WIPP Hazardous Waste Facility Permit
Draft Community Relations Plan for Public Input

1.0 Introduction and Background

The Waste Isolation Pilot Plant (WIPP) facility is located 26 miles southeast of Carlsbad, New Mexico. It is a U.S. Department of Energy (DOE) facility designed and operated for the safe disposal of transuranic (TRU) radioactive waste. TRU waste is material contaminated with radioactive elements–mostly plutonium. The majority of this waste resulted from government research and production of nuclear weapons. TRU waste will also be generated as some DOE sites are decommissioned.

Some TRU waste contains non-radioactive chemicals that are classified as hazardous waste under federal and state law. A Hazardous Waste Facility Permit is required to manage and dispose of these TRU "mixed" wastes.

The New Mexico Environment Department (NMED) regulates the management and disposal of the hazardous waste contained in TRU mixed waste.

In 1999, NMED issued the initial WIPP permit, which was renewed in November 2010 (Permit Number: NM4890139088-TSDF).

The WIPP facility is owned and operated by the U.S. Department of Energy (DOE) Carlsbad Field Office. Washington TRU Solutions LLC (WTS) is the co-operator of the WIPP facility. The DOE Carlsbad Field Office and WTS are co-permittees to the WIPP Hazardous Waste Facility Permit issued by the New Mexico Environment Department.

The activities under this permit are the subject of this Community Relations Plan.

Questions for your consideration

Would you like more information regarding the WIPP facility in the Introduction and Background sections?

Would you like more information about the permitting process in the Introduction and Background sections?

Do you know where you can examine the WIPP Hazardous Waste Facility Permit?

Would a list of reference materials and links to the agencies and companies involved be of benefit?

2.0 Purpose of the WIPP Community Relations Plan

As part of the WIPP Hazardous Waste Facility Permit, the Permittees are required to develop and implement a Community Relations Plan to keep communities and interested members of the public informed about permit-related activities and opportunities available for public participation in those activities.

Permit-related activities include waste management, closure, post-closure and corrective actions.

3.0 Parties to the Community Relations Plan

The Permittees will implement a "living" Community Relations Plan that provides effective mechanisms to disseminate information to the public and receive public input throughout the ten year term of the current Hazardous Waste Facility Permit.

Parties to this Community Relations Plan are interested members of the public who reside within the state of New Mexico, and include individuals, organizations, special interest groups, federal state and local government entities, tribal governments and tribal members.

Questions for your consideration

Is the purpose and scope of the WIPP Community Relations Plan clear?

Do you understand what "permit-related activities" are?

Do you understand the six elements of the WIPP Community Relations Plan?

Do you think that if you participate in the WIPP Community Relations Plan process that you will be adequately informed about permit-related activities at the WIPP facility?

4.0 Elements of the Community Relations Plan

The six objectives of the Permittees' Community Relations Plan are:

1. Establish working relationships with communities and interested members of the public.
2. Establish productive government to government relations between the U.S. Department of Energy and affected tribes and pueblos.
3. Inform communities and interested parties of permit activities.
4. Minimize disputes and resolve differences with communities and interested members of the public.
5. Provide timely responses to individual requests for information.
6. Establish mechanisms for communities and interested members of the public to provide feedback and input to the Permittees.

5.0 Permittees Proposed Plan

To provide a plan that responds to the public's need for permit-related information, the Permittees have developed a draft Community Relations Plan for public consideration in Sections 5.1 through 5.6 of this document. The draft plan addresses the six objectives referred to in Section 4.0 and describes communication venues designed to reach a broad spectrum of New Mexico residents and tribal governments.

A comment/suggestion form is provided with the draft plan, both online and as a mail-out to those who would like to participate in the plan's development by mail. The comment/suggestion form includes instruction for completion and return to the Permittees. Public input received from the completed comment/suggestion forms will assist the Permittees in finalizing a useful Community Relations Plan.

5.1 Establishing open working relationships with communities and interested members of the public

For more than two decades the Permittees have conducted public outreach programs in the state to establish open working relationships with communities and members of the public. This draft Community Relations Plan builds on those established relationships and seeks to broaden public participation and dialogue regarding the WIPP Hazardous Waste Facility Permit.

The Permittees are soliciting feedback on this draft plan from members of the public who have expressed prior interest in the WIPP Project, from New Mexico residents who subscribe to the WIPP Facility Mailing List, and from others who request to be informed about activities related to the WIPP Hazardous Waste Facility Permit.

Public notice was placed in major local newspapers advising members of the public that the draft Community Relations Plan would be available for review and comment on February 28, 2011.

Interested parties who have Internet access can review the draft plan by following the WIPP Community Relations Plan link on the WIPP homepage at http://www.wipp.energy.gov.

Questions for your consideration

The Permittees offer various communications venues to inform members of the public about WIPP Hazardous Waste Facility Permit activities:

1. Community Relations Plan web page
2. Dedicated e-mail address for permit-related questions
3. Mail-outs and return mailing address
4. Toll-free telephone number for permit-related questions
5. Public meetings for Class 2 and Class 3 permit change requests
6. Opportunities to be included on the Facility Mailing List

Are there other methods of communications the Permittees might explore to keep interested members of the public informed about permit activities?

