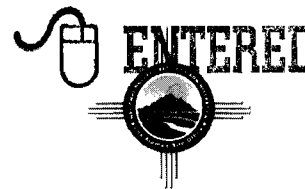


**Environmental Programs**  
 P.O. Box 1663, MS M991  
 Los Alamos, New Mexico 87545  
 (505) 606-2337/FAX (505) 665-1812



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**National Nuclear Security Administration**  
 Los Alamos Site Office, MS A316  
 Environmental Restoration Program  
 Los Alamos, New Mexico 87544  
 (505) 667-4255/FAX (505) 606-2132

Date: **FEB 23 2012**  
 Refer To: EP2012-0051

John Kieling, Acting Bureau Chief  
 Hazardous Waste Bureau  
 New Mexico Environment Department  
 2905 Rodeo Park Drive East, Building 1  
 Santa Fe, NM 87505-6303

**Subject: Request to Defer Armoring of the Stilling Basin in Upper Sandia Canyon**

Dear Mr. Kieling:

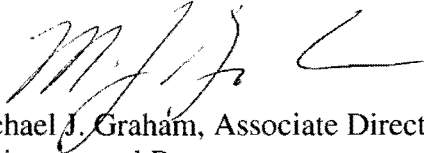
This letter requests a deferral from the requirement to harden a stilling basin at the head of the wetland in Sandia Canyon. The September 29, 2011, Work Plan and Final Design for Stabilization of the Sandia Canyon Wetland (the work plan) proposed to armor the existing stilling basin below the 72-in. culvert at the head of the Sandia Canyon wetland to ensure its stability. At the time the work plan was submitted, it was believed that a nearby grade cut through bedrock to install a sewer line would allow access to this area and the existing pool below the 72-in. culvert. Since then, a more detailed evaluation of this approach has indicated the sewer-line grade cut cannot be used as an access road because of potential impacts to the buried line.

Therefore, an alternate route that runs downcanyon of the wetland has been planned to access the Sandia Canyon wetland. Construction of the access road to the location of the planned grade-control structure (GCS) at the east end of the wetland is currently planned for early spring 2012. However, an extension of the GCS road farther to the west though the canyon is also impractical to access the head of the wetland because it may cause more harm than any benefit gained by armoring the stilling basin. The U.S. Department of Energy and Los Alamos National Security (LANS), LLC, request that rather than armor the stilling basin at this time, the geomorphic surveying requirement in the work plan will be extended to include multiple surveys of the existing stilling basin configuration to document potential changes in the current configuration. If evidence of instability is found, the results will be reported to the New Mexico Environment Department (NMED), and DOE/LANS will discuss with NMED stabilization options at that time. This request for a deferral will not affect the completion of the GCS in Upper Sandia Canyon by July 1, 2012.



If you have any questions, please contact Steve Veenis (505) 667-0013 (veenis@lanl.gov) or Cheryl Rodriguez at (505) 665-5330 (cheryl.rodriguez@nnsa.doe.gov).

Sincerely,



Michael J. Graham, Associate Director  
Environmental Programs  
Los Alamos National Laboratory

Sincerely,



George J. Rael, Assistant Manager  
Environmental Projects Office  
Los Alamos Site Office

MG/GR/TG/CD/SV:sm

Cy: Laurie King, EPA Region 6, Dallas, TX  
Steve Yanicak, NMED-DOE-OB, MS M894  
Jim Davis, NMED-Resource Protection, Santa Fe, NM (date-stamped letter emailed)  
Tom Skibitski, NMED-OB, Santa Fe, NM (date-stamped letter emailed)  
Cheryl Rodriguez, DOE-LASO, MS A316 (date-stamped letter emailed)  
David Rhodes, DOE-LASO, MS A316 (date-stamped letter emailed)  
Peter Maggiore, DOE-LASO, MS A316 (date-stamped letter emailed)  
Annette Russell, DOE-LASO (date-stamped letter emailed)  
Steve Veenis, EP-CAP, MS M997 (date-stamped letter emailed)  
Kent Rich, EP-CAP, MS M992 (date-stamped letter emailed)  
Dave McInroy, EP-CAP, MS M996 (date-stamped letter emailed)  
Tori George, EP-REG, MS M991 (date-stamped letter emailed)  
Jarrett Rice, ADEP, MS M991 (date-stamped letter emailed)  
Bruce Schappell, ADEP, MS M991 (date-stamped letter emailed)  
Dan Cox, ADEP, MS M991 (date-stamped letter emailed)  
Michael J. Graham, ADEP, MS M991 (date-stamped letter emailed)  
William Alexander, EP-BPS, MS M992 (date-stamped letter emailed)  
RPF, MS M707 (electronic copy)  
Public Reading Room, MS M992 (hard copy)