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The New Mexican

Date: 11-22-00 Page: 1

Agency certifies new WIPP waste container

The Associated Press

CARLSBAD — The U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission has approved a new radioactive-waste container to haul shipments to the Waste Isolation Pilot Plant in southern New Mexico.

The so-called HalfPACT container is about 30 inches shorter than the TRUPACT-II — or the Transuranic Package Transporter Model 2 — that is currently being used.

The HalfPACT is designed to carry seven 55-gallon drums

weighing up to 1,000 pounds each. It is also capable of carrying four 85-gallon drums.

Engineers began designing the HalfPACT in an effort to maximize shipping capacity to comply with U.S. Department of Transportation weight regulations.

While the TRUPACT is designed to carry 14 55-gallon drums, some waste drums weigh more than normal and put the shipment over the weight limit.

DOE officials said a transportation carrier will be able to haul three fully loaded HalfPACT containers.

0507 General

LANL gets battery-powered trucks

Nuclear-weapons scientists at Los Alamos National Laboratory could be driving cars powered by the Energizer Bunny after the lab received eight electric pickup trucks this week.

Powered by batteries, the electric Ford Ranger EV trucks provide a potential alternative to cars that run on petroleum, said lab property management chief Brett Ray. The lab has ordered 20 of the pickups, and eight arrived this week.

The trucks have 39 eight-volt, sealed-lead acid batteries in a compartment under the frame of the trucks. They can be plugged into a regular 220-volt circuit, and each one takes

LANL continues building complex

Construction of a complex at Los Alamos National Laboratory that will house the fastest computer in the world is back on track following last May's Cerro Grande fire, according to information from the project's designer.

The \$62.5 million, 291,000-square-foot facility, called the Strategic Computing Complex, is scheduled to be completed in December, 2001, according to the Fort Worth firm of Carter & Burgess.

The fire delayed construction by more than two weeks.

When complete the complex will be the home of a computer capable of performing 30 million operations per second.



Los Alamos Monitor

Date: 11-21-00 Page: 182

Agency certifies 'HalfPACT' radioactive waste container

CARLSBAD (AP) — The U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission has approved a new radioactive-waste container to haul shipments to the Waste Isolation Pilot Plant in southern New Mexico.

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While the TRUPACT is designed to carry 14 55-gallon drums, some waste drums weigh more than normal and put the shipment over the weight limit. DOE officials said a transportation carrier will be able to haul three fully loaded HalfPACT containers without exceeding the Transportation Department's limit.

The DOE estimated that using the new container will save taxpayers more than \$60 million and eliminate about 2,000 projected shipments to WIPP over its 35-year operating life.

The repository, which accepted its first radioactive shipment in March 1999, was designed to permanently store plutonium-contaminated waste more than 2,100 feet underground in ancient salt beds. The waste — such things as contaminated clothing, tools, debris and residue — comes from the nation's defense complex.

Energy Department acts to ease

Page A5

wildfire threat around labs

By Stacey Zolt

ZOLTS@ABQTRIB.COM / (202) 408-2726

WASHINGTON — In hopes of preempting a replay of last summer's wildfire disasters, Department of Energy Secretary Bill Richardson announced a three-part plan to upgrade and enhance the agency's fire prevention and response mechanisms.

Fires at and around three of the department's labs — Los Alamos National Laboratory, Idaho National Engineering and Environmental Laboratory and the Hanford Site near Redmond, Wash. — resulted in about \$300 million in damage at the labs alone, Richardson said.

Keith Kline, site manager at the Hanford Site, described the fire as "one of nature's most frightening situations."

"But we also know that these fires are not the last that we will see," he

said.

The capstone of Richardson's reforms is a 16-member independent commission of nationally-recognized fire-safety professionals who will advise the agency and check off on the state of its fire protection and emergency response systems.

Second, an internal Department of Energy team will review the department's fire safety and emergency management capabilities. Third, the department will formalize its relationship with the Departments of Agriculture and Interior with a Memorandum of Understanding to work together in preparation, prevention and response in fire emergencies.

"What we want is an independent commission of our nation's best and brightest to validate the steps that we are taking," Richardson said, emphasizing that the Department of Ener-

gy's systems must be "state-of-the-art" and that he is counting on the commission to keep him abreast of the latest technologies.

At the helm of the commission is Steven Cozen, a Philadelphia-based attorney who specializes in crisis response to catastrophic fires and natural disasters.

"Our objective is to provide independent and critical experience and guidance," Cozen said.

Co-chairs are Dr. Jack Snell and Jessie Roberson come from the public sector. Snell is director of the National Institute of Standards and Technology, Building and Fire Research Laboratory at the Department of Commerce, and Roberson is a President Clinton-appointed member of the Defense Nuclear Facilities Safety Board.

"In other words this is the most experienced and best possible commis-

sion of fire experts we have in this country," Richardson said.

On Oct. 2, Richardson ordered a thorough evaluation of the Department of Energy's fire readiness, and the commission's first task will be to evaluate that report. Then the commission will review implementation of the proposed Memorandum of Understanding between the Departments of Energy, Agriculture and Interior.

Finally, the panel will produce a final report for public release on their findings and recommendations.

The goal of the three-prong improvement program is to get ready for the inevitability that next summer may bring more wildfires.

"To some extent these are a fact of life, but prevention and control are the goals of the commission," Roberson said.

The group, which will cost approx-

imately \$250,000 annually to operate, has two years to complete their business, but the secretary may extend their term.

The commission will endure the change in administration — no matter if Al Gore or George W. Bush win the hotly contested presidential race.

"The fact of the matter is that the issues remain" Cozen said. "They have to be dealt with."

In the event that his turn as Energy Secretary ends with Clinton's exit in January, Richardson hopes these improvements will become part of his legacy.

"I felt that it was responsible for me to make an assessment of how we deal with fires," he said. "I wanted to be sure that we had the best technology, the best people and the best plan to deal with fires in the future."

The Los Alamos fire hit especially

close to home for the New Mexico native.

"This was particularly a sad moment for me because these were former neighbors of mine," he said referring to his years as a U.S. congressman representing the district including Los Alamos.

Commission member Harold Schaitberger, who is general president of the National Fire Protection Association, a labor union for firefighters, said the lab areas pose a unique challenge to the firefighting community because they are "urban interface" zones where the natural landscape intermixes with the business and residential communities.

This juxtaposition means the firefighters must be trained to move easily between "wildland firefighting and structural firefighting," Schaitberger said.

DOE

NEWS

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**FOR IMMEDIATE
RELEASE
December 4, 2000**

**Energy Department, Sandia and Navajo Nation Partner
To Advance Initiatives Benefitting Indian Country**

Will Promote Technical, Economic and Educational Collaboration

Secretary of Energy Bill Richardson today joined Navajo Nation President Kelsey Begaye and Sandia National Laboratories Executive Vice President Joan Woodard in signing a memorandum of understanding (MOU) to promote collaboration on critical technical, economic and educational initiatives.

"This agreement is the Department's latest step toward building a stronger partnership with the Navajo Nation in which our science and technology can most benefit the Navajo people," Secretary Richardson said. "Sandia's scientists have worked closely with Navajo scientists and economic experts on several energy-related projects, including one that uses photovoltaics to provide electricity to Navajo homes at remote sites."

The MOU cites several potential areas of collaboration and cooperation which includes promoting regional economic development and quality education, providing broad services from Sandia's Corporate Business Development and Partnerships Office and using Sandia's expertise and resources to help address technical issues on Indian Lands.

