



Northern New Mexico Citizens' Advisory Board
A U.S. Department of Energy Site-Specific Advisory Board
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August 1, 2013

Geoffrey Beausoleil, Acting Site Manager
Los Alamos Field Office
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Los Alamos, NM 87544

Mr. Pete Maggiore
Assistant Manager for Environmental Operations
Los Alamos Field Office
3747 West Jemez Road, MS A316
Los Alamos, NM 87544

Dear Messrs. Beausoleil and Maggiore,

I am pleased to enclose Recommendations 2013-08 and 2013-09, which were unanimously adopted by the Northern New Mexico Citizens' Advisory Board at its meeting held July 31st in Los Alamos.

Please call Lee Bishop, DDFO or Menice Santistevan, Executive Director, if you have questions regarding this recommendation. We look forward to the response from the Department of Energy.

Very truly yours,

Carlos J. Valdez
Chair, NNMCAB

Enclosure: a/s
Cc w/encl:
U. S. Senator Martin Heinrich
U.S. Senator Tom Udall
U. S. Congressman Ben R. Lujan
Secretary Ryan Flynn, NMED
Cate Alexander, DFO (via e-mail)
Lee Bishop, DDFO
Robert Pfaff, LASO/EPO
John Kieling, NMED
Rich Mayer, EPA
Jeffrey Mousseau, LANS
Dean Hammons, USACE (via e-mail)
Menice B. Santistevan, Executive Director
CAB File

NORTHERN NEW MEXICO CITIZENS' ADVISORY BOARD
Recommendation to the Department of Energy
No. 2013-08
WASTE ISOLATION PILOT PLANT STORAGE FOR LANL WASTE
Authored by

Carlos Valdez, Stephen Schmelling, Gerard Martinez, and Lawrence Longacre

Background

The responsibility of the Environmental Management Site Specific Advisory Board at Northern New Mexico is to provide meaningful opportunities for collaborative dialogue among the diverse multicultural communities of Northern New Mexico, the Department of Energy (DOE), the Los Alamos National Laboratory (LANL) and any state or federal regulatory agency. The Northern New Mexico Citizens' Advisory Board (NNMCAB) is chartered to discuss and make recommendations for any clean-up efforts as it relates to Legacy and Cold War issues.

Comments and observations

The Waste Isolation Pilot Plant (WIPP) was chartered by Congress to provide permanent storage for defense related transuranic (TRU) waste. To date, WIPP has already received almost 87,000 cubic meters of such waste from 13 DOE sites, including LANL. It has recently come to the attention of the NNMCAB, that there are several entities that have intentions to utilize, are working on plans, or are making recommendations, to expand the mission of WIPP. More specifically this expanded mission for WIPP would include making WIPP the final disposal site for hazardous waste and the preferred alternative for greater than class C waste. The Blue Ribbon Commission has made a recommendation that spent nuclear fuel be deposited in WIPP. WIPP has applied for recertification to the New Mexico Environment Department (NMED) to be able to dispose of waste from leaking tanks located at the Hanford Nuclear Reservation in Washington State.

LANL is currently in the process of moving 3,706 cubic meters of above-ground TRU waste off of LANL property, with a commitment to complete this project, "The 3706 Campaign" by June 30, 2014. There is additional TRU waste at LANL that is to be disposed of as part of the "2005 Order on Consent" between LANL and the NMED. The NNMCAB is concerned the proposed expansion of the WIPP mission: the additional large volume of waste being proposed for storage in WIPP from different entities, and the limited storage available for all waste; that WIPP will not have sufficient space for what remains at LANL and the obligation it has to remove all TRU waste for permanent disposal in WIPP. In addition, NNMCAB also raises concerns about possible limits on the rate at which LANL TRU waste can be accepted by WIPP.

Recommendation

1. The NNMCAB recommends to the DOE that an extensive thorough inventory be conducted at LANL of all the WIPP eligible waste and that an accurate volume be reported back to the NNMCAB.
2. The NNMCAB recommends that DOE certify in writing that in light of currently planned and proposed waste shipments from all entities, WIPP will have sufficient capacity for all WIPP eligible waste that is located at LANL and can continue to accept LANL TRU waste on a schedule that will allow it to meet the June 30, 2014 commitment and the 2005 Order on Consent.

Intent

The intent of this recommendation is that DOE/EM and WIPP set their priorities for the remaining storage facilities at WIPP to ensure that there will be enough capacity to hold all TRU waste remaining at LANL and that the current disposal schedules can be met.