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**Department of Energy**  
Carlsbad Area Office  
P. O. Box 3090  
Carlsbad, New Mexico 88221

 **ENTERED**

**May 16, 1997**

**Dear Stakeholder:**

I am pleased to provide you the latest revision of the Waste Isolation Pilot Plant (WIPP) Disposal Decision Plan.

The Disposal Decision Plan is a graphic representation of critical milestones that must be achieved to open and operate the WIPP. The most significant change is that the date for beginning disposal operations has moved to May 1998 from November 1997. This change occurred as a result of negotiations with the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) about its schedule to review the Compliance Certification Application and an appreciation that, due to additional information requests, peer reviews and data reviews/evaluations, the EPA will not be able to render a certification decision until April 1998. Most of the EPA's requests have now been met, and we are anticipating a completeness determination from EPA within the next few days. The EPA's commitment to this schedule now provides us with a clear path towards solving the nation's transuranic waste problem.

We are confident that, with this extra time, we will successfully meet the EPA's evaluation and certification requirements necessary to operate the WIPP as a safe transuranic waste disposal facility. Our efforts will focus on ensuring that this schedule change benefits the program by allowing further demonstration of the site's compliance with all regulatory requirements, as well as added assurance that the site meets or exceeds all safety standards necessary to protect human health and the environment.

If you have any questions or require further information, please contact the WIPP Information Center at 1-(800)-336-WIPP.

