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Home > DOE nuclear waste disposal study in North Dakota

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The Department of Energy is conducting a study to determine whether a site in North Dakota could potentially replace the Yucca Mountain Nuclear Waste Repository for storing long term, high level nuclear waste. The site, a 20-acre area near Rugby, North Dakota was chosen for its lack of seismic activity.

During its investigation, DOE plans to explore deep borehole disposal, a faster and cheaper disposal alternative to conventional mined repositories. By drilling 16,000-foot boreholes, DOE will be able to collect more hydrogeological, geochemical, and geo-mechanical information on the underlying crystalline basement rock, thereby helping them to determine whether the area would be suitable for high level nuclear waste disposal.

The study and is set to start later this year, however local and state leaders are asking for more time before the proposed five-year study begins.

Sources: E&E News, U.S. Department of Energy
