

Subject: Re: A proposal for a documentary on WIPP: Please read

Date: Tue, 14 Nov 2000 12:09:30 -0700

From: Steve Zappe <Steve_Zappe@nmenv.state.nm.us>

Organization: NMED Haz/Rad Materials Bureau

To: Jareo@aol.com

BCC: Will Fetner <William_Fetner@nmenv.state.nm.us>,
Steve Holmes <Steve_Holmes@nmenv.state.nm.us>



Sanette -

Thanks for the opportunity to participate in your documentary, but NMED is not in a position to "even out the sides of the debate," as you put it. Perhaps I can better explain it by analogy - you probably would not find a judge willing to discuss on the record the relative merits of a case that had yet to be heard and for which no evidence had been presented. NMED is in a similar position - our job is to remain neutral and ensure the hazardous waste regulations are fairly interpreted and enforced. We don't take sides, especially before we receive a permit modification request from DOE detailing the approach to be taken at WIPP with respect to remote-handled (RH) TRU waste. Further complicating the matter is that we anticipate there will be a public hearing on this modification, and I will most likely serve as an expert witness for NMED at the hearing. Anything I (or anyone else from NMED) say prior to the hearing - especially if it can be produced as evidence at the hearing (like a video taped interview) - could be used to impugn my testimony. That's the main reason why I must decline your offer.

However, if you are looking for balance in your project, I suggest you speak to several other individuals (either in State government or associated with it) who can provide you with knowledgeable insight into the question of RH waste at WIPP. One or more of them may agree to be interviewed on film:

Mr. Bill Mackie, Coordinator
Governor's WIPP Task Force
(505) 827-1372 - Santa Fe
<BMackie@state.nm.us>

Mr. Lindsay Lovejoy
NM Attorney General's Office
(505) 827-6695 - Santa Fe
<llovejoy@ago.state.nm.us>

Dr. Matthew Silva, Director
NM Environmental Evaluation Group
(505) 828-1003 - Albuquerque
<msilva@eeg.org>

I can provide you with a copy of our testimony at last year's hearing outlining the issues and concerns we had with RH waste leading us to prohibit it in the current permit. I referred to it at the meeting on

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November 3, and would be happy to fax or e-mail it to you, if your AOL account can accept e-mail attachments from outside. I may also have other documents in our records here that could provide you with background information to develop better questions to ask your interviewees. Let me know how I can help in this manner.

I'd enjoy seeing your documentary when it is finished. Please call me at 827-1560 x1013 with any further questions. Good luck!

Steve Zappe
NMED WIPP Project Leader

Jareo@aol.com wrote:

>

> Dear Mr. Zappe,

> My name is Sanette Owen-Thomas and I am a student at the College of Santa
> Fe. Last week I attended a meeting at the WIPP project building in Santa Fe
> on November 3, 2000. My partner Jennie Weaver and I have proposed a treatment
> for a documentary on the WIPP project in Carlsbad, New Mexico. We have eager
> participation from CCNS and possibly other activist groups, and we are asking
> if you would like the opportunity to even out the sides of the debate. We
> would like to interview both parties for our documentary in this dispute over
> the RH-TRU waste project that WIPP has taken over. We would like to know if
> an interview with you could be arranged for our perspective documentary. If
> at any time after the interview you have concerns over the content of the
> interview, we will show you the raw footage of the interview so that you may
> review it before we cut the final film. If there is anything at all that you
> do not want us to put into the film, we will take that out. Please consider
> our offer for an interview, we feel that to give the viewers a fair overview
> of the WIPP controversy, we must show both sides equally. Please email me
> back at Jareo@aol.com, or you may call me at (505) 473-6986. If I do not
> hear from you in a week or two, I will try and contact you again.

> Best Regards,

> Sanette Owen-Thomas

> 1600 St. Michael's Dr. #298

> Santa Fe, NM 87505