The signing of the MOU follows a directive by Secretary Richardson to Sandia and other Energy Department's laboratories to create partnerships with tribes and pueblos. Several Sandia employees met with Navajo leaders, including Navajo Nation Vice President Taylor McKenzie and Navajo Nation Economic Developer Sharlene Begay-Platero, to outline terms. Three Navajo Nation legislative bodies – including the economic development committee, natural resources committee and the intergovernmental relations committee – approved the agreement.

(More)

R-00-296

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Sandia National Laboratories are operated for the Energy Department by Lockheed Martin. With facilities in Albuquerque, and Livermore, Calif., Sandia has major research and development responsibilities in national security, energy and environmental technologies, and economic competitiveness.

- DOE -

R-00-296

DOE NEWS

NEWS MEDIA CONTACT:
Bill Wicker, 202/586-5827

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
December 4, 2000

Secretary Richardson Delivers on Bold Promise To Return Historic Homelands to Native Americans

Restores Ownership of More Than 85,000 Acres to Ute Tribe

Energy Secretary Bill Richardson today brought to closure a historic process he set in motion last January: the largest voluntary return of land to Native Americans in the Lower 48 states in more than a century.

In a ceremony at the Ute Indian Reservation in northeastern Utah, Secretary Richardson delivered on his promise to restore to Ute ownership and control of more than 85,000 acres in an area that is the aboriginal homeland of the Ute people. The undeveloped tract of land had been the U.S. Department of Energy's Naval Oil Shale Reserve No. 2. In 1916, it was taken from the Ute Tribe by the U.S. Government for use as a potential source of fuel for the Navy's oil-burning ships.

"Today we're doing the right thing, because land and the environment have always been the essence of Native American identity," said Secretary Richardson. "With the cooperation of the United States Navy, which is commemorating the 90th anniversary of the federal law that established the Naval Oil Shale Reserves, we are fulfilling a pledge made 113 years ago to the Ute people by returning their land."

In legislation proposed by Secretary Richardson in January, following the signing of a memorandum of understanding with tribal leaders, the department asked for authorization to begin cleaning up the Moab site in southern Utah and to return to the Utes the land some 65 miles to the north. The legislation, which was passed by Congress in October, has since been signed into law by President Clinton.

As part of the land return, the Ute Tribe has agreed to establish a quarter-mile land corridor along a 75-mile stretch of the Green River that will be protected as environmentally sensitive. The Green River, one of the nation's most scenic and famous rivers, winds across eastern Utah through miles of undeveloped backcountry and ancient canyons. Additionally, the United States retains a nine percent royalty from future energy production on the land to help fund the clean-up of the nation's fifth largest pile of uranium mill tailings near Moab, Utah.

(MORE)

R-00-297



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Tracy Loughead

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The Moab tailings, which are piled 110-ft. high and located dangerously close to the Colorado River and two national parks -- Arches and Canyonlands -- are the radioactive-contaminated waste from nearly three decades of uranium mining operations. The tailings contain low levels of radioactivity from uranium and radium, as well as hazardous chemicals and metals. The cleanup will be regulated by the U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission, with participation by the State of Utah.

- DOE -

R-00-297

DOE

NEWS

NEWS MEDIA CONTACT:
Bill Wicker, 202/586-5806

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
November 28, 2000

Secretary Richardson Announces Fellowship To Research History of Atomic Age

Scholarship Honors Nuclear Pioneer Dr. Glenn Seaborg, Aims To Provide Definitive Record of Nuclear Era

U.S. Energy Secretary Bill Richardson has established a new Energy Department fellowship that will take a look at more than five decades of nuclear history. The "Glenn T. Seaborg Fellowship in Nuclear History" will focus on the atomic age, from its birth to the present, and is intended to provide quality scholarship for broad public distribution.

Secretary Richardson announced the fellowship today during a visit to Augusta, Ga., to help celebrate the 50th anniversary of the Department of Energy's Savannah River Site. "This fellowship will allow students to spend an academic year in Washington, D.C., helping the Energy Department write the definitive history of this era," Secretary Richardson said. "This will be a story written for people -- not historians -- and it will help remind everyone of the sacrifices and strides made during this era."

Named in honor of the Nobel-winning pioneer of the atomic age, the fellowship provides an opportunity for college students to spend a year in Washington, D.C., helping the Department of Energy write the definitive history of this era. Dr. Seaborg, who died last year, was a Manhattan Project pioneer, Nobel Laureate, head of the Atomic Energy Commission, presidential advisor, University of California-Berkeley chancellor and respected science educator.

The Seaborg Fellowship is open to all recent American History majors currently enrolled in a doctorate program in the United States. Fellows will receive a stipend and reimbursement for round-trip transportation between Washington, D.C., and their home or campus.

The fellowship is for one academic year. To learn more, please contact Chief Historian Skip Gosling, U.S. Department of Energy, Room 7E-054 Forestall Building, 1000 Independence Ave. SW, Washington, D.C. 20585 (skip.gosling@hq.doe.gov).

- DOE -

R-00-294

DOE

NEWS

NEWS MEDIA CONTACT:
Matt Nerzig, DOE, 202/586-4940

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
December 1, 2000

Media Advisory

**Secretary Richardson to Sign Ceremonial Deed
Transferring Land to Ute Indian Tribe**

U.S. Secretary of Energy Bill Richardson and O. Roland McCook, Sr., Chairman of the Ute Indian Tribe will sign a ceremonial deed returning 85,000 acres from the federal government to the Ute Nation on Monday, December 4 at 12:30 p.m.

The signing ceremony will be held at the Northern Ute Tribal Headquarters. Immediately following the ceremony, Secretary Richardson will have a brief media availability.

- WHO:** Secretary of Energy Bill Richardson
O. Roland McCook, Sr.
Members of Ute Tribal Council
- WHAT:** Signing ceremony followed by brief media availability
- WHEN:** Monday, December 4, 2000
12:30 p.m.
- WHERE:** Auditorium
Northern Ute Tribal Headquarters
Fort Duchesne, Utah

-DOE-

N-00-161

The New Mexican

Date: 12/03/00 Page: 203

Citizens group files suit to close WIPP

By KRISTEN DAVENPORT
The New Mexican

Twenty-one months and 112 shipments after the Waste Isolation Pilot Plant opened near Carlsbad, an anti-WIPP citizens group has filed another lawsuit that the group's members think could force the nuclear-waste repository to stop receiving shipments.

Citizens for Alternatives to Radioactive Dumping, an anti-WIPP group in Albuquerque, filed papers in court Nov. 20 docu-

menting what it says is a history of U.S. Department of Energy geologists falsifying scientific data to get environmental permits to open the dump.

At issue is the presence of karsts, geological regions that include underground running water and caverns. According to the group's legal brief, DOE geologists had evidence that the WIPP site included substantial karstic areas but never included information in their environmental-impact statements and tried to hide that information.

If karsts existed, environmentalists say, it would mean water could get into the under-

ground storage rooms or cause erosion and underground collapses, possibly risking a radioactive release from the containers.

DOE officials said Friday that the lawsuit has little merit.

"Ultimately, we expect to prevail," said Stuart Hunt, chief counsel for WIPP in Carlsbad. "But that will be for the judge to decide."

Hunt would not comment on specifics of the case and said DOE will respond to the briefs and information about falsified data next year. The groups will go to court for

Please see WIPP, Page A-2

The New Mexican

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WIPP

Continued from Page A-1

their next hearing Jan. 16.

DOE spokesman Tom Welch said that the lawsuit is nothing new and that the DOE has already successfully defended the process for its environmental-impact statement in court.

