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UNITED STATES NUCLEAR REGULATORY COMMISSION

Protecting People and the Environment

**GENERIC ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT
STATEMENT FOR URANIUM RECOVERY**

Public Scoping Meeting

August 7, 2007

**Dr. Andrew C. Campbell,
Acting Director, Environmental Protection and
Performance Assessment Directorate,
Division of Waste Management and
Environmental Protection,
U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission**

Meeting Objectives

- **NRC's Role and Responsibility**
- **NRC Review Process**
- **Questions**
- **Public Comments**

Who is the NRC?

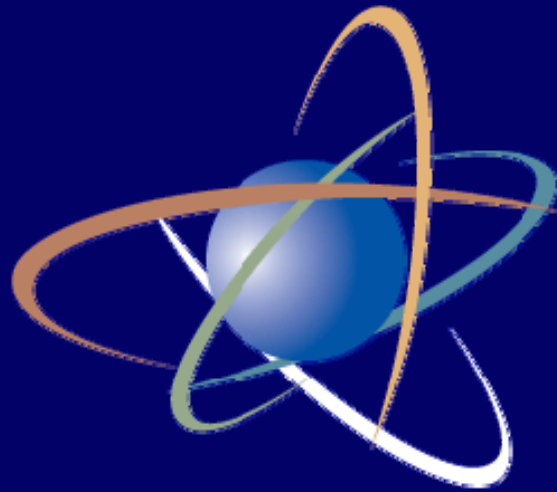
- **INDEPENDENT** Federal agency
- Report directly to **CONGRESS**
- Regulatory **RESPONSIBILITY**
 - Safety and security review
 - Environmental review
 - Licensing
 - Inspection
 - Enforcement

**OUR
MISSION:
Protect
Public
Health and
Safety,
and the
Environment**

NRC's Role

- **All nuclear projects must meet strict safety, security, and environmental requirements**
- **Only if the requirements are met will the license be issued**

**NRC
does not
promote
nuclear
projects**



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**Mr. Gregory Suber
Chief, Environmental Review Branch,
Division of Waste Management and
Environmental Protection,
U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission**

National Environmental Policy Act of 1969

- **Set national environmental policy**
- **Requires detailed statement for all major federal actions significantly affecting the human environment**
- **Established the Council on Environmental Quality (CEQ)**

Generic EISs

- **CEQ regulations (40 CFR 1502.4)**
 - **EISs on “broad actions”**
 - **Can evaluate geographically or generically**
 - **Use scoping, tiering to “relate broad and narrow actions”**

NRC Examples of GEISs

- **Final GEIS on Uranium Milling (NUREG-0706)**
- **GEIS for License Renewal of Nuclear Plants (NUREG-1437)**
- **GEIS on Decommissioning of Nuclear Facilities (NUREG-0586)**

Tiering

- **CEQ regulations (40 CFR 1502.20 and 1508.28)**
 - **Incorporate GEIS discussions in narrower environmental analyses**
 - **Focus on actual issues ready for decision in narrower analyses**
 - **Appropriate when going from GEIS to site-specific analysis**

Purpose of Uranium Recovery GEIS

- **Evaluate environmental issues common to in-situ leach uranium milling and to alternate methods of uranium recovery (e.g., conventional milling)**
- **Use to tier off for site-specific license applications**
- **Fulfill NRC's NEPA requirements**

Scope of Uranium Recovery GEIS

- **Address construction, operation, and decommissioning / reclamation of uranium recovery facilities**
- **Discuss direct, indirect, and cumulative radiological & non-radiological impacts**
- **Evaluate potential environmental impacts to various resource areas**

Environmental Impact Resource Areas

- **Land Use**
- **Geology and Soils**
- **Water Resources**
- **Ecological Resources**
- **Air Quality**
- **Waste Management**
- **Historic and Cultural Resources**
- **Transportation**
- **Socioeconomics**
- **Public and Occupational Health**

