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January 31, 1992

Mr. John Stroud
Concerned Citizens for Nuclear Safety
412 West San Francisco
Santa Fe, NM 85701

Dear Mr. Stroud:

This is in response to your fax with questions regarding the ability of the Department of Energy to store off-site mixed waste from the Waste Isolation Pilot Plant (WIPP) at Los Alamos National Laboratory (LANL) in the event that WIPP is determined to be unsuitable for the disposal of mixed waste.

First, the RCRA permit presently held by LANL is for hazardous waste only; the permit does not address mixed waste. It is correct that the hazardous waste permit is for on-site waste only.

LANL has submitted a Part A for mixed waste and it does have a component for the storage of off-site mixed waste that is to be reprocessed for plutonium. They do not plan to accept any off-site mixed waste that is not going to be reprocessed, i.e. mixed waste from the WIPP which is already below the economically recoverable threshold for plutonium. If the decision is made to remove waste from WIPP and store it at LANL, LANL would have to amend its Part A, or its permit if it had a mixed waste permit at that time, for the receipt of off-site mixed waste that is not to be reprocessed for plutonium. Such off-site mixed waste could not be accepted by LANL without its first notifying the New Mexico Environment Department and modifying the applicable document.

If you have any questions regarding this, please contact Dr. A. Elizabeth Gordon on my staff at 827-4300.

Yours truly,

Kathleen M. Sisneros
Kathleen M. Sisneros, Director
Water and Waste Management Division

KMS/AEG/aeg

cc: Benito Garcia, Chief, H&RMB
WIPP and LANL files



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