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NEW MEXICO  
ENVIRONMENT DEPARTMENT

*Hazardous Waste Bureau*

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Secretary

RAJ SOLOMON, P.E.  
Deputy Secretary

CERTIFIED MAIL - RETURN RECEIPT REQUESTED

May 18, 2011

George J. Rael  
Assistant Manager  
U.S. Department of Energy  
National Nuclear Security Administration  
Los Alamos Site Office  
3747 West Jemez Rd, MSA316  
Los Alamos, NM 87544

Michael J. Graham  
Associate Director Environmental Programs  
Los Alamos National Security, L.L.C.  
P.O. Box 1663, MS M991  
Los Alamos, NM 87545

**RE: APPROVAL WITH MODIFICATIONS  
CONDITION OF WELL R-26 AND RECOMMENDATION TO ABANDON THE  
LOWER SCREEN AND EVALUATE THE NEED FOR SUPPLEMENTARY  
DRILLING  
LOS ALAMOS NATIONAL LABORATORY  
EPA ID#NM0890010515  
HWB-LANL-MISC-GW**

Dear Messrs. Rael and Graham:

The New Mexico Environment Department (NMED) has reviewed the United States Department of Energy (DOE) and Los Alamos National Security, L.L.C.'s (collectively, the Permittees) document entitled *Condition of Well R-26 and Recommendation to Abandon the Lower Screen and Evaluate the Need for Supplementary Drilling* (Recommendation) dated May 3, 2011 and referenced by ENV-RCRA-11-0176.

The Recommendation states that the reliability assessment conducted on Westbay well R-26 indicates that screen 2 is compromised by the presence of bentonite and is no longer usable. The Permittees propose to abandon screen 2 by placing a cement plug and sand inside the well casing from the bottom of the well to 750 feet below the top of the well casing (approximately 80 feet below the bottom of screen 1). Screen 1 can then be rehabilitated as necessary and R-26 can be converted to a single-screen well with an



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active purge and sampling system. The Recommendation also proposes postponing the decision to replace screen 2 with another well installed at the location of R-26 until December 15, 2011, which coincides with the due date for submittal of the Permittees' *Well Evaluation and Network Recommendations Study Report for Technical Area 16 and Upper Water Canyon Watershed* (Evaluation).

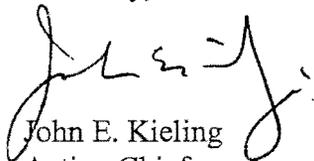
NMED has reviewed the Permittees' proposal, and hereby approves the abandonment of well R-26 screen 2 R-26 with the following modification.

In order to isolate groundwater present within the well casing within the coarse sand interval located above the cement plug, the Permittees must extend the coarse sand interval from the originally planned depth of 750 feet below ground surface (bgs) to 700 feet bgs and install a packer on top of the coarse sand interval.

NMED also approves postponing the decision whether to install a well to replace screen 2 at R-26 until December 15, 2011. The decision must be included in the Evaluation and submitted to NMED no later than **December 15, 2011**.

Please contact Michael Dale at (505) 661-2673 if have questions.

Sincerely,



John E. Kieling  
Acting Chief  
Hazardous Waste Bureau

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File: Reading and LANL 2011 – R-26 Recommendation to Abandon Lower Screen