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Department of Energy
Albuquerque Operations Office
Los Alamos Area Office
Los Alamos, New Mexico 87544

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CERTIFIED MAIL - RETURN RECEIPT REQUESTED

Mr. Benito Garcia, Chief
Hazardous and Radioactive Materials Bureau
New Mexico Environment Department
2044 Galisteo St., Bldg. A
P. O. Box 26110
Santa Fe, NM 87505

Dear Mr. Garcia:

Subject: Fiscal Year (FY) 1996 First Quarterly Progress Report, Consent Agreement for Compliance Orders NMHWA 93-01, 93-02, 93-03, 93-04

The purpose of this letter is to submit for your review the FY 1996 first quarterly progress report for the Transuranic Waste Inspectable Storage Project (TWISP) at the Los Alamos National Laboratory (LANL). The report is required by Section IX.C of the subject December 10, 1993 Consent Agreement. It is being submitted by the U. S. Department of Energy (DOE) and the University of California (UC).

The enclosed report addresses the activities related to TWISP during the reporting period of November 1, 1995 through January 31, 1996. The following elements, as required by the referenced Consent Agreement, are addressed in the enclosed report:

1. A brief description of activities completed during the reporting period to implement the requirements of the Consent Agreement.

2. A brief description of activities scheduled for the following reporting period.

3. A description of any change in key project personnel which occurred during the reporting period.

4. A description of problems encountered during the reporting period and mechanisms used or proposed for resolving the problems.

5. Tables and figures summarizing all data, sampling and test results for the period.

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As you are aware, the October 4, 1995 Federal Facility Compliance Order (FFCO), issued by the New Mexico Environment Department to implement the Mixed Waste Site Treatment Plan at LANL, resulted in the termination of the March 15, 1994 Federal Facility Compliance Agreement (FFCAgreement) with the Environmental Protection Agency, according to the terms of the FFCAgreement. A letter was sent to DOE and UC on January 12, 1995, acknowledging the termination of the FFCAgreement. Although DOE is therefore no longer subject to the provisions of the FFCAgreement related to TWISP, it is acknowledged that termination of the FFCAgreement shall in no way affect DOE's and UC's responsibilities pursuant to this Consent Agreement.

Supporting documents will be retained at LAAO and will be made available to your staff on request. As you can see, there has been significant progress. We will continue to keep you apprised of the progress as per our agreement. If you should have any questions, please feel free to contact Jody Plum of my staff at (505) 665-5042.

Sincerely,

FOR

Joseph C. Vozella
Assistant Area Manager
Office of Environment and Projects

LAAMEP:7HJP-017

Enclosure

cc w/enclosure:
Barbara Hoditschek
Hazardous and Radioactive Materials Bureau
New Mexico Environment Department
2044 Galisteo Street
P. O. Box 26110
Santa Fe, NM 87505

LOS ALAMOS NATIONAL LABORATORY (LANL)
TRANSURANIC WASTE INSPECTABLE STORAGE PROJECT
QUARTERLY PROGRESS REPORT
NOVEMBER 1, 1995 - JANUARY 31, 1996

The Transuranic (TRU) Waste Inspectable Storage Project (TWISP) was initiated in February 1993 in response to the New Mexico Environment Department's (NMED) Consent Agreement for Compliance Order NMHWA 93-03. The TWISP involves the recovery of approximately 16,865 TRU and TRU-mixed waste containers currently under earthen cover on Pads 1, 2, and 4 at Technical Area (TA) 54, Area G, and placement of that waste into inspectable storage. All waste will be moved into inspectable storage by September 30, 2003. Waste recovery and storage operations will emphasize protection of worker safety, public health, and the environment.

I. Activities accomplished during the period November 1, 1995 - January 31, 1996

A. Final Safety Analysis Report

The TWISP Draft Final Safety Analysis Report (FSAR) is complete. LANL will submit the completed FSAR to DOE during February 1996.

B. TWISP Facility Construction

TWISP facility construction commenced upon DOE approval of the TWISP Preliminary Safety Analysis Report (PSAR) in December 1994. To date, Phase I construction is 100 percent complete. A final inspection of construction activities was performed as part of the close-out for construction. A "punch list" was generated and completed as part of the final inspection. Fire suppression systems were not part of the contractual agreement and will require installation, beginning in March 1996.

