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Hswa LANL 4/10/99/ck
C-00-607



Date: January 7, 1999
Refer to: EM/ER:99-002

Mr. Benito Garcia
NMED-HRMB
P.O. Box 26110
Santa Fe, NM 87501

SUBJECT: REQUEST FOR MODIFICATION TO SURFACE WATER SAMPLING SUITE FOR UPPER SANDIA CANYON

Dear Mr. Garcia:

This letter addresses upcoming quarterly surface water base flow sampling being performed under the Upper Sandia Canyon Sampling and Analysis Plan. Los Alamos National Laboratory is requesting New Mexico Environmental Department concurrence on the elimination of the radionuclide portion of the analytical suite for the three remaining quarters of surface water base-flow sampling. This request is based on the following information.

Results for the first quarter surface water base flow sampling do not indicate the presence of elevated radioisotopes in the filtered or unfiltered samples. Additionally, base-flow conditions (e.g., water depth, turbulence, velocity) in Upper Sandia Canyon are not likely to mobilize non-soluble contaminants that may be present at potential release site or in canyon-bottom sediments. Future storm-water sampling will include the radionuclide suite in order to determine potential contribution from the surrounding watershed.

In addition, sediment sampling results (approximately 13 samples plus 2 duplicates) for canyon bottom sediments indicate that only one location shows concentrations for uranium isotopes, strontium-90, and plutonium-239 slightly above the respective background value for sediment. The results and the comparison to background are presented below.

<u>Isotope</u>	<u>Result (pCi/g)</u>	<u>Background Value (pCi/g)</u>
U-234	3.6	2.59
U-235	0.2	0.2
U-238	3.1	2.29
Sr-90	1.9	1.04
Pu-239	0.391	0.068

JK



If the radionuclide analyses are eliminated from the base-flow sampling suite, the remaining analytes will include diesel-range organics, polychlorinated biphenyls and pesticides, semivolatile organic compounds, total suspended solids, total organic carbon, and dissolved organic carbon.

Thanks for your consideration on this matter. If you have any questions, please call David McInroy at 505-667-0819.

Sincerely,



Julie A. Canepa, Program Manager
LANL/ER Project

Sincerely,



Theodore J. Taylor, Program Manager
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