GEIS Schedule

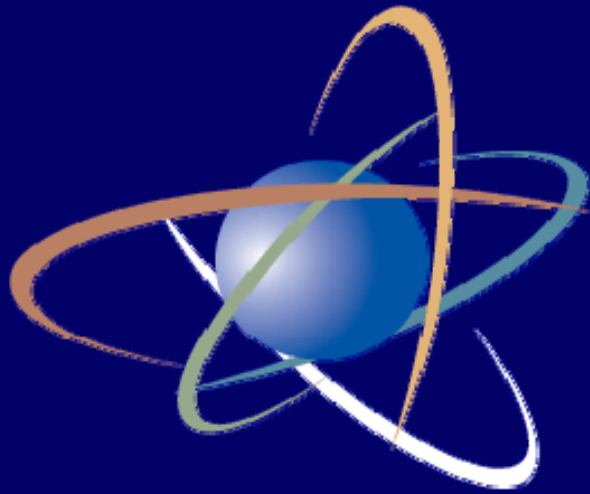
- **Publish Notice of Intent (July 24, 2007)**
- **Scoping Comment Period (July 24 to September 4, 2007)**
- **Scoping Summary Report**
- **Draft GEIS prepared (April 2008)**
- **Draft GEIS Public Comment Period**
- **Final GEIS Prepared (January 2009)**

GEIS Scoping Comments

- **Postmarked by September 4, 2007, “Uranium Recovery GEIS” in the subject line**
- **By regular mail**
 - **Chief, Rules Review and Directives Branch, Mail Stop T-6D59, U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission, Washington, DC 20555-0001.**
- **By email**
 - **Send to nrcprep@nrc.gov**

Contact Information

- **NEPA and GEIS questions, contact:**
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[jrj@nrc.gov](mailto:jrp@nrc.gov)
- **Uranium recovery questions, contact:**
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rwv@nrc.gov



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OVERVIEW OF URANIUM RECOVERY FACILITIES AND REVIEWS

Public Scoping Meeting

Mr. William VonTill

**Chief, Uranium Recovery Licensing Branch,
Division of Waste Management and
Environmental Protection,
U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission**

Uranium Recovery

What is Regulated:

- **Conventional Uranium and Thorium Mills**

**SRP for Reclamation
(NUREG-1620)**

- **In Situ Leach (ISL) Uranium Extraction**

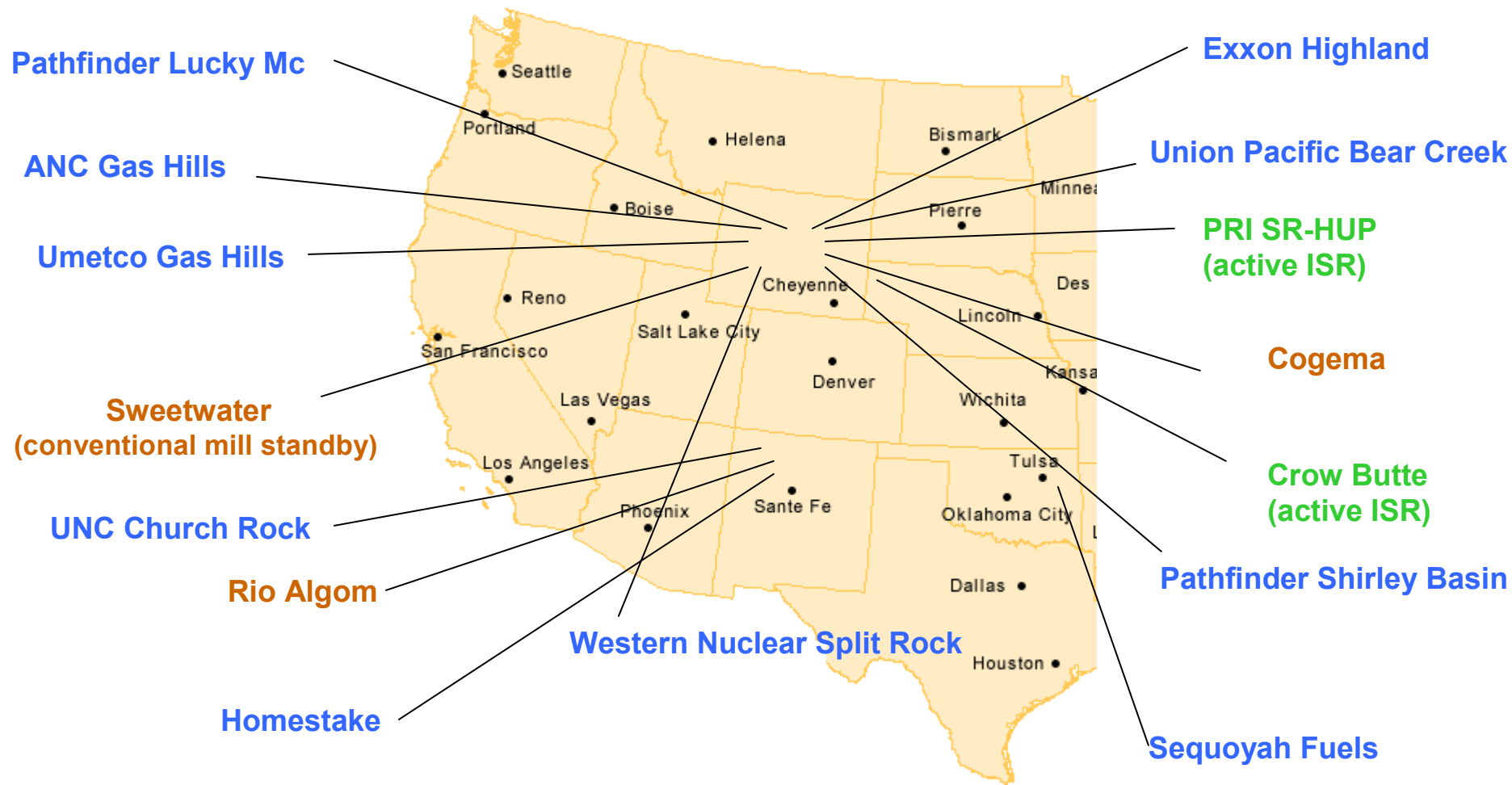
**SRP for ISL License Applications
(NUREG-1569)**

