



ENVIRONMENTAL EVALUATION GROUP

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NM ENVIRONMENT DEPARTMENT  
OFFICE OF THE SECRETARY

July 6, 2000

Ms. Deborah D. Griswold  
Team Leader, Environmental Restoration Division  
U.S. Department of Energy  
Albuquerque Operations Office/ERD  
P.O. Box 5400  
Albuquerque, NM 87185



Dear Ms. Griswold:

Your June 29, 2000 Draft Long-Term Stewardship Report, sent to our former Director, Robert H. Neill, was received on July 3, 2000. It is not possible to make a very extensive review in less than three working days. However, we do have one significant comment.

We believe that a thorough evaluation should be conducted of the merits of off-site disposal of the approximately 4400 m<sup>3</sup> of buried TRU waste at Los Alamos. These types of evaluations are planned for Hanford and INEEL and the expectation is that their buried TRU wastes will be disposed off-site (WMPEIS, DOE/EIS-0200-F, Appendix B). We have seen no indication that such an evaluation is being considered for LANL and the WMPEIS indicates these wastes will be disposed of on-site. This evaluation should be in sufficient detail so that reviewers outside of DOE can adequately respond to the recommended action.

EEG is concerned with LANL buried TRU waste for two reasons:

- (1) The waste is very long-lived and any potential hazard will exist for thousands of years. Therefore possible institutional control in the near future will have little effect on the potential hazard. This is the reason why stored TRU waste and, very possibly, buried TRU waste from other sites will be disposed at WIPP;
- (2) The possible merits of exhuming TRU waste at other sites are recognized and will be evaluated. There is no apparent reason why buried TRU at LANL can be dismissed a priori.

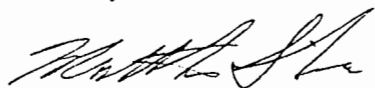
EEG plans to evaluate the buried TRU waste at LANL.



Deborah D. Griswold  
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Thank you for the opportunity to comment on this draft report. Please feel free to call me or Dr. Jim Channell of our staff if there are questions.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Matthew Silva". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Matthew" written in a larger, more prominent script than the last name "Silva".

Matthew Silva  
Director

MS:js

cc: Jennifer Salisbury, NMEMNRD  
Peter Maggiore, NMED