



UNITED STATES ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION
AGENCY

Washington, DC 20460

September 28, 2020

OFFICE OF
AIR AND
RADIATION

Mr. Reinhard Knerr
Manager
Carlsbad Field Office
U.S. Department of Energy
P.O. Box 3090
Carlsbad, New Mexico 88221-3090

Dear Mr. Knerr:

The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency has reviewed the planned change for the excavation and construction of a fifth shaft at the Waste Isolation Pilot Plant (WIPP) articulated in the U.S. Department of Energy's (DOE) Planned Change Notice (PCN) dated September 29, 2017. EPA staff have reviewed the PCN, DOE's August 10, 2020 response to the EPA's correspondence of May 4, and applicable sections from the 2019 WIPP Compliance Recertification Application (CRA) and finds that the new shaft is not expected to impact long-term releases of radionuclides. EPA's review concludes that the new shaft will not result in non-compliance with the terms of the certification. The EPA does not object to the shaft construction.

The EPA appreciates the advanced notice of the proposed change and the follow up information provided by DOE in these communications and as part of the CRA review. The Agency requests that DOE provide periodic updates on construction progress. We look forward to seeing the results of the concurrent shaft geologic characterization that DOE has committed to conduct.

If you have any questions concerning this letter, please contact Tom Peake at peake.tom@epa.gov (202-343-9765).

Sincerely,

Lee Ann B. Veal
Director, Radiation Protection Division

cc: Electronic Distribution
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