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Los Alamos Area Office, MS A316
Environmental Restoration Program
Los Alamos, New Mexico 87544
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Date: May 10, 2001
Refer to: ESH-18/WQ&H:01-125

Mr. James P. Bearzi, Chief
Hazardous Waste Bureau
New Mexico Environment Department
2044 A Galisteo Street
Santa Fe, New Mexico 87505

**SUBJECT: NEW MEXICO ENVIRONMENT DEPARTMENT CONCERNS REGARDING
GROUND-WATER MODELING**

Dear Mr. Bearzi:

Los Alamos National Laboratory (Laboratory) and the Department of Energy, Los Alamos Area Office (DOE/LAAO) have reviewed your letter dated March 16, 2001 describing your concerns regarding the Laboratory's groundwater modeling. Your letter referred to our joint meeting on January 17, 2001, which was one of a number of meetings in the past few months during which discussions were held regarding the Laboratory's approach to groundwater modeling.

We appreciate receiving your perspective on the vadose zone and groundwater modeling effort at the Laboratory. We note that your concerns relate principally to data collection, utilization of extant data, and water level measurement as they relate to modeling activities. During our meeting on March 6, 2001 we discussed the reasons for delay in conveying regional well data, and indicated that not only had five well completion reports been delivered to NMED recently, but that quarterly analytical results from groundwater samples had also been transmitted. Additional information regarding geophysical logs and slug test results have also been recently communicated, or are incorporated in the five well completion reports. We will continue to improve the quantity, process and timeliness by which we transmit data, and please be assured that this data is being utilized by the modelers in their activities. Instead of commenting further on your concerns in this letter, we would prefer to continue to meet with you to discuss your concerns. Through continuing dialogue, we should hopefully resolve your concerns through the provision of additional information, that may be unknown to you at present. In addition, we do concur that on a quarterly basis, a separate meeting should be held with your technical staff to update them on the details of model input parameters, assumptions, and sensitivity analyses. In this regard, a separate meeting for this purpose will be scheduled following the half day Quarterly Groundwater Characterization Program Meetings.



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May 10, 2001

We would like to take this opportunity to again request approval regarding the Draft Hydrogeologic Workplan Addendum regarding modeling that was transmitted to you July 10, 2000. It has been our understanding from conversations with your technical staff, that this addendum regarding modeling was to be approved some time ago. We would appreciate finalization of this document written in response to your request of March 27, 2000.

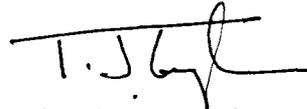
Thank you for sharing your perspective and concerns regarding modeling.

Sincerely,



Charles L. Nylander
Program Manager
Hydrogeologic Workplan

Sincerely,



Theodore J. Taylor
Project Manager
Groundwater Protection Program

CN/tml

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