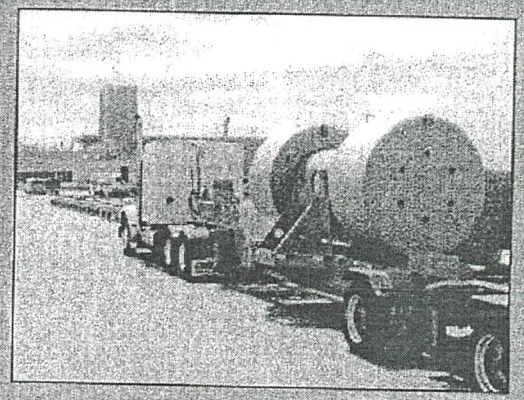


WIPP Issues

Run ? What's needed on RH WASTE ?

DC

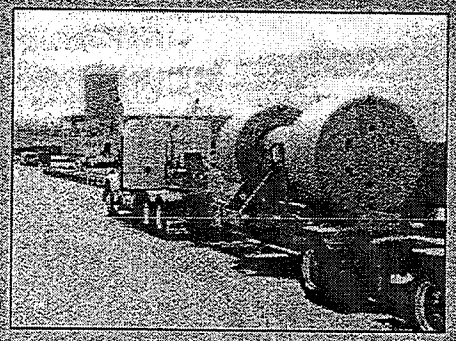
State Representative John Heaton
Carlsbad Mayor Bob Forrest

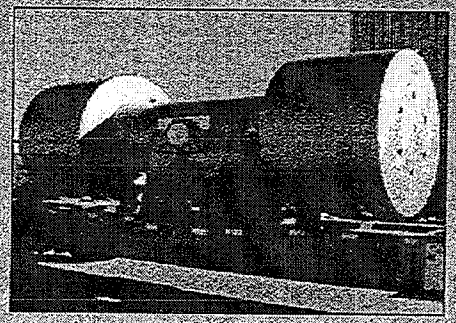
August 2003

030801

ENTERED

Remote-Handled (RH) Waste





- RH waste has always been part of WIPP's scope as mandated in the Land Withdrawal Act (Public Law 102-579)
- *"... the RH waste characterization program proposed is ... not based on a reasoned departure from the ... CH process, the current legal standard."*

  -New Mexico Environment Department (NMED) March 5, 2003
- We need to expedite the RH permitting process taking into account the NAS recommendations and not simply following the overly conservative approach used for CH waste
- We ask for your assistance in scheduling an approval process for RH waste

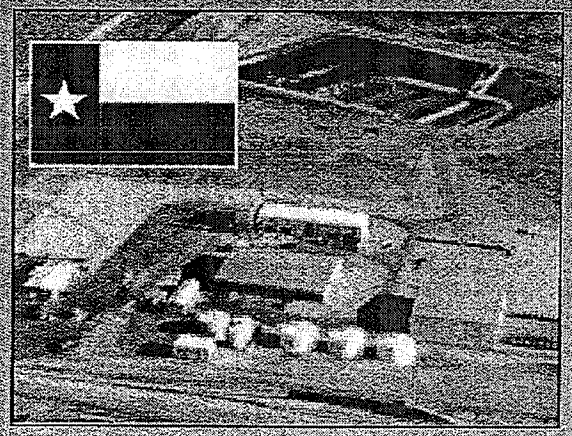
Legislative Definition

"Many requirements having to do with waste characterization and packaging, lack a safety or legal basis." "The committee recommends that DOE's efforts to review waste characterization and packaging requirements continue, and changes be implemented."

From the National Research Council Final Report, "Improving Operations and Long-Term Safety of the WIPP", June 2001

- Legislative language has been proposed to define RCRA compliance for TRU waste characterization
- The legislative definition will incorporate changes to the waste characterization processes recommended and supported by the NAS and EEG
- We ask that you don't oppose this initiative and assist in scheduling an approval process for the changes

Limited Surface Storage



- The amount of TRU waste that WIPP can temporarily store on the surface is greatly restricted by it hazardous waste facility permit
- This leads to logistics problems and operational inefficiencies that slow down TRU waste cleanup and disposal
- WCS, a facility in Texas, is now being considered for TRU waste temporary storage and processing
- We ask for your assistance in keeping WIPP TRU operations in Carlsbad

Jobs

Initiatives	Direct jobs	Annual spending	Total annual impact (direct and indirect)
Central confirmation facility at WIPP	250	$50M	$171M
Low level waste (LLW) and mixed low level waste (MLLW) disposal facilities	100	$20M	$68M
Mixed waste treatment facility at WIPP	100	$20M	$68M
Remote handled (RH) waste disposal at WIPP	60	$12M	$41M
Expanded temporary surface storage at WIPP	20	$4M	$14M
Medical isotope facility	80	$16M	$55M
Modern pit facility	1000	$300M	$1023M
Advanced reactor test facility	600	$120M	$409M
TOTAL	2210	$542M	$1.8Billion

Summary

- Key WIPP issues:
  - Timely approval and commencement of RH waste operations
  - Changing TRU waste characterization requirements to eliminate unnecessary waste analysis
  - Keeping WIPP-related operations and jobs in Carlsbad, rather than having them shifted to other places like Texas
- We ask your assistance in:
  - Scheduling approval processes for RH waste and changes to waste characterization requirements
  - Keeping Carlsbad-designated jobs in Carlsbad and pursuing new jobs in the field of environmental management