Bechtel Nevada

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Emergency Services and Operations Support
Trials and Tribulations Involving
Transuranic Waste Shipments
Nevada Test Site

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INTRODUCTION

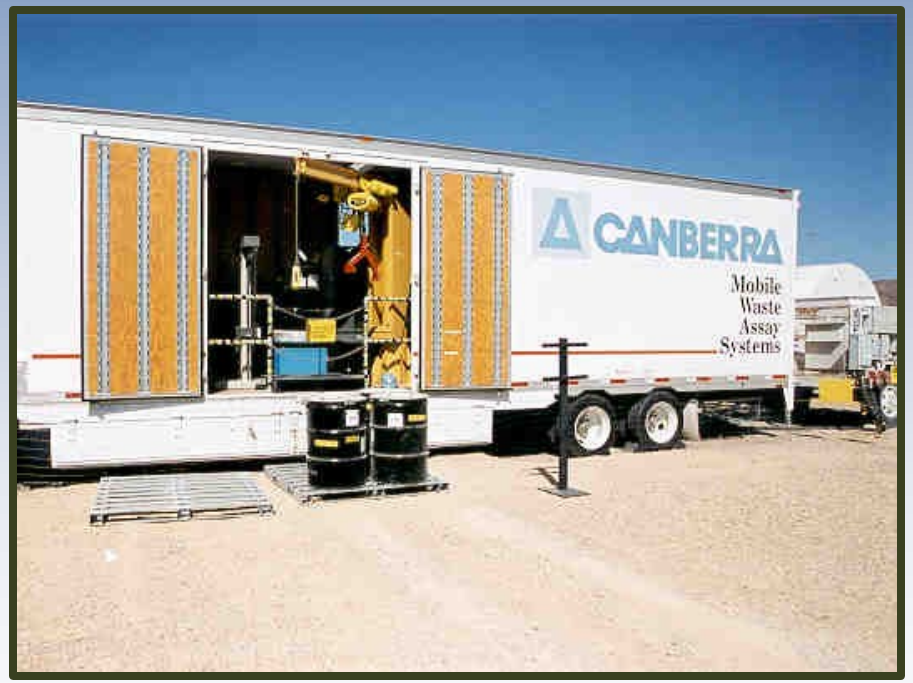
- A small quantity of transuranic (TRU) waste was shipped to the Nevada Test Site (NTS) for storage
  - Approximately 1,800 drums stored
  - Most waste from weapons research at Lawrence Livermore National Laboratory shipped to the NTS between 1974 and 1990
  - TRU waste is stored in the TRU Pad Cover Building located in Area 5 at the NTS

INTRODUCTION (cont.)

- TRU waste is stored in 55 gallon drums, 85 gallon overpacks and oversized boxes
- Final disposition is disposal at the Waste Isolation Pilot Plant (WIPP) in Carlsbad, New Mexico
- Requires characterization of waste for WIPP acceptance, which employs the Central Characterization Project (CCP) from WIPP
- Certification Audit approved

