



State of New Mexico
ENVIRONMENT DEPARTMENT
 Harold Runnels Building
 1190 St. Francis Drive, P.O. Box 26110
 Santa Fe, New Mexico 87502
 (505) 827-0187

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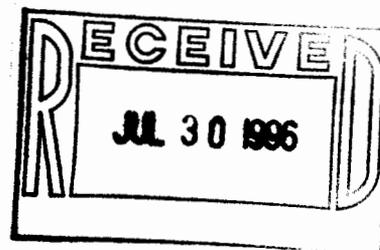
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 SECRETARY

EDGAR T. THORNTON, III
 DEPUTY SECRETARY

GARY E. JOHNSON
 GOVERNOR

29 July 1996

Mr. Steven R. Rae
 Water Quality & Hydrology Group (ESH-18)
 Los Alamos National Laboratory
 P.O. Box 1663
 Los Alamos, New Mexico 87545



Re: **Notices of Intent to Discharge (NOIs)**

Dear Mr. Rae:

The New Mexico Environment Department (NMED) Surface Water Quality Bureau is in receipt of two NOIs submitted by your office dated 3 July 1996. These NOIs address the following two discharges:

- 1) Guaje Water Wells GR-1, GR-2, GR-3, and GR-4 located in Guaje Canyon on land owned by the U.S. Department of Agriculture, U.S. Forest Service; and
- 2) Sandia Canyon watercourse at the point where the Radioactive Liquid Waste (RLW) Cross Country line crosses the streambed near TA-3.

The following responses are based upon the aforementioned LANL submittal and a 25 July 1996 telephone conversation between Mr. Glenn Saums of my staff and Mr. Alex Puglisi of your staff.

Response to the NOI on the Guaje Wells:

LANL's NOI does not indicate how these discharges will comply with federal National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) permitting requirements. NMED believes such discharges to the watercourse will require regulatory coverage under the federal NPDES permit program.

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LANL indicates: "[s]oil and rock drillings and rock cuttings (refuse) will be disposed of in a manner in which they will not enter a watercourse." Handling of these materials as well as other refuse in a manner to prevent entry into a watercourse is necessary to prevent violation of Water Quality Control Commission (WQCC) Regulation 2201 (20 NMAC 6.2).

In addition to complying with WQCC Regulations, LANL needs to assure discharges will not cause violation of applicable WQCC water quality standards (WQS) [20 NMAC 6.1]. In particular, LANL needs to evaluate and take such measures as are necessary to comply with numeric standards for "Livestock Watering" and "Wildlife Habitat" (WQS §§3101 K. & L. respectively [reference WQS §1105.A. regarding applicability of standards in unclassified waters]). Further, attention should also be directed to assuring narrative standards in Section 1102 of the WQS are not violated.

Finally on this issue, I strongly recommend that you speak with the Española District of the Santa Fe National Forest on this discharge. Any action which could adversely affect the Forest's resources may require their review and approval prior to the Lab's initiating the project.

Response to NOI on RLW Line Crossing:

Concerns on this NOI are similar to those expressed above regarding preventing the disposal of refuse in the watercourse and preventing violations of the WQS. Due to the fact the pipeline being moved normally carries radioactive contaminated liquid, we specifically direct your attention to the WQS narrative standard in §1102.G. regarding radioactivity.

As discussed with Mr. Puglisi, due to the presence of chlorine in potable waters that will be used to flush the pipeline, care should be taken to prevent exceeding the WQS 3101.L.3 chlorine numeric standard of 1.0 mg/l.

It is our understanding your office is also working with Ms.

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Cecilia Brown of my staff regarding permitting this activity under federal Clean Water Act Sections 404 and 401. This letter does not address, or constitute, the Surface Water Quality Bureau's certification of these or any other activities conducted under sections 404/401. The NOIs in question were also submitted to the NMED Ground Water Quality Bureau. This letter does not contain comments the Ground Water Quality Bureau may have on this matter.

If you have any questions, please contact Glenn Saums of my staff at (505) 827-2827.

Sincerely,



Jim Piatt, Ph.D.
Chief
Surface Water Quality Bureau

cc:

Marcy Leavitt, Chief, NMED-GWQB
Benito Garcia, Chief, NMED-HRMB
Steve Yanicak, NMED-DOEOB, White Rock Office
Cecila Brown, NMED-SWQB
Lori Osterstock, District Ranger, Española Ranger District., USFS
Ken Zamora, DOE-LAAO