The new allegations of falsified geological data were tacked this month onto an ongoing lawsuit the citizens group filed against DOE over WIPP just before the waste repository accepted its first shipment of nuclear waste in March 1999.

The documents filed last week include affidavits and written statements from several geologists saying DOE provided false scientific information in its environmental-impact statement.

For instance, a geologist who worked at Sandia National Laboratories says DOE officials told him to avoid using the word "karst" entirely because they knew the presence of karsts in the underground caverns would be a red flag for environmental managers.

The citizens group maintains the documents show a "systematic suppression by DOE of information showing the WIPP site to be unstable," a news release states.

"DOE still maintains no karst exists at the site," said Maria Santelli, an employee of the group. "But karst is the kind of thing that created Carlsbad Caverns (near the site)."

year lifespan.

So far, the site is accepting low-level transuranic waste contaminated with plutonium from Los Alamos National Laboratory, the Hanford Site in Washington state, the Idaho National Engineering Laboratory and Rocky Flats in Colorado.

Richard Phillips, who has a doctorate in geomorphology from the University of Oregon, is quoted as saying he witnessed a "pattern of lies and deceptions designed to disguise the true hydrology of the area's aquifer and the WIPP site."

Attorney John McCall, who represents the group, said it ultimately wants to shut down WIPP. But it is more likely the judge could force WIPP to spend \$30,000 testing the area and issue a temporary halt to shipments, McCall said.

Since Congress first approved the concept of WIPP in 1979, DOE and WIPP supporters have faced a barrage of lawsuits that prevented the waste dump from opening for more than a decade past its first officially scheduled opening date.

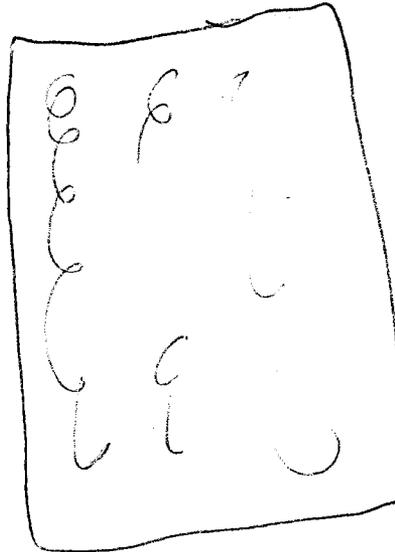
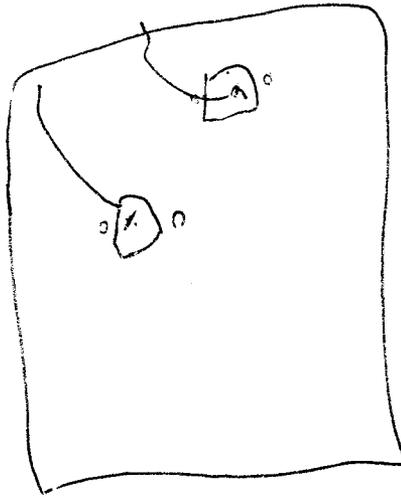
The WIPP dump, about 2,100 feet below the surface in underground rooms dug into salt beds, is expected to contain about 19,300 loads of contaminated waste from 23 sites over its 35-

OGC

OED

OECA

OERR



10/17/00

10/24/00

Revised FAR for Preamble
Groundwater & Financial Assurance

Revised FAR Package, excluding
Full Work Group Conference Call
Revised FAR

December 20

January 4

Final Agency Review, Workgroup Closure
January 11

Los Alamos Monitor

Date: 11-17-00 Page: 374

Environmental group drops WIPP lawsuit

ALBUQUERQUE (AP) — An environmental group has dropped a lawsuit that challenged the state Environment Department's permit over the burial of radioactive waste also contaminated with chemicals in an underground nuclear waste dump near Carlsbad.

The case, challenging permit standards for the Waste Isolation Pilot Plant, was valid but had little chance of succeeding, said Don Hancock, director of the Southwest Research and Information Center, which filed the lawsuit a year ago.

A second lawsuit, which challenges placement of such mixed waste in WIPP's panel one, excavated for nuclear waste, remains pending. Hancock said a settlement conference on that lawsuit is set for Dec. 6.

Susan McMichael, attorney for the Environment Department, said she was pleased because the dis-

missal of the lawsuit would save the state time and money.

The state has no authority over WIPP shipments that contain solely radioactive waste, but does have jurisdiction over mixed waste that contains such things as chemical solvents.

Southwest Research, a longtime WIPP critic, has contended the Department of Energy's application for the permit was inadequate and that the Environment Department ignored expert testimony.

WIPP opened in March 1999. The federal government worked for two decades to get a repository in the ancient underground salt beds of southeastern New Mexico so it would have a place to bury plutonium-contaminated waste from the nation's defense programs.

The repository expects to receive up to 38,000 shipments over about 30 years.

Los Alamos Monitor

Date: 11/28/00 Page: 172

WIPP shipment takes wrong turn

By SUE MAJOR HOLMES
Associated Press Writer

ALBUQUERQUE — Drivers for a trucking firm hauling its first radioactive waste shipment to a federal dump near Carlsbad missed a turn in Santa Fe and illegally headed down Interstate 25 toward Albuquerque before being turned around by state police.

The Department of Energy is investigating how the Tri-State Motor Transit truck overshot the cutoff to U.S. 285 to the Waste Isolation Pilot Plant near Carlsbad on Nov. 21 and why monitors didn't catch the mistake right away, DOE spokesman Greg Sahd of Carlsbad said Tuesday.

WIPP shipments must follow designated routes. In the Santa Fe area, they cut off the interstate at a bypass, I-25 through Albuquerque — currently undergoing a massive reconstruction project — is not a designated route.

The monitoring system showed where the truck was, but those watching it didn't notice, Sahd said.

"We're looking at the details and finding out exactly why it happened," he said.

Multiple tracking systems keep

track of WIPP shipments. Drivers are required to check in periodically, and trucks are tracked by a central monitoring system at WIPP, a satellite tracking system based out of Oak Ridge, Tenn., and the state police.

Sahd acknowledged the tracking center should have been the first to notice the problem.

"In this case, the state saw the truck and notified the control center, and it called the drivers and they corrected their course," he said. "It did not work the way it was designed to."

But, he said, the backup system worked.

"The system works," Sahd said. "Obviously, we'd like it to work a little faster."

A state police dispatcher monitoring the truck "noticed it got past Santa Fe and notified an officer" who stopped it about 10 miles south of Santa Fe, state police Lt. Greg Smith said.

"It goes to show that they're watching," Smith said.

The flatbed trailer carries three 10-by-8-foot tall silo-like containers of plutonium-contaminated waste.

The head of a WIPP watchdog

group said he's concerned that tracking systems failed to notice the truck was off course.

"If DOE is taking this seriously, they should be suspending shipments until ... the system is fixed," said Don Hancock, executive director of the Albuquerque-based Southwest Research and Information Center.

The DOE has suspended shipments by Tri-State while it reviews what happened with last week's shipment from the Idaho Engineering and Environmental Laboratory, Sahd said. The company, which won a hauling contract in late August, was making its first shipment to Carlsbad, he said.

WIPP's other hauler, CAST Transportation, will take up the slack in the meantime, Sahd said. The repository, which buries the waste 2,100 feet underground in salt beds, is averaging about four shipments a week. The shipments have come from Los Alamos, Idaho, Hanford, Wash., and Rocky Flats near Denver.

Hancock suggested all shipments to WIPP should be suspended while the incident is investigated.

(Please see WIPP, Page 2)

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WIPP

(from Page 1)

"It wasn't strictly a Tri-State problem. ... The Carlsbad part and the Oak Ridge part also failed," he said.