- **Conventional Uranium Mines not regulated by the NRC (States, U.S. MSHA/OSHA)**

NRC Review Process

- **Acceptance review**
- **Safety/Technical review**
- **Environmental review**
- **Notice of opportunity for hearing**
- **Work with stakeholders (e.g. States, EPA, BLM, Indian Tribes)**
- **Inspections**

Uranium Recovery Sites Undergoing Decommissioning

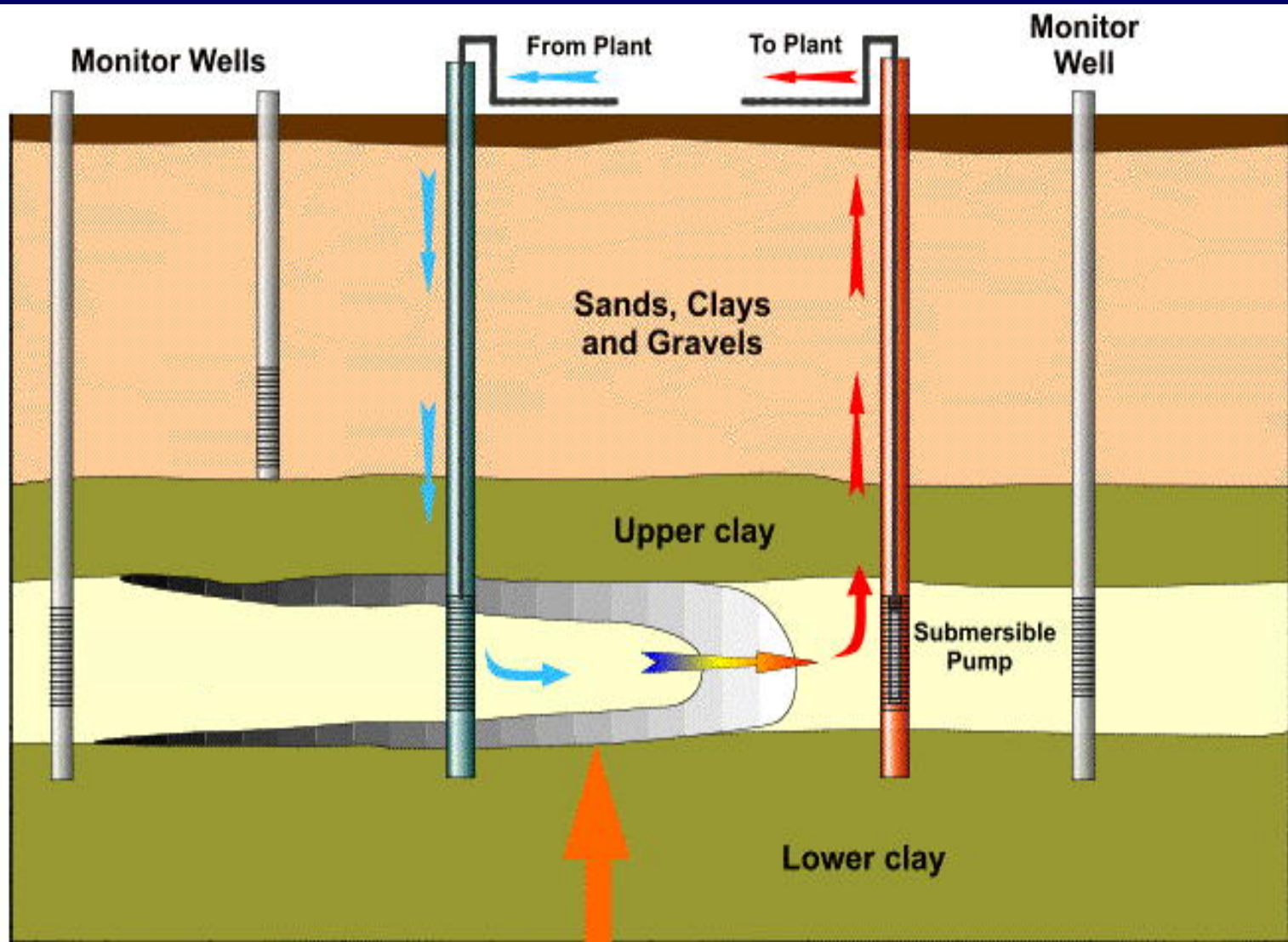


Note: Colorado, Texas, and Utah are agreement states

Typical Uranium Mill Facility



The ISL process