Sincerely,

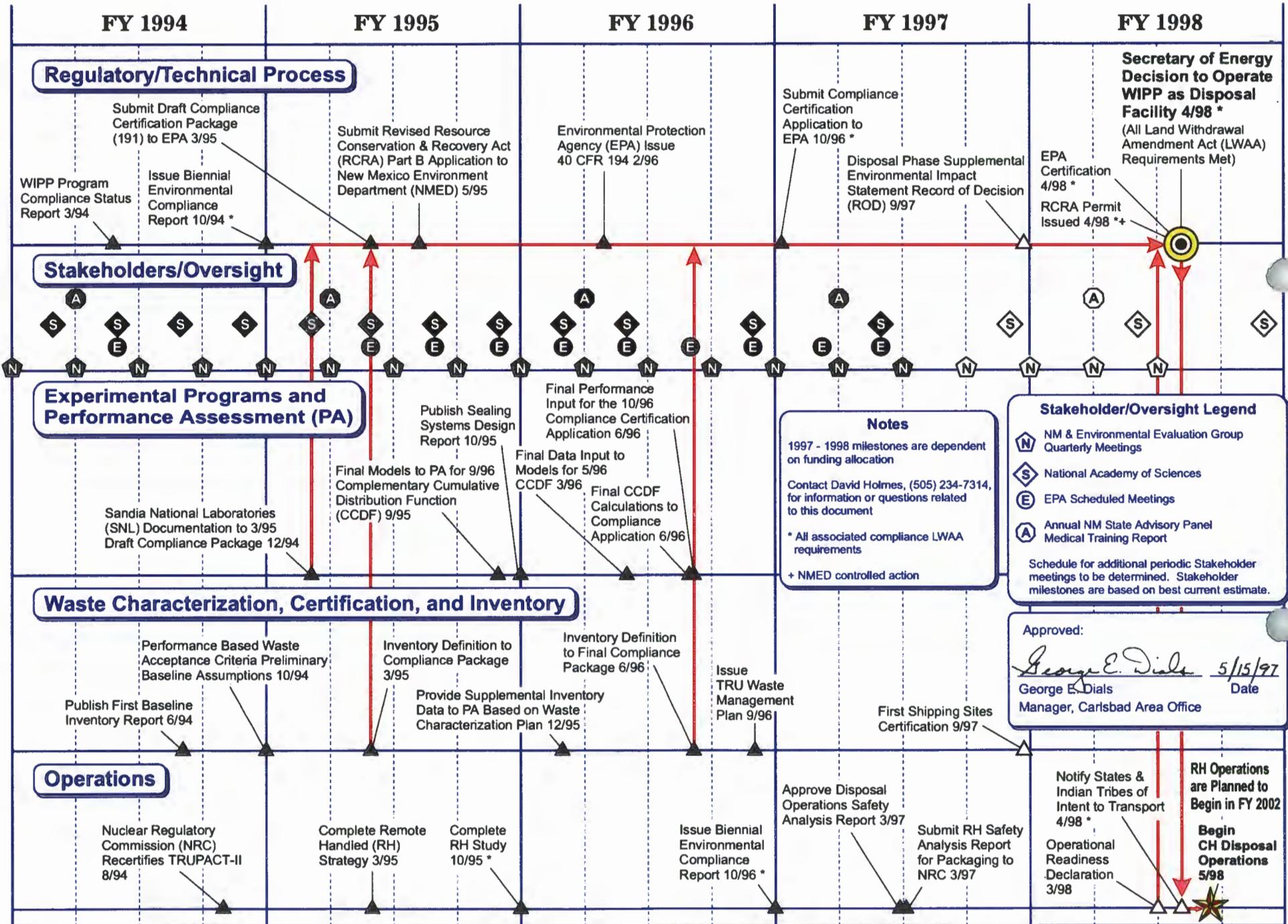
  
George E. Dials  
Manager

**Enclosure**

Refer to:CAO:OPA:DSH 97-0669 / UFC 1200

# WIPP Disposal Decision Plan

Revision 4  
May 15, 1997





# Carlsbad Area Office MONTHLY CALENDAR

Milestones and Involvement Opportunities  
June 1997

June 1997						
S	M	T	W	T	F	S
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
8	9	10	11	12	13	14
15	16	17	18	19	20	21
22	23	24	25	26	27	28
29	30					

July 1997						
S	M	T	W	T	F	S
		1	2	3	4	5
6	7	8	9	10	11	12
13	14	15	16	17	18	19
20	21	22	23	24	25	26
27	28	29	30	31		

August 1997						
S	M	T	W	T	F	S
					1	2
3	4	5	6	7	8	9
10	11	12	13	14	15	16
17	18	19	20	21	22	23
24	25	26	27	28	29	30
31						

## June 1997

June 20 -- Public Tour Day at the Waste Isolation Pilot Plant\*, Carlsbad, New Mexico

## July 1997

July 7 -- WIPPTREX 97-1, Cheyenne, Wyoming, 3:30 p.m., observers' briefing and notification of location and time for full-scale exercise on July 8, 1997

July 8 -- WIPPTREX 97-1, Cheyenne, Wyoming

July 10 - WIPPTREX 96-2, Fort Collins, Colorado, 7 p.m., observers' briefing and notification of location and time for full-scale exercise for July 11, 1997

July 11 -- WIPPTREX 96-2, Fort Collins, Colorado

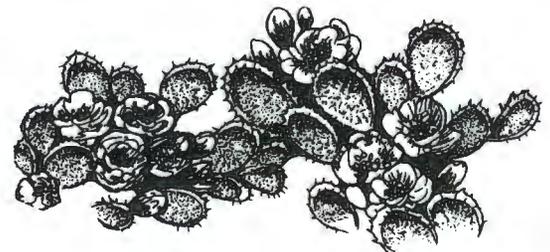
July 11 -- Public Tour Day at the Waste Isolation Pilot Plant\*, Carlsbad, New Mexico

July 31 -- 59th WIPP Quarterly Review Meeting, (New Mexico Energy, Minerals and Natural Resources Dept., Santa Fe, New Mexico)

## September 1997

September 29 -- Los Alamos Shipment Route Exercise, Pojoaque Pueblo, New Mexico, 2 p.m., observers' briefing and notification of location and time for full-scale exercise for September 30, 1997

September 30 -- Los Alamos Shipment Route Exercise, Pojoaque Pueblo, New Mexico



\* A Public Tour Day has been developed to accommodate larger numbers of citizens wishing to tour the WIPP. Interested persons should call the WIPP Information Center at 1-800-336-WIPP (1-800-336-9477).