"It's not enough to say it won't happen again," Hancock said.

Hancock also said the public should have been told about the wrong-route truck.

Spokesmen for the department and state agencies said the state is notified of any incidents involving WIPP shipments. All parties said it was the first time a shipment went off course in New Mexico since the repository opened in March 1999.

"We're still very confident in the quality of our drivers. We hold the drivers to the highest standards," Sahd said. "Anytime we see any incident that's questionable, we focus on it with full diligence because our commitment is to make sure shipments arrive safely, assuring the safety of the public and environment the whole way."

FBI searches landfill

By JOHN MARBLE
Monitor Staff Writer

The FBI is conducting a search at the Los Alamos County Landfill "in furtherance of an ongoing investigation," and that is the only information the bureau is releasing at this time, said Doug Beldon, supervising special agent.

At least a half dozen FBI agents were at the far eastern end of the landfill this morning with a trailer and four Chevrolet Suburban sports utility vehicles with federal government license plates (two pulling stands of floodlights). Agents apparently arrived at the landfill Monday.

Los Alamos County officials and employees said they could not answer any questions about the investigation, and referred all questions to Beldon.

Julie Habiger, Los Alamos County public information officer, said the county received a request from the FBI to "go through" the landfill. She said the county is complying

with the FBI's request, and the bureau is not required to provide any other information.

John Gustafson, Los Alamos National Laboratory spokesman, said that any questions directed to LANL's Public Affairs Office about the investigation would also be directed to Beldon.

People are still allowed to dispose of garbage in the dumping area of the landfill, but employees there said the "pit" is closed to the general public.

Albuquerque Journal

Date: 11-29-00 Page: 374

WIPP Shipment That Missed Exit Under Investigation

Truck hauling radioactive waste started heading down I-25 toward Albuquerque on Nov. 21

By SUE MAJOR HOLMES
The Associated Press

Drivers for a trucking firm hauling its first radioactive waste shipment to a federal dump near Carlsbad missed a turn in Santa Fe and illegally headed down Interstate 25 toward Albuquerque before being turned around by State Police.

The Department of Energy is investigating how the Tri-State Motor Transit truck overshot the cutoff to U.S. 285 to the Waste Isolation Pilot Plant near Carlsbad on Nov. 21 and why monitors didn't catch the mistake right away, DOE spokesman Greg Sahd of Carlsbad said Tuesday.

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See MISGUIDED on PAGE A2

The New Mexican

Date: 11-29-00 Page: 174

WIPP-bound truck misses route turnoff

► *Vehicle carrying radioactive waste travels 27 miles on I-25 before being stopped.*

By **KRISTEN DAVENPORT**
The New Mexican

A truck laden with radioactive waste missed its turnoff near Santa Fe on its way to Carlsbad and the Waste Isolation Pilot Plant storage rooms about a week ago and drove 27 miles before anyone caught the error.

"It could have ended in Albuquerque," said Don Hancock, director of nuclear safety with the Southwestern Research and Information Center.

"It could have ended up at the Big I, which is under construction," Hancock said Tuesday.

"A WIPP truck in the middle of the construction in Thanksgiving traffic — that sounds like a hazard to a lot of folks."

The truck, which was carrying

transuranic waste contaminated with plutonium from the Department of Energy's laboratory in Idaho, was at La Bajada Hill when New Mexico State Police dispatcher Carmen Leyba noticed on the state's satellite tracking computer that the truck was off-course.

The drivers were notified, and the truck was turned around at 7:30 a.m. Nov. 21.

By law, WIPP shipments must follow designated routes.

The shipment was the first transported by Tri-State Motor Transit, a Missouri company hired because WIPP is expecting to double its waste coming from Idaho.

The drivers were coming south on Interstate 25 and had passed through Raton and Las Vegas.

The truck was supposed to get off I-25 about 15 miles north of Santa Fe and head south on U.S. 285 to Carlsbad.

The DOE has suspended Tri-State Motor Transit from driving any further shipments to

Please see **WIPP**, Page A-3.

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WIPP

Continued from Page A-1

WIPP for at least 30 days until an investigation can be completed, said Gregory Sahd, a DOE spokesman.

"This is the first time we've had a problem like this with a WIPP shipment," Sahd said.

"We are pleased that the back-up system worked in this case."

However, Sahd said DOE officials admit the primary system to catch safety problems with WIPP shipments failed.

The DOE has its own satellite tracking system and whoever was supposed to be watching the errant truck missed it, he said.

However, Sahd said, the shipment arrived safely later that day.

"We're doing what we can to make sure the process is corrected."

State police Lt. Gary Smith said the department is pleased the stray truck was caught.

"We're real proud of the dispatcher," he said.

However, Smith said, he doesn't believe the public was put at risk because of the problem.

"To be honest, those trucks are probably safer than most of the stuff we have coming down our highways," Smith said.

The radioactive material is shipped in tall silo-like containers — specially designed for such waste and approved by the nuclear safety board — on a

flatbed truck.

But Hancock said the vagrant truck incident also shows that WIPP officials aren't handling everything correctly.

The public didn't know about the errant shipment until Hancock called members of the media, he said.

"It's totally inappropriate they didn't let folks know," Hancock said.

"And in my view, all shipments to WIPP should be suspended because this shows the system is flawed," he said.

"To me, the whole system failed and shipments should be halted until it's fixed."

DOE will be using an old shipping company, CAST Trucking out of Colorado, for all shipments from Idaho until an investigation is complete, Sahd said. WIPP has received about two a week — for a total of 21 — from Idaho.

The facility has received a total of 112 shipments from Idaho, Los Alamos National Laboratory, Hanford Site and Rocky Flats since its opening in March 1999.

The nuclear-waste storage facility will eventually accept radioactive material from six other DOE facilities across the country.

Los Alamos Monitor

Date: 11-17-00 Page: 374

Environmental group drops WIPP lawsuit

ALBUQUERQUE (AP) — An environmental group has dropped a lawsuit that challenged the state Environment Department's permit over the burial of radioactive waste also contaminated with chemicals in an underground nuclear waste dump near Carlsbad.

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missal of the lawsuit would save the state time and money.

The state has no authority over WIPP shipments that contain solely radioactive waste, but does have jurisdiction over mixed waste that contains such things as chemical solvents.

Southwest Research, a longtime WIPP critic, has contended the Department of Energy's application for the permit was inadequate and that the Environment Department ignored expert testimony.

WIPP opened in March 1999. The federal government worked for two decades to get a repository in the ancient underground salt beds of southeastern New Mexico so it would have a place to bury plutonium-contaminated waste from the nation's defense programs.

The repository expects to receive up to 35,000 shipments over about 30 years.



Environmental Management Site Specific Advisory Board
Stewardship Workshop • Denver, Colorado • October 25-27, 2000

ENVIRONMENTAL MANAGEMENT SITE-SPECIFIC ADVISORY BOARDS RECOMMENDATIONS ON LONG-TERM STEWARDSHIP

**Draft for Review Purposes Only
October 31, 2000**

PREAMBLE

The nationwide Environmental Management Site-Specific Advisory Boards (EMSSABs) recognize that the U.S. government faces an enormous challenge. Radioactive and toxic legacy wastes and contamination related to past government practices affect many communities. Some of these materials will pose a threat to human health and the environment for a very long time.

Therefore, the EMSSABs recommend that the Department of Energy (DOE) take the following steps to ensure that Long-Term Stewardship (hereafter referred to as "stewardship") for contaminated sites is a major focus for the Department.

