



# **WIPP Update and Status of Recovery**

**Northern New Mexico Citizens Advisory Board**

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# Events at WIPP

## Two Events in February:

- February 5<sup>th</sup> - a fire in the WIPP underground involving a salt haul dump truck
- February 14<sup>th</sup> – radiological airborne release from Panel 7



# Current Status

- WIPP waste handling activities suspended since February 5
- Accident investigation reports have been issued
  - Fire (March 2014)
  - Phase 1 Release (April 2014)
- Investigation continues into cause of radiological release



# Independent Reviews

- Accident Investigation Board appointed with experts from around the complex
- EHHS is providing operational oversight
- WIPP regulators involved (NMED, EPA)



# Investigation Into Cause

- Narrowed event source to Room 7, Panel 7
- Reviewing various waste streams
- Safely conducted numerous entries allowing us to narrow the physical location



Top-down view of Panel 7, Room 7

# Potential Dispersal Mechanisms

- A broad range of possibilities are being considered
- The change in absorbent in one waste stream is just one potential theory
- No conclusions for the cause have been reached





# Investigation

- Evaluating source of contamination
- Evaluating samples from release and generator waste streams in laboratories across the DOE complex
- Evaluating processing of waste streams at generator sites

# 3706 Project Status

- Shipments from LANL to WCS have been suspended as a precaution
- Meeting the deadline will be extremely difficult
- Efforts continue to meet the goal, however safety is and will be the top priority





# WIPP Recovery

- Integrated Project Recovery team has been chartered
- Federal and contractor staff is being augmented for support
- Formal corrective action plans for both events are being developed

# WIPP Recovery (cont.)

- Ventilation system upgrades
- Decontamination planning and execution
- Mine stabilization



# Long-Term Prognosis

- Unanswered questions
  - Cause of release
  - Extent of decontamination
  - Out-year budgets
- “Culture change” mandatory
- Corrective Action Plan resolution
- Return to full operations – Indeterminate



# Questions