

**From:** Maestas, Ricardo, NMENV  
**To:** Biswell, David, NMENV; Tellez, Hernesto, NMENV; McLean, Megan, NMENV  
**Subject:** FW: Draft permit for WIPP Panel Closure Modification  
**Date:** Wednesday, March 21, 2018 9:41:16 AM

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**From:** Russell Hardy [mailto:rhardy@nmsu.edu]  
**Sent:** Wednesday, March 21, 2018 9:36 AM  
**To:** Maestas, Ricardo, NMENV <Ricardo.Maestas@state.nm.us>  
**Cc:** Russell Hardy <rhardy@nmsu.edu>  
**Subject:** Draft permit for WIPP Panel Closure Modification

Good morning Ricardo, I am writing in support of the draft permit which includes modifications to the WIPP Panel Closure system. As you well know, this permit modification has been in the works for a long time (since March 20, 2013) and was in the final stages of completion when the February 14, 2014 underground radiation event occurred. As a result of that underground event, we have all witnessed the need for changes to the WIPP Panel Closure system in order to reduce the cost, labor, and time associated with closing off filled panels and unstable areas within the repository. Therefore, I approve of the proposed changes and the submission of the draft permit as they are presented. Additionally, given the amount of time that has expired with respect to this proposed change and the amount of discussion that has already occurred regarding the proposed method for panel closure since 2013, I do not believe that a public hearing is needed on this subject. My advice would be to approve the proposed draft permit and move on to more pertinent issues related to the WIPP and the remaining permit modifications that are under consideration.

Thank you for the opportunity to comment and let me know if you have any questions or need any additional information regarding this matter.

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