FUNDING

- **Make guaranteed funding for stewardship a national priority, removed from the annual Congressional appropriations process, and maintained off-budget. Stewardship funds must be protected from the demands of other programs. Stakeholders must be involved in the development of a fair allocation process. To meet these objectives, DOE must develop authorizing legislation for submittal to Congress.**

ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

- **Issue a stewardship policy by December 2001 that addresses:**
 - **Legal basis (law)**
 - **On-going review**
 - **Allowance for site-specificity**
 - **Continuing research and development**
 - **Funding**
 - **Stakeholder involvement**



Environmental Management Site Specific Advisory Board
Stewardship Workshop • Denver, Colorado • October 25-27, 2000

MEMORANDUM

TO: EMSSAB Stewardship Workshop Participants
FROM: Ken Korkia
Board / Staff Coordinator, Rocky Flats Citizens Advisory Board
Facilitation Lead for the EMSSAB Stewardship Workshop
DATE: November 1, 2000
SUBJECT: Transmittal of Draft Recommendations

I would like to thank all the participants in the EMSSAB Stewardship Workshop for your hard work and fine discussion during the course of the workshop. Enclosed you will find the “fruits of your labor” in terms of the draft recommendations.

As these recommendations are transmitted to the various SSABs that participated in the workshop, I would like to remind everyone of the process we will use to officially approve the recommendations as a joint statement of the EMSSABs. Each participating Board has agreed to consider the statements no later than February 2001. The SSAB Chairs will be meeting in Nevada in mid-February to discuss the progress of getting the recommendations approved. Based on this discussion by the Chairs, a strategy will be developed to complete the recommendations and iron out any inter-site disagreements. The goal is to complete this process and forward the final recommendations to DOE sometime in the early spring.

As a closing thought, I would like to remind everyone, especially those who are not SSAB members, that the enclosed recommendations are still in draft form and should not be construed in any manner as an “official” position of the EMSSABs.

We hope to have the written workshop summary completed by the end of this month, at which time we will forward it to you.

In closing, let me again thank-you for your participation in the workshop.

Northern New Mexico Citizens' Advisory Board
1640 Old Pecos Trail, Suite H
Santa Fe, New Mexico 87505
505-989-1662 phone 505-989-1752 fax
800-218-5942
adubois@doeal.gov http://www.nnmcab.org

San Ildefonso Pueblo

Board Meeting Minutes
November 15, 2000

Board Members Present:

Menice S. Manzanares, Chair
Jim Johnston, Vice Chair
Fran Berting
Jim Brannon
George Chandler
Patrick Feehan
Sara Galpin
Agustin Garcia
Janet Gerwin
Dorothy Hoard
Angelina Valdez

Board Members Absent:

James Alarid
John Alejandro
Anthony Armijo – On Leave
Tim Gallegos
Domingo Martinez
Evelyn Maruska

Ex-Officio Members Present:

James Bearzi, NMED
MJ Byrne, DDFO/LAAO
Tom Starke for Mike Baker, ER/LANL
Joe Vozella, ER/DOE/LAAO

Guest:

Julie Canepa, ER/LANL
Neil Weber, Director, San Ildefonso Pueblo, Department of Environmental and Cultural Preservation
Myron Gonzales, Lead Technician of the Cultural Preservation Program, San Ildefonso Pueblo
Judith W. Moss, Liaison Officer, NMED, DOE Oversight Bureau

Staff:

Ann DuBois, PWT

I. OPENING

MJ Byrne, Deputy Designated Federal Official, called the meeting to order at 6:15 p.m. Governor Perry Martinez of the San Ildefonso Pueblo welcomed the Board members and

the public. He introduced Neil Weber, Director, Department of Environmental and Cultural Preservation and Myron Gonzales, Lead Technician of the Cultural Preservation Program. Menice S. Manzanares, Chair, asked the Board members and members of the public to introduce themselves.

II. PUBLIC COMMENT

Paul Schumann, ER/LANL, Mail Stop K498, Los Alamos, NM 87544, 505-667-5840

Mr. Schumann reported on the Sandia Task Force meeting that he attended on November 14. He encouraged the Board to connect with this Task Force that is a continuation of the Site Specific Advisory Board. He was impressed with their work on the Sandia landfill issue.

Tom Weidner, ChemRisk, Center for Disease Control Project on Historical Records

Mr. Weidner reported that the historical research into dosage records has been delayed due to security restrictions keeping project personnel from accessing the records. He hopes that these restrictions will be lifted soon so they can complete their research. A draft summary report on their progress to date is now available. The project will have a website by the end of year.

James Bearzi, Chief, Hazardous Waste Bureau, New Mexico Environment Department, 2044A Galisteo Street, Santa Fe, NM 87502, 505-827-1557

Dr. Bearzi reported on the Santa Fe Water Quality Task Force. The Santa Fe City Council is appointing the Task Force members. The New Mexico Environment Department's Drinking Water Bureau is looking at any potential impacts of LANL's operations on the drinking water supply. Dr. Bearzi suggested that the Task Force should also look at the Española sewage treatment problems that could impact Santa Fe's drinking water.

Dr. Bearzi reported on the Interagency Flood Risk Assessment Team. This interagency team is looking at the impact on risk with contaminant transport in the Los Alamos canyons. This task force is following up on any potential impacts from flooding after the Cerro Grande fire. He invited the Board to attend the December 18 open house that will be held at the Hilton Hotel in Santa Fe.

Dr. Bearzi said that LANL's RCRA Permit is up for re-issuance this year. The first part will be in draft form sometime this spring. Both the operating units and the Environmental Restoration program are involved. He offered to brief the Board if requested. The Board requested a briefing at the January meeting. A public comment period will be included in the re-issuance process.

END OF PUBLIC COMMENT

III. REPORTS

A. **Neil Weber, Director, Department of Environmental and Cultural Preservation for San Ildefonso Pueblo.**

The funding for the Department comes from DOE, the Environmental Protection Agency, the State of New Mexico, the Bureau of Indian Affairs, and the Indian Health Service. The Department participates in joint sampling events with LANL and the New Mexico Environment Department. His Department reviews the air quality reports prepared by LANL. An Airnet and a Newnet station are co-located on Pueblo land. The Department protects cultural sites including historical and archeological sites. The Department of Energy and LANL are on San Ildefonso's ancestral lands. The Pueblo works with LANL's Environment, Safety and Health Division 20 to map the cultural and historical locations using GIS mapping systems. The air and water sample results are compared with samples taken by LANL and NMED. The results are shared with DOE and the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA).

The Department has a Community Outreach program. The Waste Isolation Pilot Plant funds the Emergency Response team at the Pueblo. The Department is assessing the Pueblo's capability and developing a response plan. The Pueblo is involved in solid waste transfer and monitors drinking water quality and the fishing pond. The Pueblo has a liquid waste and sewage plant. The Pueblo is establishing a utilities department.

Mr. Weber reported on the effects of the Cerro Grande Fire on the Pueblo. The Department monitors the three hundred acres that were burned. The smoke effects are a big problem. The air monitoring stations were not in place at the time of the fire. A damaged area is sacred land near TA-54. The upper watershed for the Pueblo was burned. Run-off will be a problem particularly during this coming spring and summer monsoon season when run-off may flow through contaminated sites located on DOE-LANL property. The Pueblo is concerned about the transport of contaminants. The Department is now taking baseline samples of storm events. At present, no controls exist in Guaje canyon to stop the run-off from heavy storm events and the movement of burnt materials. The Pueblo took samples prior to the runoff, and coordinated samples with LANL and NMED through the use of automatic samplers and grab samples. Some rehabilitation has started in sacred areas, including cooperative logging with Jemez Pueblo.

