

choice 'political'

Nuclear site fought

United Press International
SALT LAKE CITY — The Reagan administration is putting politics ahead of the public interest in seeking a site for the nation's first high-level nuclear waste repository, environmentalists charge.

Environmental groups, voicing their concerns in a second round of U.S. Energy Department hearings Wednesday, said the two proposed Utah sites could not be considered because they are too close to the Grand Staircase-Escalante National Park.

William J. Lockhart, a spokesman for preservationist groups trying to block the dump, told the federal panel it is going too fast in selecting a final site for nuclear waste.

The proposed Gibson Dome dump sites are located about 20 miles northwest of Monticello in San Juan County.

He said it is probably illegal to hold public hearings only one month after the date when public comments were due on guidelines for site selection. People concerned about the issue need more time to respond, he said.

"The Reagan administration wants to assure that it will make the crucial repository decisions before political power slips from its grasp in the fall of 1984," said Lockhart, representing the National Parks and Conservation Association, Friends of the Earth and Utah Wilderness Association.

"Under pressure from the White House, the DOE sees the public participation requirements only as a ticket to be punched on the way to picking up campaign contributions from the nuclear industry."

Lockhart called on the DOE to conduct further hearings after it releases final guidelines for site selection. If the agency fails to comply with the request, he said, it should publicly announce its decision to decline further public comment.

Lyle Anderson, a Monticello attorney who supports the proposed site, also was concerned that the final decision would be plagued by politics. He said he feared DOE would listen to people in populous northern Utah — "where the votes are" — instead of the 1,900 residents of Monticello.

"The people of Monticello do not share the views of the preservationists, but their voices cannot be heard above the din," Anderson said. "Aesthetic values seem to be controlling life and death, health and safety decisions."

He also said the dump would not affect tourism at the park. "It would be like another thing we drive by on the way to the park — like a concession stand to the Grand Canyon," Anderson said.

In a hearing in Monticello Tuesday, San Juan County officials said they favored locating the dump in southeastern Utah to bolster the area's depressed economy.

Environmentalists argued the drop in tourism would make matters worse, however. An ongoing public poll taken at four of Utah's national parks showed 88 percent of those queried said they would be less likely to return if a nuclear dump was located near Canyonlands, they said.

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Comet to pass close to Earth

United Press International
PASADENA, Calif. — Scientists will have a rare chance next week to study a recently discovered comet that is coming within the "extremely" close range of 3 million miles although it still will be difficult to see without a telescope.

Scientists at the Jet Propulsion Laboratory said Wednesday the new comet, named IRAS-Araki-Alcock for the satellite and two amateur astronomers credited with its discovery, will give them their closest look at the astronomical phenomenon in two centuries.

It will make its closest approach to Earth on May 10 — passing about 3.1 million miles from Earth or about 12 times the distance from Earth to the moon.

Only one other known comet — Lexell in 1770 — came closer to Earth, JPL spokesman Henry Fuhrmann said. The only other comparable orbit was by Halley's comet in the year 1837 and it passed Earth at about twice the dis-

distance of the latest discovery. "This comet is unusual in two ways," Dr. Gerry Neugebauer, principal U.S. investigator on the international Infrared Astronomical Satellite Project (IRAS) said.

"It is the first comet to have ever been discovered through infrared radiation — meaning through heat emissions," Neugebauer said. "Secondly, it is so extremely close to Earth it gives us a chance to study a comet really close to us."

The comet will be difficult to see without a telescope. Although the accumulated brightness of the entire comet will be equal to the brightest stars, its light will be diffused over an area 16 times greater than the area of the moon.

The new comet was discovered simultaneously by two amateur astronomers in England and Japan using backyard telescopes and scientists monitoring data transmitted by a sophisticated satellite telescope launched in January to map unknown realms of the universe.

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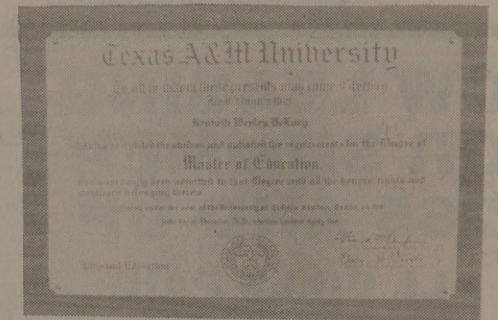
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Dying boy's final wish is to visit Texas uncle

United Press International
PITTSBURGH — His wish wasn't that big, but for young Bryan McClinton, who has been fighting cancer, the trip he will make Saturday will be like a dream come true.

The Make-A-Wish Foundation of Western Pennsylvania will send the boy, his mother and father to Midland to visit his uncle, Tom Pitman.

Pitman had taken a special interest in Bryan, whose parents are divorced, before moving his family from the Pittsburgh area. "His (Bryan's) comment was, 'I want to ride on my uncle's plane one more time,'" said Marjorie Clark, who in April founded the local chapter of Make-A-Wish, which is based in Phoenix, Ariz., and operates in a dozen states.

Piggyback rides. Tom always did that when he came over to the house," said Debbie McClinton, who had to quit work in 1981 after her son was diagnosed with neuroblastoma, a usually fatal disease in which tumors grow on the nervous system.

For his part, Bryan, who turns 8 on the day he leaves for Texas, offers only a "yup" when asked he is looking forward to the eight-day trip and an "I don't know" when quizzed on what he will do in Texas.

For some reason, they were both attracted to each other. "We've all along wanted to go down," Bryan's mother said. "We feel he really is going to enjoy it down there."

"He's crazy about dinosaurs and they say they have dinosaur

prints in a park down there," said McClinton, whose family lives in nearby McKeesport.

McClinton said the family once considered moving to Texas but Bryan's illness prevented it. She also had hoped to take Bryan and his sister, Kris-

teen, 8, on a trip to Texas but money has been short.

Having Make-A-Wish pay for the trip was suggested by Bryan's doctor, Vincent Albo, who had been in contact with Clark.



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