



*Date:* August 19, 2009  
*Refer To:* EP2009-0385

James P. Bearzi, Bureau Chief  
Hazardous Waste Bureau  
New Mexico Environment Department  
2905 Rodeo Park Drive East, Building 1  
Santa Fe, NM 87505-6303

**Subject: Request for Deviations from the Approved Investigation Work Plan for Sites at Technical Area 49 Inside the Nuclear Environmental Site Boundary**

Dear Mr. Bearzi:

The purpose of this letter is to request that New Mexico Environment Department (NMED) approve two deviations from the approved Investigation Work Plan for Sites at Technical Area 49 Inside the Nuclear Environmental Site (NES) Boundary.

The approved work plan requires drilling one moisture-monitoring borehole in the center of Area 2 inside the NES to a depth of 900 ft below ground surface (bgs). During a July 16, 2009, site visit, NMED and Los Alamos National Laboratory (the Laboratory) personnel discussed alternative technical options for determining if perched water is present at the site and for collecting moisture-monitoring data.

In a teleconference on July 29, 2009, NMED personnel suggested the Laboratory consider the following technical options:

1. Evaluate for perched water while drilling the regional well currently identified as MDA AB #2.

Although the exact location of well MDA AB #2 has not been determined, Laboratory personnel intend to meet with NMED later this month to reach a consensus on the best placement of the well. The well location and approach for investigating the perched-intermediate zone will be documented in a drilling work plan and submitted for NMED approval.

2. Collect moisture-monitoring data using existing borehole 49-02901 in lieu of drilling a new borehole, provided this borehole is suitable for monitoring.

On July 30, 2009, Laboratory personnel performed a downhole video log of borehole 49-02901 and confirmed it is open to 640 ft bgs and is suitable for monitoring.



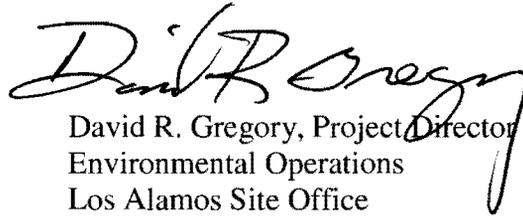
The Laboratory proposes implementing both NMED suggestions by using borehole 49-02901 for collecting moisture data in lieu of drilling a new borehole and evaluating for perched water during drilling operations at regional well MDA AB #2.

We appreciate the opportunity to work with NMED to develop technically viable and cost-effective alternatives to support the successful completion of the investigation work plan. If you have any questions, please contact Stephani Fuller at (505) 412-8937 (sfuller@lanl.gov) or Suzanne Schulman at (505) 606-1962 (sschulman@doeal.gov).

Sincerely,

Sincerely,

  
Michael J. Graham, Associate Director  
Environmental Programs  
Los Alamos National Laboratory  
MG/DG/DM/SF:sm

  
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