Members of the public have an opportunity to: 1) read this draft Community Relations Plan, fill out and submit the related comment/suggestion form online; 2) sign an optional consent form that allows the Permittees to post their suggested plan improvements to the Community Relations Plan web page; and 3) provide contact information for follow up consultation and future survey opportunities to improve the plan.

The public notice also provided a toll-free telephone number and mailing address for those who do not have Internet access.

The Permittees will mail out the draft plan, comment/suggestion form and optional consent form to requestors with instructions for its completion and return.

The toll free telephone number (1-800-234-7280) for permit-related inquiries will be staffed by the Permittees during normal business hours. Every effort will be made to respond quickly and accurately to permit-related questions and requests.

Additional opportunities for public involvement are public meetings scheduled locally for Class 2 and Class 3 permit modification requests. These public meetings provide a forum for the

Permittees to explain the purpose of the permit modification request and for members of the public to ask questions and express their views. Information about the permit modification request and public meeting schedules are published in major local newspapers.

5.2 Establishing productive government to government relations between the U.S. Department of Energy and affected tribes and pueblos.

The WIPP Community Relations Plan will inform tribal governments and tribal members of WIPP permit-related actions in the same manner as that outlined in this draft plan for communities, the general public and interested parties.

DOE Policy 141.1, *Department of Energy American Indian Tribal Government Interactions and Policy*, communicates U.S. Department of Energy programmatic and field responsibilities in relationships with sovereign American Indian and Alaskan Native tribal governments.

The Carlsbad Field Office has an active program of consultation with the state's tribal governments to assure compliance with the principles of this Policy.

> **Questions for Your Consideration**
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> Which communication methods proposed by the Permittees best meet your needs?
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> Do you feel that your opinion will make a difference by participating in the Community Relations Plan and the Permit process? If not, why?
>
> Do you believe that if you participate in the WIPP Community Relations Plan process that you will have ample opportunity to ask questions, raise concerns and have them addressed? If not, why?

5.3 How the Permittees will inform communities and interested parties of permit activities.

The Permittees will use various communication venues to inform the public and interested parties about actions related to the WIPP Hazardous Waste Facility Permit. The primary source for WIPP permit information will be the Community Relations Plan web page. A link to the web page is referenced in Section 5.1 of this plan.

The proposed WIPP Community Relations Plan web page will offer information about current permit activities and public meeting schedules, and include a link to the *WIPP Permit Information Repository* where members of the public can access specific documents related to the current permit and other permit-related resources.

The web page will include instructions for software required to view documents in the WIPP Permit Information Repository and provide free downloads to public reviewers, as needed.

Documents available in the WIPP Information Repository include:

- WIPP Hazardous Waste Facility Permit renewal application, Parts A and B
- A complete copy of the Permit, as it may be modified
- Permit modification notifications and requests associated with the Permit and any associated responses from the NMED
- Waste Minimization Report submitted per Permit Part 2,Section 2.4

- Extensions of time submitted per Permit Part 1, Section 1.10.3
- Corrective action documents submitted per Permit Part 8
- Written reports, such as notifications of planned changes, submitted per the Permit Part 1, Sections 1.7111 and 1.7.13
- Notices of Deficiency or disapproval, responses, final approval letters and directives from the NMED associated with renewal permit applications, permit modifications and corrective action documents
- Notices of Violation or administrative compliance orders and responses to such required by the NMED and directives from the NMED associated with the Permit
- Biennial Reports submitted per Permit Section Part 2, Section 2.14.2

Questions for Your Consideration

Would you like to be notified when information posted to the Community Relations Plan web page changes?

The Permittees will update notifications to the Information Repository as they become available. Availability of permit modification notifications or requests in the Information Repository will be included with notifications that go to the Facility Mailing List as required by 20.4.1.900 NMAC (incorporating 40 CFR §270.42).

A *Request for Comments* link will be offered on the web page to provide the public information and instructions for submitting comments on proposed permit activities to the Permittees or to the New Mexico Environment Department.

In addition to alerts posted to the Community Relations Plan web page of upcoming permit actions and opportunities for public involvement, the Permittees notify members of the public, who choose to be included on the WIPP Facility Mailing List, by mail of Class 1, 2, and 3 modification requests to the permit, in accordance with federal regulations (40 CFR Part 270, Subpart D, §270.42).

Members of the public can be added to the WIPP Facility Mailing List by contacting the Permittees toll-free at 1-800-234-7280; by mail to Bobby St. John, P.O. Box 2078, Carlsbad, N.M., 88221; or by contacting the New Mexico Environment Department Hazardous Waste Bureau at:

Mr. Steve Zappe
New Mexico Environment Department
2905 Rodeo Park Drive East, Building 1
Santa Fe, N.M. 87505
Telephone: 505-476-6051
Fax: 505-476-6060
E-mail: steve.zappe@state.nm.us

There also is also an opportunity to sign up for the WIPP Facility Mailing List at each permit-related public meeting.

