



ENTERED

FAMBROUGH WATER
COOPERATIVE

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Douglas Meiklejohn
Executive Director
New Mexico Environmental Law Center
1405 Louisa St., Suite 5
Santa Fe, New Mexico 87505

May 3, 2001

Dear Mr. Meiklejohn,

The Board of Directors of Fambrough Water Cooperative respectfully requests your assistance in contacting the Environmental Protection Agency Region 6 Environmental Justice Division concerning the Triassic Park Hazardous Waste Treatment Storage and Disposal Facility slated for east of Roswell in Range 31E Township 11S Sections 17 and 18. We are located just south of Hagerman, New Mexico, we have approximately 150 members and the vast majority of people we serve are poor and Hispanic with very little formal education. Most of these people do not utilize English as their primary language and many cannot even read Spanish.

The Board received a letter of concern, signed by a quorum of our members, directing us to contact you with respect to their needs and requests.

Their concerns include, but are not limited to:

1. Being left out of the process because of a language barrier.
2. Health threats posed by the proposed facility.
3. Socioeconomic and ethnic implications regarding the geographical placement of this and other similar facilities.
4. A rush to end the public comment period before the public is fully informed and has opportunity to respond.

Their needs include, but are not limited to:

1. Brochures in Spanish explaining exactly what a RCRA Subtitle C TSDF is, how it works and how it can affect their health.
2. Brochures in Spanish explaining exactly what each of the 491 compounds of Attachment 'K' of the draft permit are, what the chemical and physical properties of each compound are and what the known health implications of each compound are.
3. A certified translator for informal question and answer sessions.
4. A certified translator for the public hearing.
5. Assistance in facilitating an informed public comment from individuals who desire to communicate with the NMED.

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Their requests include, but are not limited to:

1. A thorough education of, and direct dissemination of information to the entire Hispanic community in Chaves, Lea, Roosevelt, and Curry Counties.
2. Solicitation of funds from the EPA for those previously mentioned education and dissemination efforts as mandated by Executive Order 12698.
3. Solicitation of funds for an investigation into possible environmental justice issues, and deliberate misrepresentation of the facility in the media by its operators.
4. Corrective action corresponding to the results of the previously requested investigation.
5. Suspension of the May 15, 2001 deadline for the public comment period indefinitely until these concerns, needs and requests have been satisfied.

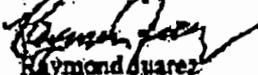
The Board feels compelled to state that this correspondence has been generated at the request of a quorum of our general membership. Our by-laws allow the cooperative members to direct the Board to act on behalf of the membership body when so directed. It is obvious to the Board that this contingent of members enjoys a status well beyond a simple quorum of our membership. This issue has generated a greater response among our people than any other that this Board can collectively recall. Hence, our action.

It appears to our members, and this Board concurs, that our situation is not unique. We collectively believe that a sense of disenfranchisement, the prominence of a communication barrier, a lack of effort to overcome it by the NMED and GMI, and a perception of being taken advantage of by this industry are serious concerns. We also contend that these concerns would be commonly held beliefs beyond our cross section of the Hispanic community *if all of the facts were known.*

We, the Board of directors of the Fambrough Water Cooperative, must state unequivocally for the record that we, as a cooperative and as individuals, have no funds available for any of the efforts detailed in this correspondence. We are a reflection of our members and are forced to rely upon outside assistance for the efforts detailed herein. We perceive the concerns, needs, and requests of our members to be sincere, valid, and with merit. We respectfully request your assistance and expertise in addressing the many issues of our membership. We request that you ask the EPA to uphold its mandate and seek to identify the needs of Hispanics throughout southeastern New Mexico. We urge you to intervene and suspend the public comment period deadline indefinitely until the Hispanic community in southeastern New Mexico can eliminate their disenfranchisement.

Thank you for your attention to this matter.

Respectfully,



Raymond Suarez
President
Fambrough Water Cooperative

*Raymond Suarez
Fambrough Water
Cooperative*

cc: Chaves County Commissioner Hobson NM State Reps D. Foley, P. Ponce, A. Wilson, D. Whitaker,
D. Bratton, M. Unostic, Jr., E. Roberts, NM State Sens S. Ingle, T. Jennings, R. Adair,
NM Attorney General P. Madrid