



Department of Energy

Albuquerque Operations Office
Los Alamos Area Office
Los Alamos, New Mexico 87544

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CERTIFIED MAIL - RETURN RECEIPT REQUESTED

Dr. Stuart Dinwiddie
Permitting Program Manager
Hazardous and Radioactive Materials
Bureau
New Mexico Environment Department
2044 Galisteo St., Bldg. A
P. O. Box 26110
Santa Fe, New Mexico 87505

Dear Dr. Dinwiddie:

Subject: Change in Status of the Technical Area (TA) 53 Surface Impoundments

The purpose of this letter is to confirm the status of TA-53 Surface Impoundments. At the last monthly meeting, April 15, 1997, one of the issues that we discussed was the change in status of the three surface impoundments at TA-53. The change was from that of a Treatment, Storage, Disposal (TSD) Unit to a Corrective Action Unit.

Over the last year we have been discussing this issue. The Los Alamos National Laboratory (LANL) has submitted data packages regarding sampling that has taken place at the impoundments, presented information from employees concerning actions (past and present) at TA-53 regarding the disposition of hazardous and mixed waste at TA-53 and what administrative actions have been put in place and enforced.

As a culmination of these activities, our discussion at the April 15, 1997 monthly meeting concluded with the decision to remove the three impoundments at TA-53 from TSD status to Corrective Action Status. At this time we would like to formally request that all three of these units be removed from TSD status and placed in the corrective action category. The Environmental Restoration Program is prepared to follow up on this change and take the next steps. They will be working with your staff on whatever corrective measures are necessary. The two north impoundments are numbered 53-002(a) and the south impoundment is numbered 53-002(b).

With this change in status, the need for the submittal of the closure plan requested by the New Mexico Environment Department (NMED) is no longer necessary. LANL will not be submitting the closure plan and would like to have NMED withdraw this request in



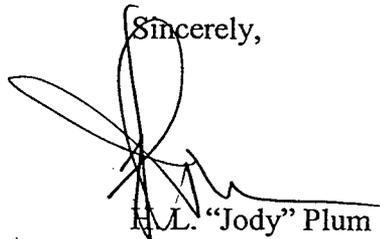
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order to close out this issue. The closure plan was placed on hold at NMED's request pending final resolution of the change in status request. In order to preclude some future action on this issue, LANL requests that NMED respond in writing that submittal of a closure plan for the south impoundment at TA-53 is no longer necessary.

We would like to take this opportunity to express our gratitude for NMED's consideration and willingness to work with us on this issue. We look forward to a continued good working relationship with you and your staff. If there are any questions on this matter, please call me at (505) 665-5042.

Sincerely,



J.M. "Jody" Plum

Office of Environment and Projects

LAAMEP:2JP-075

cc:

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