Myron Gonzales was the producer of the video Closing the Circle. This video describes the experience and the perspective of San Ildefonso Pueblo living below Los Alamos. San Ildefonso is the only Native American Tribe to share contiguous borders with a DOE facility. Mr. Gonzales described the video as the

first time to tell the story from a Pueblo perspective. He interviewed tribal members about the effects on their traditional society. The National Park Service and DOE funded this video that will be shown on public access TV.

Mr. Gonzales described the Pueblo's efforts before the Indian Claims Commission. San Ildefonso pursues its court battle to restore its original land boundaries. This Pueblo is the last tribe to hold out and not settle its claims. This fifty year land fight is with the US Forest Service, and the Bureau of Land Management. He said that Santo Domingo and Sandia Pueblos settled with the government.

Mr. Gonzales requested the Board's assistance in getting the video shown to the Secretary of Energy at DOE Headquarters. Ms. Manzanares promised that the Board would send a copy to the EM-22 headquarters staff and request that they view the video, and assist in the effort to have the DOE Secretary view the film.

Tim Martinez, a tribal member asked about the Board's mission and views on WIPP transportation issues. He is concerned about environmental justice and the disposal of contaminants. Ms. Byrne explained that the Board's recommendations are sent to the DOE Los Alamos Area Office and Headquarters in Washington, D.C.

B. Chair's Report

Ms. Manzanares suggested that Board members participate in a potluck at the December Board meeting. The Board members asked for the following items to be on the December agenda: a report on WIPP shipments, Dr. John Till's report on LANL's air quality, and Dr. Bearzi's overview report on LANL's permit modification process.

Ms. Manzanares requested that the Bylaws Committee consisting of Fran Berting, Domingo Martinez, Jim Johnston, and Menice Manzanares meet soon to recommend changes in the Bylaws.

Ms. Manzanares reported that she is sending a letter to DOE about Board members who have missed Board meetings, and not serving on committees. She will recommend that three Board members be replaced. Local officials and community leaders are being asked for nominations. Ms. Manzanares thanked Ms. Moss, Mr. Johnston, Ms. Byrne and Ms. DuBois for their outreach efforts.

C. DOE's Report

Ms. Byrne reported that the Board is seeking a facilitator for Board meetings. A ATA Services is seeking additional candidates to act as facilitator for the January 24 meeting and retreat. Ms. Manzanares appointed a Committee to interview potential facilitators. The Committee members are Judith Moss, Jim Brannon,

Jim Johnston, and Menice Manzanares. The Board selected the date of January 20 as a tentative date for a Board retreat. A suggested location is the Hotel Loretto in Santa Fe.

Ms. Manzanares asked about the DOE approval for new Board members Jim Brannon and Dorothy Hoard. Ms. Byrne responded that DOE Headquarters has instituted a new approval process and we should be hearing soon.

D. Waste Management Committee

Ms. Manzanares asked that this Committee to meet and choose a Committee Chair.

E. Community Outreach Report

Mr. Johnston reported on the Transportation Symposium held in Santa Fe during November. The conference was well attended by 180 people and 21 exhibitors. The participants toured LANL's Solid Waste Treatment program and the burned areas. The response to the conference was excellent. In January 2002 another transportation seminar is scheduled. Ms. Manzanares commended Mr. Johnston for his outstanding work on this event.

KRSN offered to conduct a live interview at 8:10 am Thursday after each Board meeting. Either Ms. Manzanares or Mr. Johnston will participate in the interviews.

F. Environmental Restoration Committee

Dr. Berting reported on the SSAB Long-Term Stewardship Conference held on October 26-27. She thanked Julie Canepa, Sandra Martinez and Paul Schumann for their assistance in preparing for the conference. Dr. Berting thanked Mr. Brannon who prepared the Board's presentation. The conference statement requires action by this Board. Dr. Berting requested that Board members review the statement of principles, and structural changes. The Board will take a vote on whether to accept and support these principles during next month's Board meeting.

Dr. Berting commented on the Draft Study on the Programmatic Environmental Impact Statement. She asked Board members to review this document and make comments. On page 29, the description of LANL begins. Mr. Schumann said that LANL made extensive comments and changes to the National Authorization Act document on Long-Term Stewardship. Mr. Schumann will give to the Board a new version of this text. He said that Jim Werner, DOE Headquarters Stewardship Office, is interested in meeting with the Board.

Dr. Berting announced the Risk Assessment Workshop to be held on December 2.

The primary audience is Board members while it is a public meeting.

Dr. Berting said that the Environmental Restoration Committee will look at the draft long-term stewardship report at its December 4 meeting so the Board can vote on this matter at the December meeting.

G. Monitoring and Surveillance Committee

Ms. Manzanares thanked Mr. Garcia for Chairing the Committee in the absence of Mr. Armijo. Mr. Garcia reported that the Committee met last week. The main topic was the contamination found in a drinking water well in Los Alamos.

IV. ADJOURNMENT

The meeting adjourned at 9:00 p.m. Ms. Manzanares thanked the Board members for attending the meeting.

The minutes are an accurate and complete summary of the matters discussed and conclusions reached at the Northern New Mexico Citizens' Advisory Board meeting held on November 13, 2000.

Certified by:

Menice Santistevan Manzanares, Chair

Date

Northern New Mexico Citizens' Advisory Board
1640 Old Pecos Trail, Suite H
Santa Fe, New Mexico 87505
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Johnson Controls Building
Española

Northern New Mexico Citizens' Advisory Board
Meeting Minutes
October 25, 2000

Board Members Present:

Menice S. Manzanares, Chair
Fran Berting
George Chandler
Patrick Feehan
Sara Galpin
Agustin Garcia
Dorothy Hoard
Jim Johnston
Angelina Valdez

Board Members Absent:

James Alarid
John Alejandro
Jim Brannon
Tim Gallegos
Janet Gerwin
Domingo Martinez
Evelyn Maruska

Ex-Officio Members Present:

Michael P. Baker, ER/LANL
James Bearzi, NMED
Joe Vozella, EM/DOE

Ex-Officio Members Absent:

MJ Byrne, DDFO/DOE
Rich Mayer, EPA

Guest:

Carmen R. Rodriguez, ER/LANL
Tom Starke, LANL/Stewardship

Staff:

Ann DuBois, PWT

I. OPENING

In the absence of the Deputy Designated Federal Official MJ Byrne, Joe Vozella, Assistant Area Manager of Environmental Management Programs DOE/LAAO, called the meeting to order at 6:15 p.m. He turned the meeting over to Menice S. Manzanares, Chair. Ms. Manzanares asked the Board members and members of the public to introduce themselves.

Fran Berting, seconded by Sara Galpin, moved to approve the meeting agenda as sent to

the Board before the meeting. The agenda was approved by consensus.

Sara Galpin, seconded by George Chandler, moved to approve the August Board minutes, as amended.

George Chandler moved, seconded by Angelina Valdez, to approve the September Board minutes, as amended.

II. PUBLIC COMMENT

- A. **Tom Starke, Program Manager, LANL Environmental Stewardship Office, MS-J 591, Los Alamos National Laboratory, Los Alamos, New Mexico 87544 505-665-8118**

Mr. Starke invited the Board and other Site Specific Advisory Boards (SSAB) to participate in the DOE Pollution Prevention Conference to be held in Albuquerque in June. The webpage announcing the conference will be available soon.

Mr. Starke said that MJ Byrne took the conference announcement to the SSAB Stewardship Conference that was held this week in Denver. She will ask the SSAB Chairs if they want to participate in this conference.

