



CCNS

Concerned Citizens for Nuclear Safety

file WIPP



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January 7, 1994

Mr. George E. Dials, Manager
U.S. Department of Energy
Carlsbad Area Office
P.O. Box 3090
Carlsbad, N.M. 88221-3090

Dear Mr. Dials,

Concerned Citizens for Nuclear Safety (CCNS) is a nonprofit, Santa Fe-based information and education organization focusing on the environmental, economic and safety issues posed by the production, handling, transportation and disposal of radioactive materials. Since 1988, CCNS has done exhaustive research into the public concerns over the Waste Isolation Pilot Plant (WIPP).

CCNS welcomes you to New Mexico. I hope to meet with you soon to discuss our continued involvement with the process of WIPP's application for certification as a waste disposal facility.

I am writing today to ask you to recommend that the Department of Energy (DOE) notify the New Mexico Environment Department (NMED) that DOE is withdrawing its current application for a WIPP test phase permit under the state Hazardous Waste Act. DOE has already publicly announced that it will not pursue tests with mixed waste at the WIPP facility prior to its official certification as a disposal facility. With the withdrawal of the WIPP test phase, DOE no longer needs to claim that WIPP has interim status. So DOE's failure to withdraw the Hazardous Waste permit application leads to speculation that, despite its public assertions, DOE nevertheless wants to leave the door open to other scenarios which would bring waste to WIPP before certification.



In view of the administration's policy to maintain open communication with the public, it seems unwise for DOE to have two different postures. DOE therefore should withdraw the WIPP Hazardous Waste permit application in order to maintain credibility with the New Mexico public. The legitimate concern for providing resources for NMED to maintain its ongoing technical review of WIPP's compliance progress can be dealt with under a new framework separate from the permit application process.

NMED's deadline for public comment on the WIPP Hazardous Waste permit application is January 14, 1994. I would like to hear from you prior to that time. Please contact me if you have questions. Thank you for your prompt consideration of this matter.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Margret Carde".

Margret Carde
Nuclear Waste Project Director

cc: Barbara Hoditschek
Please file this in connection with the WIPP Hazardous Waste permit application.