Uranium Deposit

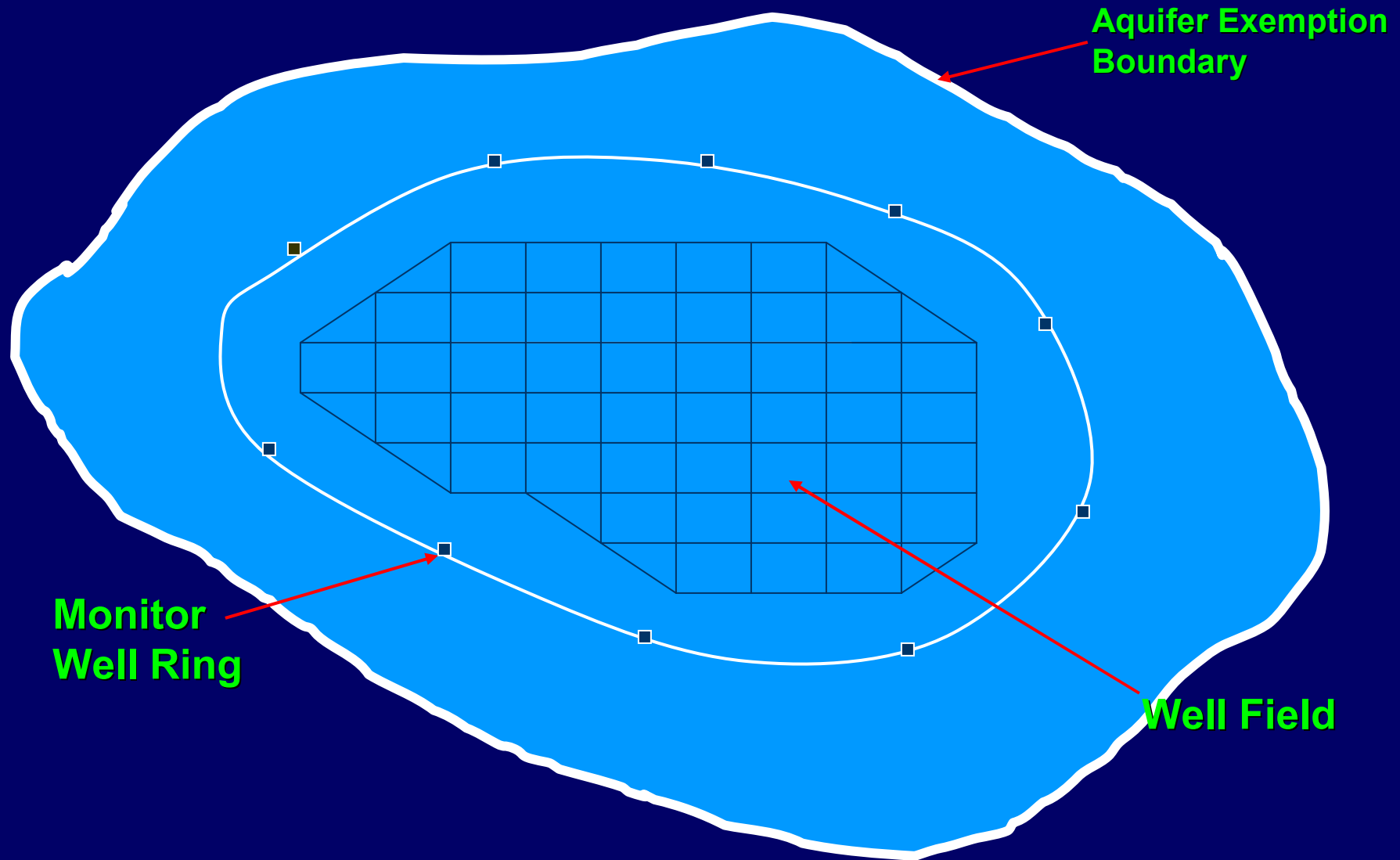
Typical ISL Wellfield



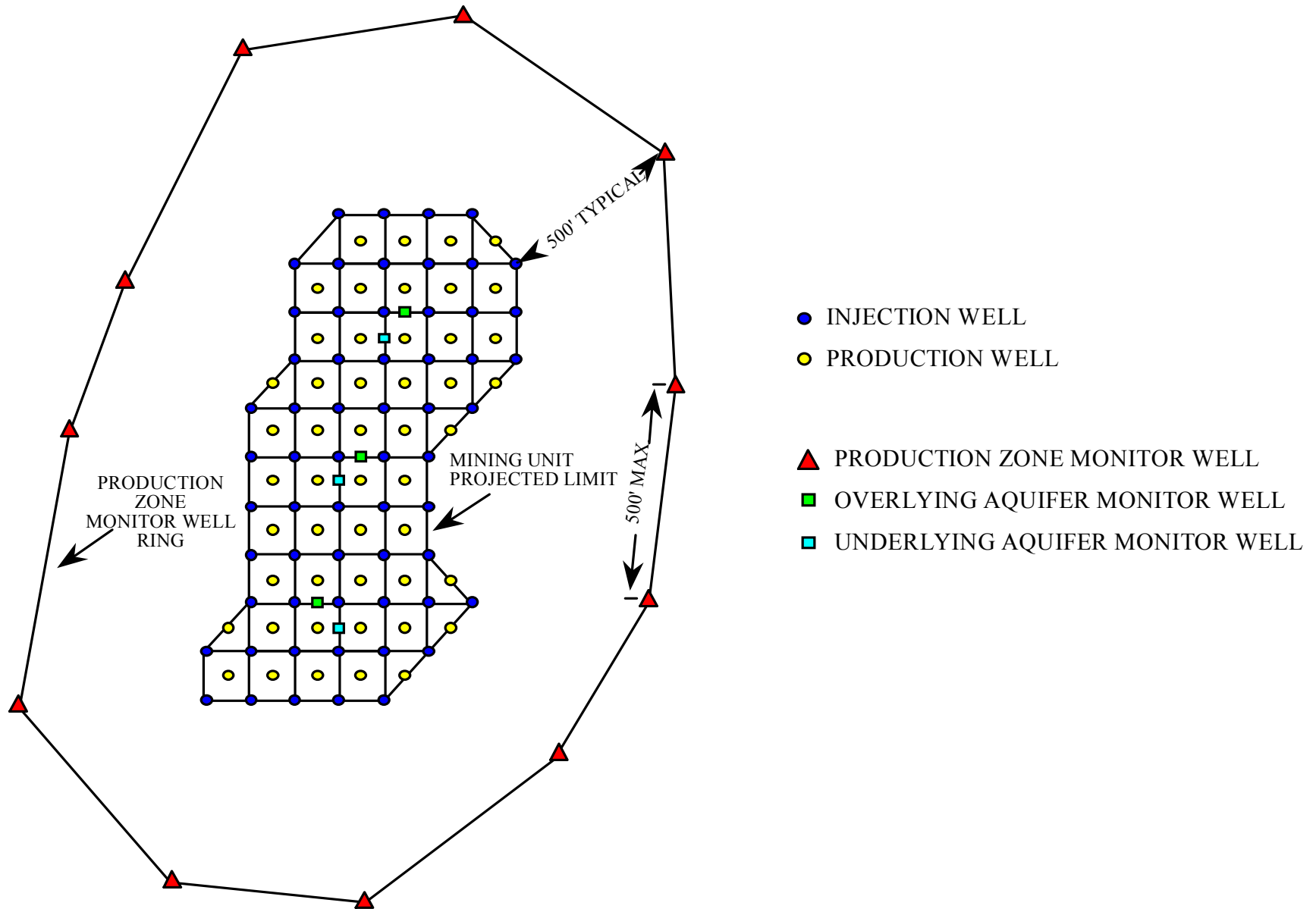
ISL Central Processing Plant



Typical ISL Wellfield Layout



Typical ISL Wellfield Layout



Thank You for Your Input