Mail-outs to interested members of the public for Class 1, 2 and 3 permit modification requests include a description of the proposed modification request. Class 2 and 3 requests will also provide the time, dates and locations for public meetings and opportunities for discussion and comment.

Notifications of public meetings for Class 2 and 3 permit modification requests are published in major local newspapers prior to public meeting dates.

The Permittees also offer e-mail notifications to the public for items listed in the following table.

LIST OF E-MAIL NOTIFICATIONS IN THE PERMIT

PERMIT SECTION	SUBJECT
1.7.11.1	Reporting planned changes
1.7.11.2	Reporting anticipated non compliance
1.7.13.3	Written notice of occurrence
1.7.15	Relevant facts regarding incorrect or new information
1.11	Requirement to have an e-mail notification list
1.16.6	Notice to NMED invoking dispute resolution per 1.16.2
1.16.6	Letter from NMED concluding Tier I negotiations
1.16.6	Request to NMED Secretary invoking Tier II per 1.16.4
1.16.6	Final Tier II decision
2.3.2.3	Submittal of a final audit report for NMED approval
3.1.1.4	Use of CH Bay surge storage
3.1.2.4	Use of Parking Area Unit surge storage
4.1.1.2.i	Request to increase disposal capacity
4.5.2.2	Notification regarding construction of a new panel
4.6.1.2	Submittal of the annual geo-mechanical monitoring report
4.6.1.3	Notification of adverse condition in underground units
4.6.2.3	Notification of exceedence of Table 4.6.2.3 C of C
4.6.3.2	Notification of exceedence of Table 4.6.3.2 action level
4.6.5.2	Notification of exceedence of Table 4.6.5.2 action level
4.6.5.5	Notification of sampling line loss
4.6.5.5	Notification of sampling line loss evaluation
6.4	Notification of closure
6.10.1	Letter regarding final volume in HWDU

A1-1c(1)	Same as 3.1.1.4
A1-1c(2)	Same as 3.1.2.4
C-0b	Meeting regarding determination that AK is sufficient
C-0b	Provisional approval of an AKSD request
C-0b	Notification of annual meeting to discuss AKSD proposals
N1-8	Same as 4.6.5.2
N1-8	Same as 4.6.5.5 line loss
N1-8	Same as 4.6.5.5 line loss evaluation

Interested members of the public can subscribe to this e-mail notification service at http://www.wipp.energy.gov/Stakeholders/Notice.aspx.

To increase public awareness of the plan, the Community Relations Plan web page address, toll-free telephone number, dedicated e-mail address and Permittee contact information will be printed on WIPP information products and permit-related public notifications in major local newspapers.

5.4 Resolving differences between the public and Permittees regarding the Community Relations Plan

The Permittees will give careful consideration to all public comments and suggestions, and work in consultation with communities and interested members of the public to avoid disputes and to resolve differences.

The Permittees will address comments that require a response and provide the response to the community or individual who originated it. Responses specific to this plan will be posted to the Community Relations Plan web page, with the consent of the parties involved.

5.5 Provisions for timely responses to individual requests for information

As stated in Section 5.1, a number of mechanisms are available for requesting answers to permit-related questions or obtaining information and documents from the Permittees. These include e-mail, surface mail or toll-free telephone requests.

The Permittees will respond to such requests as quickly as possible within the constraints of applicable regulations, such as those involving dissemination of security or personal information. The Community Relations Plan e-mail and toll free telephone will be monitored by the Permittees during normal business hours, Monday through Friday, 7:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m., except for holidays.

5.6 How communities and interested members of the public can provide feedback and input to the Permittees

The draft WIPP Community Relations Plan, comment/suggestion form and optional consent form will be sent electronically or by mail to subscribers to the WIPP Facility Mailing List and

others who have expressed interest in the plan. Input received from public comments will be used to further develop and finalize a plan that effectively responds to permit information needs.

With permission from the contributor, the Permittees will post consultations, communications, agreements and disagreements between the Permittees and interested members of the public regarding development of the plan on the WIPP Community Relations Plan web page. Comments received by mail will be scanned and posted to the Community Relations web page.

In May of each year, the Permittees will post a survey on the Community Relations Plan web page seeking public suggestions for plan improvement. The survey will be mailed to the Facility Mailing List and to those who have expressed interest in participating in the Community Relations Plan. Suggestions, resulting changes and updates to the plan will be posted on the web page and provided by mail to interested members of the public who request mail distribution.

Timeline for Community Relations Plan Development and Implementation

The WIPP Hazardous Waste Facility Permit requires the Permittees to implement the Community Relations Plan by June 28, 2011.

The draft Community Relations Plan was available to the public on February 28, 2011.

Public comments and suggestions must be received by the Permittees no later than March 21, 2011, to allow sufficient time for consultation with members of the public, plan development, finalization and implementation.

Please address questions about the Community Relations Plan or how you can participate in the plan to the Permittees at:

E-mail address: communityrelations@wipp.ws

Toll-free Community Relations Plan telephone number: 1-800-234-7280

Mailing address: Bobby St. John, P.O. Box 2078, Carlsbad, N.M., 88221