- B. **Carmen M. Rodriguez, LANL ER, MS M707, Los Alamos National Laboratory, Los Alamos, New Mexico 87544 505-665-5358**

Ms. Rodriguez said that Ms. Elizabeth Withers, NEPA Document Officer, sent to the Board meeting a copy of the Special Edition of the SWEIS Yearbook Wildfire 2000. She distributed additional copies to Board members.

Ms. Rodriguez explained that Julie Canepa was absent due to illness.

- C. **James Bearzi, Chief, Hazardous and Radioactive Materials Bureau, New Mexico Environment Department, 2044A Galisteo Street, Santa Fe, NM 87502 505-827-1557**

Mr. Bearzi talked about the Santa Fe City Council Water Quality Task Force. The City Council is now selecting the Task Force membership. On November 1, the Task Force will meet with Dr. Till. At the December meeting, the Task Force will hear about how operations at the Rocky Flats facility resulted in contamination of the Westminster water supply.

- D. **Hank Daneman, P. O. Box 13260, Santa Fe, New Mexico 87502 505-983-5261**

Mr. Daneman is one of the founders of the Santa Fe City Council Water Quality Task Force. He said that the Task Force is collecting materials on the

hydrogeology of the area. The Task Force does not yet have an office. He asked if these materials could be stored at the Board office since the Task Force and the Board have common interests. Ms. Manzanares said that these materials could be stored at the Board's Santa Fe office.

III. REPORTS

A. **Presentation on Tritium Detections in a Los Alamos Drinking Water Well**

Mat Johansen, DOE/LAAO said that the Department takes seriously the presence of tritium in a Los Alamos drinking water well. The current level of tritium is below the EPA drinking water standards. However, its presence is an indicator that there is movement between LANL waste and the aquifer. This movement is a key indicator of risk. Watchfulness is required so sampling will be increased to monitor what is happening with the well.

Dr. Berting asked Mr. Johansen to be more specific about the levels. Mr. Johansen responded that background levels are 1-3 picuries and the sample tested at 40 picuries per liter. Dr. Berting asked about the timeframe of this increase. Mr. Johansen replied that during 1997 this well was off line. The first sample was taken in June 1996 and tritium was seen then. Two samples have now been taken and the level has stayed the same. The nearby test well samples are consistent showing 36 picuries per liter. In 1993, the levels were the same.

Dr. Berting said that since this data is minimal, it is difficult to draw conclusions from it. Mr. Daneman expressed his concern that the strontium 90 levels are higher than the tritium. He thought that strontium 90 is a bigger risk to human health. Mr. Johansen replied that in January the data was 1.9 picuries per liter, which is closer to the drinking water standard. LANL used a new lab to establish greater precision on the sample results. Strontium 90 was not seen in the most recent sample. He said that in twelve drinking water wells, seven regional wells, and fourteen springs, there have been no valid samples showing strontium 90. Mr. Johansen added that strontium 90 was found in the shallow wells.

Mr. Johansen introduced Bob Beers with the LANL Environment, Safety and Health Division 18. Mr. Beers distributed a handout describing an overview of LANL's drinking water monitoring activities. Three of the four programs are conducted in cooperation with the New Mexico Environment Department, the Los Alamos County and LANL. One program is conducted solely by LANL.

LANL meets monthly with the Los Alamos County to discuss the results found in the previous month. The reports from these meetings are found in the annual Environmental Restoration Surveillance Report.

Mr. Beer described the strengths of the water system in Los Alamos. He said that the system's problems include perchlorates associated with the manufacture of

rocket fuels, munitions, and jet propulsion. The original thought about the origin of perchlorates was the research on high explosives at TA-16 or TA-9. After investigation, the source is the Chemical labs where they are using perchlorates.

Mr. Daneman asked about the strontium 90 data that was collected in 1999. Ken Mullen explained that all the 1999 data on strontium 90 was canceled because it could not be validated. Mr. Vozella said that a more accurate answer was that LANL started using another laboratory that could reduce the uncertainty of the results. Mr. Mullen agreed with Mr. Daneman that the bigger concern is for strontium 90. The analytical data is hard to measure in the lower concentrations. Mr. Mullen said that LANL would continue to sample for strontium 90. He said that the 1999 Surveillance Report is nearly ready to be distributed. Mr. Johansen said that the values are a big concern because more of them are in the non-detect range. He added that the LANL's current sample testing program with better analysis shows the non-detects.

Peter Maimgren from the Rio Arriba Environmental Health Association in Española asked how does LANL determine if the water is safe and what will happen when there is a problem. James Bearzi, New Mexico Environment Department, explained that his Department will determine when LANL went past the legal limit and the law requires LANL or the Los Alamos County to treat the water, or not use the well.

A member of the public asked if the Potential Release Sites at LANL are the source of this contamination and who decides to shut down the well. Mr. Vozella explained that the Los Alamos County makes the decision to shut down a well. The DOE is taking the final steps to transfer the water system to the Los Alamos County. The County has leased the water system for some time. He said that the source terms have been defined and the Environmental Restoration program is responsible for the tritium in Pueblo Canyon. Each source term is being pursued by the New Mexico Environment Department and will be prioritized by risk including rapid movement.

Dorothy Hoard asked about the source of the strontium 90. Mr. Vozella said that LANL does not know the source at present. Mr. Chandler asked if it is possible for surface water to get into the drinking water well and contaminate it. Mr. Mullen said that the monitoring wells are showing approximately the same levels so it is not likely that the surface water was getting into the well. Mr. Mullen added that tritium is a concern because it shows that there is a pathway between legacy waste and the drinking water aquifer. He said that the source of the strontium 90 was the high atmospheric levels in the mid-1960s due to aboveground nuclear weapons testing.

Mr. Beer said that LANL is confident that perchlorates present in low levels in the Otowi 1 well are at or below 1 or 2-3.5 range. LANL communicated these results to the New Mexico Environment Department and the Los Alamos County. The

EPA has not yet established the maximum limits for perchlorates before treatment. EPA is testing to find these limits.

Mr. Beer said that the tritium levels got LANL's attention. LANL increased the well monitoring samples and is working with the Los Alamos County and the New Mexico Environment Department to track and trend the results. Mr. Daneman asked why do the limits on the Chemicals of Concerns vary and if the effects on children and the elderly are concentrated in the human body in different ways. Mr. Beers responded that LANL must comply with the drinking water limits set by the New Mexico Environment Department. LANL has a toxicologist doing research on these levels. Dr. Feehan responded that at low levels, the limits are theoretical. For example, at low levels of strontium 90 at the 40 picuries level, the strontium 90 will not be taken up by the bone marrow. He said that radiation by itself is not the problem. The presence of tritium is an indicator of what else is going on in the pathways.

Mr. Daneman said that Al Shapola had graphs showing the effect of strontium 90 on the historical cancer incidence in Los Alamos. Dr. Feehan said that this issue is being researched. The data shows that thyroid cancer was a problem but not brain cancer. The brain cancer was found in people living in Los Alamos and working in Española so the cluster did not exist.

Mr. Maimgren from the Rio Arriba Environmental Health Association in Española said that he is doing an oral history project. He interviews people living in Los Alamos and Española. Mr. Maimgren found that 28 of 40 workers died of cancer. Dr. Feehan said that the types of cancers are usually prostate, breast or leukemia not lung. A thyroid cancer cluster did exist. The University of New Mexico did an epidemiological study. The low lung cancer rate seems to be the same as other parts of the country. Dr. Feehan added that people are living longer and more cancers are seen at 60 than at earlier ages.

