DEC 23 2015

Ms. Doreen Barger, Chair
Paducah Citizens Advisory Board
111 Memorial Drive
Paducah, Kentucky 42001

Dear Ms. Barger:

Thank you for your December 3, 2015, letter regarding recovery of the Department's Waste Isolation Pilot Plant (WIPP). We appreciate the Environmental Management (EM) Site Specific Advisory Board's (SSAB) continued support for the EM program.

With respect to your first recommendation to create and make available to the EM SSAB and the public a realistic plan and timetable to restore WIPP to full operation, the Carlsbad Field Office (CBFO) is currently finalizing an Integrated Performance Measurement Baseline for WIPP. This baseline documents the activities, cost, and schedule for the contractors' and the Carlsbad Field Office's activities leading toward resumption of limited waste emplacement operations. Upon approval of this baseline, a summary will be available on the WIPP Recovery web site at http://energy.gov/em/waste-isolation-pilot-plant-wipp-recovery. Should you desire, we will arrange a briefing on this baseline when it is approved.

Your second and third recommendations concern identifying, evaluating, and implementing safe alternatives to retaining waste at its point of generation until WIPP is restored to full operation. Currently, we have adequate safe interim storage at affected sites until we can resume normal waste shipments, and legacy waste processing and packaging activities are continuing. CBFO has initiated conceptual planning, preliminary requirements development, and trade-off analyses for additional above-ground storage capability at WIPP. We will keep you informed of interim storage decisions as they are made.

If you have any questions, please feel free to contact me or Ms. Kristen G. Ellis, Director, Office of Intergovernmental and Community Activities, at (202) 586-5810.

Sincerely,

Monica C. Regalbuto
Assistant Secretary
for Environmental Management

cc: Kristen Ellis, EM-3.2
Dave Borak, EM-3.2