CENTRAL CHARACTERIZATION PROJECT

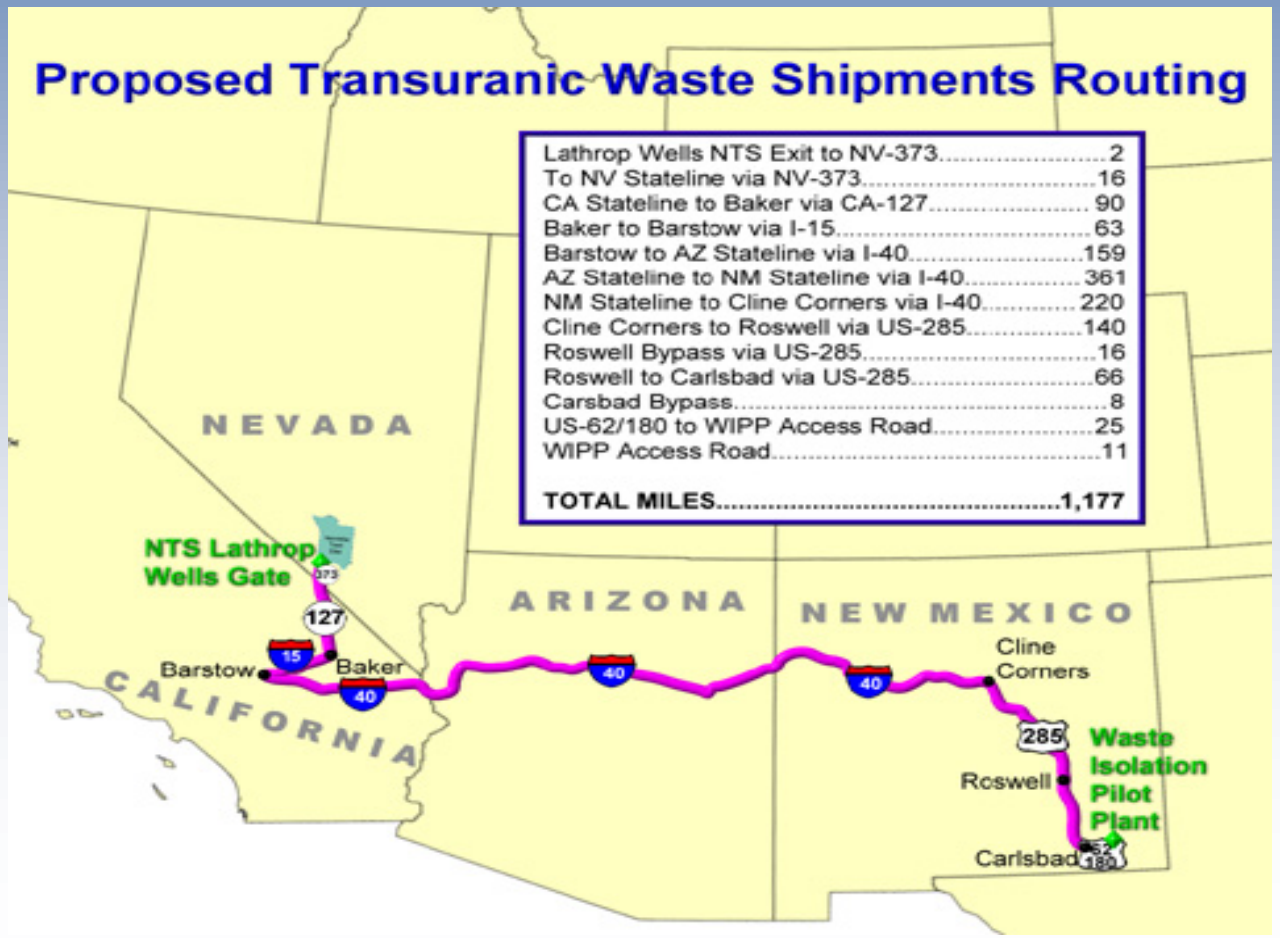
- Perform characterization activities necessary to meet the WIPP Waste Acceptance Criteria
  - Non-destructive assay
  - Non-destructive examination
  - Headspace Gas Sampling
- CCP supplements other site characterization activities



SHIPPING CHALLENGES

- In June 2003, TRU waste shipments to the WIPP were postponed until California concurred on the route
- Negotiations allow shipments on the route through December 31, 2004
- After December 31, 2004, a new route has to be negotiated
- Shipments initiated January 7, 2004

ROUTE THROUGH DECEMBER 31, 2004



SHIPMENTS BEGIN

- Seven shipments made in January 2004
- Nevada Highway Patrol and California Highway Patrol perform inspections prior to shipment leaving the NTS and escort the shipment to their respective State border
- Nevada State Health Division Radiological Health Program conducts inspections before shipment
- Approximately 60 shipments remaining destined for the WIPP
- Remaining shipments scheduled to resume August 2004 and be completed in December 2004

SUMMARY

- Nevada Division of Emergency Management officials involved in planning meetings for shipment coordination
- Performed WIPPTREX emergency management exercise with key players in January 2001
- First seven shipments were successful

SUMMARY (cont.)

- Good interaction between involved parties
- Characterization activities continue at the NTS to prepare more drums for shipment to WIPP
- The NTS will continue to make TRU waste shipments to WIPP until December 31, 2004