



ENTERED Schneider

Department of Energy
Washington, DC 20585

FEB 19 1992

Ms. Margo T. Oge, Director
Office of Radiation Programs
Environmental Protection Agency
401 M Street, S.W.
Washington, D.C. 20460

Ms. Sylvia K. Lowrance, Director
Office of Solid Waste
Environmental Protection Agency
401 M Street, S.W.
Washington, D.C. 20460

Dear Ms. Oge and Ms. Lowrance:

On October 3, 1991, the Secretary of Energy, after a comprehensive review, found that the Waste Isolation Pilot Plant (WIPP) was ready to receive transuranic (TRU) waste and announced his intention to proceed with the Test Phase at WIPP, pending an appropriate land withdrawal.

Since the Secretary's announcement, there has been considerable progress made in the preparation of TRU waste for the WIPP Test Phase. Four test bins, each containing the equivalent of four to five 55-gallon drums of TRU waste, have been loaded at the Idaho National Engineering Laboratory and are ready for shipment to WIPP. In addition, preparations are underway to load TRU waste generated at the Rocky Flats Plant into test bins. Although the Department has achieved readiness at WIPP, we are currently constrained from starting the Test Phase with waste by a court-imposed injunction. Nevertheless, we are continuing to maintain readiness and to conduct other activities related to the test program. Coordination and cooperation between the Department and the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) is essential for many of these activities. Therefore, I request a meeting with your staff to bring you up to date on the status of WIPP and to discuss a number of issues for which EPA input is needed.

I have enclosed a proposed agenda for the meeting which has been coordinated with your staff. As you can see, there are a number of areas where the Department of Energy would like to brief your staff on the status of the WIPP program and to receive EPA guidance and information to assist the Department in its planning and implementation of the WIPP Test Phase.

Our staffs have been discussing the details of this meeting and have set March 12, 1992, at EPA as the date and location for the meeting. Please let us know if these plans need to be changed.

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Within my office, Mr. Steve Schneider, Director, WIPP Project Division, is the point of contact for this meeting. He can be reached at (301) 903-7201.

Please call me on (301) 903-7201 if you have any questions regarding this request.

Sincerely,



Mark W. Frei, Director
Office of Waste Management Projects
Office of Waste Management
Environmental Restoration
and Waste Management



Enclosure

cc w/enclosure:

L. Duffy, EM-1
E. Livingston, EM-1
J. Arthur, DOE-WPIO
W. Gunter, EPA-ORP
T. McLaughlin, EPA-ORP
R. Dyer, EPA-ORP
M. Hale, EPA-OSW
M. Straus, EPA-OSW
D. Layland, EPA-OSW
R. Layton, EPA-Region VI
R. Maier, EPA-Region VI

