and safety



Process


Staff Input
Stakeholder Input
Current Environment, Internal and External
Alternate Futures, Near-Term and Long-Term
Gaps, Vulnera-bilities, and Short-comings
Evalua-tion of Activities
Prioritized List of Activities

Methods for Addressing Issues

- Legislative changes
- Rulemakings
- Guidance
  - Alternate waste classification
  - LLW storage
  - Concentration averaging
  - Waste minimization
  - Low-activity waste disposals in RCRA facilities

Decisionmaking Criteria

- Agency strategic and excellence goals – safety, security, effectiveness, timeliness, operational excellence, and openness
- Need (time frame)
- Level of effort
- Benefit
- Additional considerations (unintended consequences or indirect benefits)
- Scenario applicability
- Resources

High-Priority Tasks

Task No.	Description	Schedule
1	Update storage guidance Review industry guidance for reactors	2nd quarter '08 4th quarter '08
2	Develop guidance on 20.2002	4th quarter '08
3	Investigate DU from enrichment plants	4th quarter '08
4	Update BTP on concentration averaging	Begin 2nd quarter '08
5	Develop import/export procedure	Begin '09
6	Develop guidance on 61.58	Revisit '09
7	Perform scoping study of financial assurance	Revisit '09

Conclusions

- Current LLW issues indicated a need to evaluate current LLW regulatory framework
- Stakeholder input was a major driver of the issues needing resolution
- Strategic Assessment actions assigned based on rigorous process and prioritization
- NRC focused on actions within NRC's regulatory role
- Seven high priority items to be completed in the near term to meet current and future challenges

QUESTIONS?

- Are there specific areas within the 7 tasks identified that you are looking for further guidance on?
- Other questions?