PERCEPTION OF NUCLEAR RADIATION
WHY THE FACTS AND OUR FEARS
BOTH MATTER
TRUST

MORE AFRAID
Business and Industry
Politicians
A process that’s closed

LESS AFRAID
Consumer groups
Neutral experts
A process that’s open
RISK v. BENEFIT

(More Afraid)
Nuclear radiation in non-medical setting

(Less Afraid)
Nuclear radiation in a medical setting
VOLUNTARY OR IMPOSED

(More Afraid)
The government chooses your community to host a high level nuclear waste repository

(Less Afraid)
Your community volunteers to host a high level nuclear waste repository
NATURAL V. HUMAN-MADE

(More Afraid)
Nuclear Radiation

(Less Afraid)
Radiation from Natural Sources
QuickTime™ and a H.264 decompressor are needed to see this picture.
PAIN AND SUFFERING

(More Afraid)
Anything associated with cancer (radiation, pesticides)

(Less Afraid)
Heart disease
Flu
Food poisoning
CATASTROPHIC or CHRONIC

(More Afraid)
Nuclear “disaster” (e.g. Chernobyl)

(Less Afraid)
Air pollution from fossil fuels
UNCERTAINTY

(More Afraid)
Things we can’t detect (radiation)

Things we can’t understand
(nuclear physics)
Risk Communication

Actions, words, and other interactions that incorporate and respect the perceptions of the information recipients, intended to help people make more informed decisions about threats to their health and safety.