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**The U. S. Department of Energy
Albuquerque Operations
Albuquerque, New Mexico 87185-5400
March 2, 1998**

*General
W. B. ...
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ENVIRONMENT DEPARTMENT
OFFICE OF THE SECRETARY

Dear Interested Citizen:

In a continued effort to obtain public input into the development of the Department of Energy (DOE), Albuquerque Operations Office (AL) Environmental Management (EM) Program, AL is now issuing the "Accelerating Cleanup: Paths to Closure, Albuquerque Operations Office" Draft (AL Paths to Closure) for your review and comment. This Draft includes our response to stakeholder comments which were received on the "Accelerating Clean-up: Focus on 2006 AL Discussion Draft."

The AL Paths to Closure addresses all EM mission activities at the following sites: the Lovelace Respiratory Research Institute, formerly the Inhalation Toxicology Research Institute, and the South Valley Superfund site, both in New Mexico; the Grand Junction Office in Colorado; the Monticello Superfund sites in Utah; the Maxey Flats Superfund site in Kentucky; sites throughout the country associated with the Uranium Mill Tailings Remedial Action Project; the Kansas City Plant in Missouri; the Pantex Plant in Texas; the recently closed Pinellas Plant in Florida; Sandia National Laboratories in California and New Mexico; and the Los Alamos National Laboratory in New Mexico.

Most AL sites have ongoing mission activities funded by programs other than EM, including national security, nuclear material stewardship, and basic research. These mission activities will continue indefinitely. By contrast, AL is striving to complete most EM mission activities by the end of Fiscal Year (FY) 2006. These EM mission activities are primarily in the areas of environmental restoration and waste management and include cleanup of surface contamination and cleanup or containment of groundwater contamination, final disposition of all wastes currently in storage, and transfer of funding responsibility for routine waste operations to the site landlord programs. Other EM activities such as long-term surveillance and maintenance and groundwater monitoring are expected to continue for an extended period at many AL sites.

A major difference between this AL Paths to Closure and the earlier AL Discussion Draft is the use of only one funding case instead of analysis of separate high and low funding cases. A significant addition to the AL Paths to Closure is waste disposition maps which illustrate how various waste types will be managed. Also, decreases in overall funding and changes in project-specific assumptions have changed the program completion schedules at some sites.



During the 60-day review period beginning February 27, 1998, and ending April 28, 1998, we encourage you to engage in discussions with our various Area Office contacts (identified within the document). In concert with our efforts, DOE/HQ will be issuing the Accelerating Cleanup: Paths to Closure, National Draft, which presents the overall national EM perspective. The National Draft will be forthcoming in about one week.

Comments on the two respective draft documents can be forwarded as follows:

The address for National Paths to Closure is:

U.S. Department of Energy
Mr. Gene Schmitt
P.O. Box 44820
Washington, D.C. 20026-4820
E-mail address: FocusON2006@EM.DOE.GOV (not case sensitive)

Comments on the overall AL Paths to Closure should be provided directly to:

U.S. Department of Energy
Albuquerque Operations Office
Mr. Richard Nevarez
P.O. Box 5400
Albuquerque, NM 87185-5400
E-mail address: rnevarez@doeal.gov

Site specific contacts at the Area Offices can be located in the AL Paths to Closure.

Thank you for your continued interest and involvement. If you are interested in discussing specifics of the AL Paths to Closure or need any additional information, please contact my office at (505) 845-5804. We look forward to receiving your comments and exchanging information and concerns as we continue this process.

Sincerely,

W. John Arthur III
Assistant Manager for Office of
Environment/Project Management

Enclosure