

**Allen, Pam, NMENV**

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**From:** Maestas, Ricardo, NMENV  
**Sent:** Thursday, October 11, 2012 2:40 PM  
**To:** Allen, Pam, NMENV  
**Subject:** FW: "Public Comment Still Open on Plans to Expand WIPP," Santa Fe New Mexican, 09/05/12; and "Not Consenting," (Opinion), Pueblo Chieftain, 09/02/12

WIPP file

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**From:** Holmes, Steve, NMENV  
**Sent:** Thursday, September 06, 2012 12:35 PM  
**To:** Kliphuis, Trais, NMENV; Maestas, Ricardo, NMENV  
**Subject:** FW: "Public Comment Still Open on Plans to Expand WIPP," Santa Fe New Mexican, 09/05/12; and "Not Consenting," (Opinion), Pueblo Chieftain, 09/02/12

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**From:** Gill, Deb - DOE [<mailto:deb.gill@wipp.ws>]  
**Sent:** Thursday, September 06, 2012 7:38 AM  
**To:** DL CBFO Newsclip Recipients  
**Subject:** "Public Comment Still Open on Plans to Expand WIPP," Santa Fe New Mexican, 09/05/12; and "Not Consenting," (Opinion), Pueblo Chieftain, 09/02/12

**Public comment still open on plans to expand WIPP  
Santa Fe New Mexican, Sept. 5, 2012  
By Staci Matlock**

The federal government wants to expand the amount and type of nuclear waste stored at the waste isolation facility near Carlsbad. The public still has time to comment on both plans in September.

One Santa Fe-based nuclear watchdog group thinks the proposals need a lot of scrutiny, especially since the plans also concern Los Alamos National Laboratory. Another group thinks it is time to review the purpose of Southern New Mexico's Waste Isolation Pilot Plant.

The underground storage facility began receiving transuranic radioactive waste in 1999 from national laboratories involved in nuclear weapons production and research. In addition to being subject to federal authority, the U.S. Department of Energy facility operates under a hazardous waste permit issued by the New Mexico Environment Department.

The Department of Energy proposes at least four changes or expansions to waste storage at WIPP. Two proposals are available for public comment.

Under one proposal, the Department of Energy seeks to change its state hazardous waste permit to allow the shipment of remotely handled radioactive waste in lead-shielded containers. Comments on this plan are due Monday, Sept. 10. Submit comments to Trais Kliphuis at the New Mexico Environment Department, [trais.kliphuis@state.nm.us](mailto:trais.kliphuis@state.nm.us).

A similar request by the Department of Energy to amend the WIPP permit was denied by the state Environment Department "for inadequacies," according to staff.

Under a second proposal, the Department of Energy is looking at various ways to dispose of 13 metric tons of surplus weapons-grade plutonium from the Savannah River Site, half of it in pits, the triggers for nuclear weapons. One proposal

would send almost half of the the shipments of surplus plutonium to WIPP. Comments on the proposal are due to the Department of Energy by Sept. 25.

Concerned Citizens for Nuclear Safety, a Santa Fe nonprofit, worries that those shipments will mean less space available at WIPP, which has finite approved space, for radioactive waste that still needs to be shipped from Los Alamos National Laboratory. The group also believes both proposals haven't had adequate public hearings.

Greg Mello, an engineer and co-founder of the nonprofit Los Alamos Study Group, said, "We propose reviewing whether the mission of WIPP needs to be expanded to include the direct disposal of bulk plutonium in the form of demilitarized pits [pits that have been deformed inside malleable metal bags, or otherwise destroyed] and in general, we suggest reviewing WIPP's mission to potentially expand it to include more waste of essentially the same kinds as present."

"To those who don't want to expand WIPP's mission to include other forms of plutonium waste, or additional quantities of waste, we have to ask, "Where else do you want to put it?" he noted in an email.

On the Web: • Concerned Citizens for Nuclear Safety has posted information and comments about the proposed waste shipments to WIPP at [www.nuclearactive.org/](http://www.nuclearactive.org/).

• Los Alamos Study Group information is available at [www.lasg.org/index.htm](http://www.lasg.org/index.htm).

• The requested permit amendments from the New Mexico Environment Department can be found at [www.wipp.energy.gov/library/Information\\_Repository\\_A/Class\\_2\\_Permit\\_Modifications/Class\\_2\\_Shielded\\_Container\\_7-5-12.pdf](http://www.wipp.energy.gov/library/Information_Repository_A/Class_2_Permit_Modifications/Class_2_Shielded_Container_7-5-12.pdf).

• Information on the Department of Energy's plan for plutonium waste shipments can be found at [nrsa.energy.gov/aboutus/ouoperations/generalcounsel/nepaoverview/nepa/spdsupplementaleis](http://nrsa.energy.gov/aboutus/ouoperations/generalcounsel/nepaoverview/nepa/spdsupplementaleis).

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### **Not Consenting**

**The Pueblo Chieftain, Sept. 2, 2012**

### **Opinion**

As a New Mexico nonprofit organization involved with nuclear waste issues for four decades, it is dismaying that factual errors continue in the ongoing campaign to promote New Mexico as the nation's nuclear waste dump.

("New Mexico repository a model for consent," Robert Amme, Ideas, Aug. 26). Space limits prevent a comprehensive list of factual errors. One whopper is that "today Carlsbad has the lowest unemployment rate in New Mexico." In fact, more than 150 New Mexico towns have lower unemployment rates than Carlsbad. Because of New Mexicans' objections, the federal law governing the Waste Isolation Pilot Plant, the site that Amme promotes, prohibits spent nuclear fuel and high-level waste.

If the "consent-based approach" supported by the OpEd means anything, then states like New Mexico, Idaho and Nevada that know about nuclear waste disposal and have explicitly not consented should be eliminated from consideration.

*Don Hancock*

*Southwest Research and Information Center*

*Albuquerque, NM*