C. Waste Analysis Plan (WAP)

A revised WAP with a specific waste analysis schedule was submitted to NMED in March 1995. Waste Analysis Plan approval by NMED is now on the critical path for retrieval activities and a formal response from NMED is still pending.

D. Sampling in Support of Eventual Closure

Soil samples were collected from various locations as part of the TWISP. Analysis of these samples provided a baseline of information for comparison to be used in the future when the planned storage facilities are eventually closed.

The assessment of data received to date has not identified organic or metal concentrations exceeding site-wide background levels, except for a few constituents commonly associated with analytical laboratory extraction procedures.

E. Operational Readiness Review (ORR)

The ORR Plan of Action was completed.

F. Drum Vent System

The Drum Vent System (DVS) is nearly complete. The system is undergoing cold testing to verify all working components. Because this DVS was not able to be used at Rocky Flats as originally planned, LANL will incorporate the DVS into the TWISP Operational Readiness Review.

G. Equipment Purchasing

Equipment purchases necessary for safe recovery and storage are ongoing. Purchase of two forklifts and a vacuum truck are complete. The cost of these three items alone will be approximately $500,000. The forklift and vacuum truck designated for TWISP were delivered on site March 1995. The second forklift is expected to be delivered by February 1996.

H. Update on Waste Verification Facilities

Development of new facilities for verifying the validity of existing process knowledge is ongoing. A brief description of planned facilities is provided below:

- **Drum Prep Facility:** Upgrades to the Drum Prep Facility were completed. A final inspection of construction activities was performed as part of the close-out for construction. A "punch list" was generated as part of the final inspection. All items identified were satisfactorily completed. Construction activities are complete as part of the contractual agreement.
- **Waste Characterization Glovebox Phases I (sorting), II (coring), and III (head space analysis):** The Phase I glovebox is now on site; design for the Phase II glovebox is complete; Phase II ancillary equipment design has been completed. The glovebox is essentially 100% complete.
- **Waste Characterization, Reduction, and Repackaging Facility (WCRRF) (formerly the Size Reduction Facility) upgrades for verification of hazardous constituents:** The Safety Analysis Report has been approved, and is in the process of being implemented.
- **Real-time Radiography (RTR) for non-intrusive inspection of drum contents:** The RTR was delivered in January of 1996.
- **Segmented Tomographic Gamma Scanner (S/TGS) to quantity isotopic content of drums:** The Laboratory now has an operational S/TGS that has been used at a variety of sites. The S/TGS was augmented with additional software to give it tomographic gamma scanning capabilities.
- **Passive active Neutron Assay (PAN):** The PAN is fully operational for assaying Pu-239 and U-235.

I. RCRA Permit Application Activities

Two RCRA permit related packages were delivered to the Hazardous and Radioactive Materials Bureau, NMED, during this time period. A permit modification classification request and proposed permit revision text was submitted December 22, 1995, to supplement the final draft RCRA Part B permit application of November 1, 1995, for nine container storage areas at the TA-50 Decontamination Facility, the TA-50 Waste Characterization, Reduction and Repackaging Facility, and the TA-54 Radioassay and Non-Destructive Testing Facility. Proposed permit revision text was also submitted on January 31, 1996, for the TWISP Storage Domes and Pads.

II. Activities scheduled for the period February 1 through May 31, 1996.

A. The TWISP FSAR will undergo DOE review and approval.

B. The enhanced environmental surveillance of the TRU Pad area will continue.

C. Draft documentation such as the Project Management Plan, Container Recovery Detailed Operating Procedures (DOPs), the Quality Assurance Plan, and the Health and Safety Plan will be finalized. Additional draft DOPs will be completed as necessary.

D. Work will continue on planned waste verification facilities.

E. Work will continue in preparation for the upcoming ORR.

F. The fire suppression installation will be initiated.

III. Changes in key personnel during the period November 1, 1995, through January 31, 1996.

No changes.

IV. Problems encountered during the period November 1, 1995 through January 31, 1996.

No problems encountered.

V. Summary of monitoring during the period November 1, 1995, through January 31, 1996.

No new survey data is available.