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Lessons Learned in Planning for the Removal of Spent Nuclear Fuel from Shutdown Nuclear Power Plant Sites in the U.S.

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The U.S. Department of Energy Office of Spent Fuel and Waste Disposition continues to conduct evaluations of removing spent nuclear fuel from shutdown nuclear power plant sites. The evaluations of the 14 shutdown sites (Maine Yankee, Yankee Rowe, Connecticut Yankee, Humboldt Bay, Big Rock Point, Rancho Seco, Trojan, La Crosse, Zion, Crystal River, Kewaunee, San Onofre, Vermont Yankee, and Fort Calhoun) provide an important source of information that will be used in future planning for the removal of spent nuclear fuel from the sites. The lessons learned from the evaluations were organized into ten consistent themes. Several of the themes had to do with the shutdown site visits, such as the importance of safety, the importance of preparation for the site visits, the length of the questions submitted to the sites, the importance of using photographs to document site conditions, and the importance of compiling notes at the conclusion of each during a site visit. Several themes had to do with the collection of data, such as the use of Google Earth imagery, the importance of identifying issues associated with the spent nuclear fuel inventory, and the importance of capturing data and experience shortly after shutdown. The remaining themes had to do with building relationships with the shutdown sites and organizations such as Tribes, States, State Regional Group representatives, the Federal Railroad Administration, and local community engagement or advisory panels.

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