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RYAN FLYNN  
Cabinet Secretary  
BUTCH TONGATE  
Deputy Secretary

**CERTIFIED MAIL - RETURN RECEIPT REQUESTED**

October 10, 2014

Jose Franco, Manager  
Carlsbad Field Office  
Department of Energy  
P.O. Box 3090  
Carlsbad, New Mexico 88221-3090

Robert L. McQuinn, Project Manager  
Nuclear Waste Partnership, LLC  
P.O. Box 2078  
Carlsbad, New Mexico 88221-2078

**RE: NMED APPROVAL OF THE OAK RIDGE NATIONAL LABORATORY/CENTRAL  
CHARACTERIZATION PROGRAM FINAL AUDIT REPORT, AUDIT A-14-29  
WASTE ISOLATION PILOT PLANT  
EPA I.D. NUMBER NM4890139088**

Dear Messrs. Franco and McQuinn:

On August 27, 2014, the New Mexico Environment Department ("NMED") received the Final Audit Report of the Oak Ridge National Laboratory/Central Characterization Project ("ORNL/CCP") Audit Number A-14-29 ("Audit Report"), from the Department of Energy's Carlsbad Field Office ("CBFO"). CBFO and Nuclear Waste Partnership LLC ("the Permittees") were required to submit this Audit Report under the Waste Isolation Pilot Plant ("WIPP") Hazardous Waste Facility Permit as specified in Permit Section 2.3.2.3. The intended scope of this audit was to ensure the adequacy, implementation, and effectiveness of the ORNL/CCP waste characterization for contact-handled ("CH") Summary Category Group S5000 debris wastes utilizing the visual examination process relative to the requirements of the WIPP Permit. Visual Examination of CH waste is a new activity for ORNL/CCP. Other waste characterization activities at ORNL/CCP were audited by CBFO in January 14-16, 2014 and approved by NMED on April 25, 2014.

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The Audit Report consisted of the following items:

- A narrative report (hardcopy and electronic)
- Copies of relevant Permit Attachment C6 checklists
- Final ORNL/CCP standard operating procedures for characterization of the waste category listed above (hardcopy and electronic)
- Objective evidence examined during the audit (hardcopy and electronic):
  - General Information
  - Visual Examination (VE)

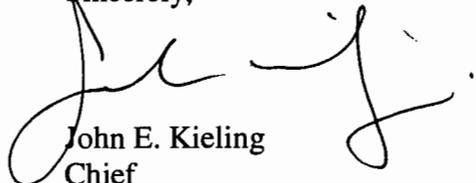
NMED Representatives observed the audit on July 29 through 30, 2014. NMED has examined the Audit Report for evidence of compliance with the requirements of Permit Sections 2.3.2 (Audit and Surveillance Program) and 2.3.1 (Waste Analysis Plan [WAP]). There was one recommendation offered to CCP management to have the VE operators record the verification of the output container as being empty on the VE Data Sheet prior to initiating the VE process. This recommendation is discussed in the interim audit report. There were no concerns identified that were associated with Permit requirements.

Attached are NMED's general comments based upon review of the Audit Report. These are provided to guide future audit report preparation and to assist the Permittees in understanding NMED's concerns.

NMED concludes that this Audit Report demonstrates that ORNL/CCP has implemented the applicable characterization requirements of the WAP. NMED approves the Permittees' Audit Report for ORNL/CCP Audit A-14-29. This Audit Report approval is of the broad programmatic implementation of waste characterization requirements at ORNL/CCP, and does not constitute approval of individual waste characterization procedures, nor condone inappropriate applications of those procedures. This approval does not relieve the Permittees of their obligation to comply with the requirements of the permit or other applicable laws and regulations.

If you have any questions regarding this matter, please contact Ricardo Maestas at (505) 476-6050 or myself at (505) 476-6035.

Sincerely,



John E. Kieling  
Chief

Hazardous Waste Bureau

Messrs. Franco and McQuinn

October 10, 2014

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cc: Tom Blaine, Director, NMED EHD  
Ricardo Maestas, NMED HWB  
Steve Holmes, NMED HWB  
Coleman Smith, NMED HWB  
Susan Lucas-Kamat, NMED DOEOB  
Robert Bishop, TDEC  
Shari Meghreblian, TDEC  
John Owsley, TDEC DOEOB  
Laurie King, EPA Region 6  
Tom Peake, EPA ORIA  
File: Red WIPP '14

**NMED COMMENTS ON THE**  
**OAK RIDGE NATIONAL LABORATORY/ CENTRAL CHARACTERIZATION**  
**PROJECT (ORNL/CCP) FINAL AUDIT REPORT A-14-29**

NMED's review indicated that the body of the Audit Report and the C6 Checklists generally appear to address the applicable elements. NMED provides the following comment for the Permittees consideration:

1. Question 30 of the C6 Checklist has no responses in the fields to answer the question.