



# US NUCLEAR ENERGY FOUNDATION

“Evangelizing Nuclear Advocacy by Bringing Science to Citizens”

A Non-Profit 501 (C)(3) Nevada Foundation

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**12-16-16**

**Op-Ed**

## “Making Yucca Mountain the Poster Child for Infrastructure Development”

For the past decade the US Nuclear Energy Foundation (USNEF) has been trumpeting the need for grassroots education about nuclear technology. Gary Duarte, Director of USNEF was a panel speaker at the American Nuclear Society Winter Meeting in Las Vegas, “**Focus on Communications**” workshop. Duarte’s talk stressed, “Yucca Facts, the Science, Not the Politics”. In the state of Nevada, for the past three decades, the public message has been dealt by the bureaucracy, not the research analytical conclusions.

America’s **largest single public works infrastructure project** is **Yucca Mountain** costing an estimated \$97 billion dollars. It has been postponed for three decades by political obstruction rather than science and engineering analysis. USNEF believes that the industry has to inform the public about nuclear to champion bureaucratic change. The world cannot expect to advance high technology solutions for society if it is to be blocked by political opposition. The messaging for the Yucca MT Application Review Study must come from the science and engineering community, not “political opinion.” Realizing this, it would serve the public safety to move our spent nuclear fuel from 90 locations currently situated around the country into one geographically safe and secure repository, extending this infrastructure development to enhance national security.

It appears likely that the Trump administration’s “all of the above energy development” will include nuclear and its contribution to carbon free power production. Many discussions are suggesting that nuclear should be classified as a renewable. Issues can be resolved only if entities are more willing to negotiate variables. We need a paradigm shift in public policy messaging that reaches across party lines into the real world of the citizens affected by these programs. We need to rebrand education about nuclear waste and nuclear power, demonized for half a century.

A paper submitted by Kenneth D. Kok, PE to the 15th International Conference on Environmental Remediation and Radioactive Waste Management 2013, Brussels, Belgium. Based on fissionable isotopes in spent fuel, calculations indicate that the value of our U.S. 71,000-tons **of our nuclear waste** is \$14 trillion dollars when extended through the entire cycle (2013) dollars. A nuclear repository is like a safe deposit box. It is designed to store value, but, ore or minerals require further reprocessing for it to produce a new value extraction.

While society has been “educated” on the development of cell phones, digital TV and the many advances of technology, our nuclear industry, government agencies and politicians have failed to educate society on the value of nuclear technology. More grassroots education is needed for public policy acceptance.

Gary J Duarte, President, Director

US Nuclear Energy Foundation

*The US. Nuclear Energy Foundation is a non-profit organization dedicated to providing accurate information on nuclear energy. The USNEF has the goal of mobilizing citizens in Nevada and across the U.S. to design and build new "4th generation advanced reactors, Small Modular Reactors, (SMRs) the Yucca Mountain Repository and spent fuel reprocessing technology".*