Mr. Vozella described the upstream study to discover the source of the tritium. LANL will look at the first quarter sampling results. When the source of the tritium is identified, then the original producer will move the source to the evaporators at TA-53. LANL expects in the next 1^{1/2} to 2 years to find and segregate the source. Then LANL will treat at the source or at the plant to quickly get the waste streams under control. Ms. Hoard asked if you could fingerprint tritium. Mr. Vozella said that tritium cannot be identified that way. Mr. Daneman said that because of the cost of tritium, it is effective to recover it. Mr. Steve Yanicak, New Mexico Environment Department, said that his Department is looking into methods to detect strontium 90 with all three of their labs.

B. Chair's Report

Ms. Manzanares said that an 8A contractor, ATA Staffing Services, will be

providing both technical and administrative support to the Board as of September 29th. They hired Amanda Burton who is working temporarily until Terra Nash comes on November 20. Ms. Nash has both technical work experience and a technical education that will help the Board move forward.

Ms. Manzanares appointed a Bylaws Committee to suggest changes in the current bylaws. The Committee members are Dr. Berting, Mr. Johnston and Ms. Manzanares. The Committee should finish this task by January 1, 2001. Ms. Galpin suggested that the March 24, 1999 edition of the bylaws be redistributed to the Board members.

Ms. Manzanares asked the Board members to recommend other Board members so the Board can expand to the full complement of twenty-one members. She explained that Anthony Armijo requested a temporary leave of absence from Board activities to finish his degree. Ms. Byrne approved that temporary leave of absence. Ms. Manzanares said that Agustin Garcia would be the temporary Chair of the Monitoring and Surveillance Committee.

C. DOE Report

Mr. Vozella reported that Ms. Byrne is attending the SSAB Stewardship Conference along with proposed Board member Jim Brannon. He had nothing further to report.

D. Waste Management Committee

The Waste Management Committee did not meet this month. Ms. Manzanares asked if a Board member were interested in serving as Chair of the Waste Management Committee. She indicated that she has emailed some Board members about the importance of serving on committees and attending Board meetings.

E. Monitoring and Surveillance Committee

Mr. Garcia reported that Mr. Armijo, Dr. Berting and he went on a flight over Los Alamos to see the Cerro Grande fire damage particularly in the canyons. This experience was very instructive to see the monitoring and surveillance issues resulting from the fire. Mr. Larry Sanders took them up in his plane at no cost to the Board.

Ms. Manzanares asked Mr. Vozella for a report about the fire cleanup. Mr. Vozella said that all the physical construction is complete and they are cleaning up and seeding the construction sites. The next Environmental Restoration public meeting is on October 31. The topic will be to update the report on the cyanide found in the surface water. He said that the U.S. Forest Service is checking the vegetative growth. On the flat areas, vegetation is growing well. The steep areas

are more difficult to grow anything. The Forest Service may re-seed in the spring.

Mr. Vozella said that LANL experienced some recent storm events. Some erosion occurred away from any facilities or Pueblo land. The erosion was in Guaje and Water canyons.

Mr. Vozella said that LANL is working on the Potential Release Sites that were damaged by the fire. Less than thirty sites are being remediated, particularly at TA-2, TA-41 and the canyon bottoms. The LANL ESH-16 website on the Cerro Grande fire has the most recent information. (<http://drambuie.lanl.gov/esh/>) DOE gave NMED some funds to do a fire risk analysis and an independent dose assessment. The contractor will look at all the data and assess the risk to the public. The contracting process has begun. He offered a future briefing if the Board requested it.

Mr. Garcia said that the Committee is concerned about what LANL can do to clean up the water after it is contaminated. He requested a follow-up presentation at the next Committee meeting.

F. Environmental Restoration Committee

Dr. Berting distributed a written report. She announced the Risk Assessment workshop sponsored by the Board to be held on December 2. The workshop's purpose is to learn how to assess risk to the public. The workshop participants will use Acid Canyon cleanup decisions to apply what they learn. The next Committee meeting will be on October 30. Dr. Berting invited members of the public to join the Committee.

G. Community Outreach Committee

Mr. Johnston distributed a written report.

IV. Board Comments

Ms. Manzanares expressed her appreciation to Jim Brannon for his work on the LANL Stewardship paper to be presented to the Site Specific Advisory Board Long-Term Stewardship conference.

Ms. Rodriguez asked if the Board had considered the Santa Fe WIPP office space. Ms. Manzanares said that this space was considered but parking is a problem. She said there might appear to be a conflict of interest if the Board were housed in the WIPP office.

Ms. Manzanares asked about the FY2001 budget. Mr. Vozella said that DOE/LAAO is working on how much carry over there will be and how much the LANL Environmental Restoration program will fund this year.

Mr. Chandler asked about the press coverage for this Board meeting. He suggested that the Board should invite the press for each meeting. A press release should go out from LANL before each meeting to announce the Board's agenda. Mr. Vozella said that this meeting had a timely issue. LANL came out with the data on tritium in a timely manner. The Board provided a public forum to discuss the implications of this information.

V. **ADJOURNMENT**

The meeting adjourned at 8:50 p.m.

The minutes are an accurate and complete summary of the matters discussed and conclusions reached at the Northern New Mexico Citizens' Advisory Board meeting held on October 25, 2000.

Certified by:

Menice Santistevan-Manzanares

Date

ARC

Northern New Mexico Citizens' Advisory Board
1640 Old Pecos Trail, Suite H
Santa Fe, New Mexico 87505
 505-989-1662 phone 505-989-1752 fax
 800-218-5942
adubois@doeal.gov http://www.nnmcab.org

December 8, 2000

Dear Board Member:

Enclosed are the papers you need for our December 13 Board meeting. We will be at the Town Hall, 139 Longview Drive in White Rock. White Rock is close to Los Alamos. Go North on US-285 and make the right-hand turn in Pojoaque to go to Los Alamos. Watch for the signs for NM-502 West. Make the turn onto NM-4. When you enter White Rock, you will see signs to our meeting. You are invited to our potluck dinner in the same location beginning at 5:00 p.m. Thanks to all of you who are bringing food to our special dinner. Hope you can join us early.

Enclosed is a draft copy of the Environmental Management Site-Specific Advisory Boards Recommendations on Long-Term Stewardship. You received a copy of this document in last month's mailing. Please read this document as we plan to take action at this Board meeting.

The Bylaws Committee expects to meet this weekend. The current bylaws are enclosed so you can determine if more changes need to be made.

The SSAB Chairs will be meet on February 8-10 in Las Vegas, Nevada. We invite additional Board members to attend this meeting. Please let Ann or me know if you are interested in attending this meeting.

I look forward to seeing you soon.

Sincerely,



Menice S. Manzanares
Chair

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Board Meeting Agenda

December 13, 2000

Board's Mission: The Office of Environmental Management Site Specific Advisory Board will provide the Department of Energy Assistant Secretary for Environmental Management with policy information, advice and recommendations concerning EM environmental restoration, waste management, and technology development activities.

- I. Call to Order by DOE**
 - Welcome
 - Approval of Agenda
 - Approval of Minutes – October and November

- II. Public Comments**

- III. Reports**
 - A. Report on Air Quality Audit – Dr. John Till
 - B. Report on the WIPP Shipping Schedule

- IV. Board Business**
 - A. Report from the Chair
 - B. Report from DOE
 - C. Report from Monitoring and Surveillance Committee
 - D. Report from Environmental Restoration Committee
 - E. Report from Community Outreach Committee
 - F. Report from Budget Committee
 - G. Report from Waste Management Committee

- V. Board Comments**

- VI. Adjourn**