



Department of Energy
Albuquerque Operations Office
P. O. Box 5400
Albuquerque, New Mexico 87185-5400

General

March 15, 2000

Ms. Menise S. Manzanaras, Chair
Northern New Mexico Citizens' Advisory Board
1640 Old Pecos Trall, Suite H
Santa Fe, NM 87505

Dear Ms. Manzanaras:

This letter responds to the Northern New Mexico Citizens' Advisory Board's (NNMCAB) Recommendation 99-2, which was adopted on May 26, 1999. The NNMCAB expressed concern that the projected levels of funding for Los Alamos National Laboratory's (LANL) Environmental Restoration (ER) Project would be insufficient to meet the goals stated in the "Accelerated Paths to Closure" document or in meeting the "Environmental Stewardship Vision" of 2006. The NNMCAB recommended that "the Department of Energy (DOE) request significant increases in the ER budget to enable LANL to meet the 2008 deadline."

As part of the yearly budget formulation process, DOE's Albuquerque Operations Office (AL) is required to meet a target level funding in developing its budget for the environmental mission. However, DOE-AL has consistently requested "above target" funding for the LANL ER Project to enable an acceleration of the completion date. However, at this time the funds projected to be allocated to DOE-AL by Congress and DOE Headquarters reflect a "flat" funding profile of approximately \$200 million per year. This funding profile does not allow for any appreciable increase in funding for the LANL ER Project in the near term.

During Fiscal Year (FY) 1999, LANL developed a life cycle baseline that has been reviewed and validated by DOE for implementation. The baseline currently shows a completion date of FY 2013 at a funding level ranging from a low of \$54 million in FY 2001 to a high of \$82 million in FY 2006-10. The baseline is the project document that LANL and DOE will use to manage the LANL ER Project. We will continue to look for opportunities to streamline the baseline to reduce costs and accelerate the completion schedule. In addition, DOE-AL will endeavor to increase funding for the LANL ER Project as other DOE-AL sites complete their ER work, and as other sources of funds become available.

I plan to provide a budget briefing and update at the NNMCAB on the budget status at DOE-AL and specifically the LANL projects at the March 22, 2000, NNMCAB meeting. If



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Ms. Menise S. Manzanares

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you have questions or concerns, please call me at (505) 845-6682 or Tony Trujillo at (505) 845-5987.

Sincerely,



John G. Themelis
Deputy Assistant Manager for
Office of Environmental
Operations and Services

Cc:

K. Chaney, EM-34, HQ
J. Vozella, LAAO
T. Taylor, LAAO
M. Byrne, LAAO
G. Rael, ERD, AL
T. Trujillo, ERD, AL
S. Gonzales, BRMD, AL