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**For immediate release**

## **Firm Awarded WIPP Records Demonstration Contract**

**CARLSBAD, N.M., February 17, 2005** – Washington TRU Solutions LLC (WTS) announced today that Science & Engineering Associates of Albuquerque has been chosen to assist in development of a records archive center for Waste Isolation Pilot Plant (WIPP) documents. A subsidiary of Apogen Technologies, the company will convert existing paper-copy and microfilm records into a digital format available to the public on the Internet. The Records Center Project will be located in Carlsbad.

The Albuquerque company will soon send a staff of technical specialists to establish an office in Carlsbad and plans to hire additional local employees. WTS solicited competitive bids for the project in November. Science & Engineering Associates was awarded the contract, with an estimated worth of \$440,000, last week.

The records project is funded by the U.S. Department of Energy (DOE) through monies earmarked for the center in 2003 and 2004 Energy and Water appropriations bills.

This initial phase of the project is the first step toward what Carlsbad and DOE leaders hope will become a centralized records center to include not only WIPP-related records, but possibly those of other state and federal agencies.

In the following months, Science & Engineering Associates will demonstrate its technology to scan and digitize a limited quantity of hard copy and microfilm records now stored at a Carlsbad holding facility. The digitized records will be published to the Internet to test online search capabilities and ease of use by citizens, researchers, stakeholders and

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WIPP regulators. As part of its contract, the company will develop a master document index of WIPP records for use as the project evolves.

Information to be made available to the public includes documents related to WIPP waste characterization activities, National TRU Waste Program records and waste packaging information.

Carlsbad and DOE leaders have long promoted the concept of a records center to conserve WIPP records. As transuranic waste generator sites are cleaned up and decommissioned, their records are sent to federal holding facilities. The Carlsbad Records Center Project would consolidate those records and make them readily available to the public.

Plans for the project's next phase include coordination with transuranic waste generator sites around the country to estimate records inventories and disposition schedules, a prerequisite for design of a permanent records center.

WIPP, a cornerstone of DOE's cleanup effort, is the world's first repository for the permanent disposal of defense-generated transuranic radioactive waste left from research and production of nuclear weapons. Washington TRU Solutions is the management and operating contractor for DOE at WIPP.