



U.S. DEPARTMENT OF **ENERGY**

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Carlsbad Field Office Manager Selected

CARLSBAD, N.M., November 10, 2011 – The U.S. Department of Energy’s (DOE) Richland Operations Office (RL) Assistant Manager for the River Corridor Joe Franco was selected as Manager for the Carlsbad Field Office (CBFO), which oversees the Waste Isolation Pilot Plant (WIPP).

CBFO Deputy Manager Ed Ziemianski has been acting in the CBFO Manager’s position for the past year and will continue to serve as Deputy Manager. In operation since 1999, WIPP is a DOE facility designed to safely isolate defense-related transuranic (TRU) waste from people and the environment.

Since 2006, Franco was responsible for cleanup and restoration of the 220 square miles of the Columbia River Corridor, which includes former plutonium production reactors and fuel fabrication, research and support facilities, at the Hanford Site, Washington. Prior to his DOE RL position, Franco worked in numerous management positions from 1989 to 2006 for Washington TRU Solutions (WTS), LLC -- formerly Westinghouse TRU Solutions, LLC prior to the company’s name change in 2003. WTS is the WIPP management and operating contractor.

“Joe, a native of Carlsbad, New Mexico, brings a wealth of experience to the job, including over 25 years of nuclear experience,” said Acting Assistant Secretary for DOE Environmental Management Dave Huizenga. “Joe is no stranger to the site as he previously worked as a contractor for WTS for 17 years. As Manager of CBFO, he’ll lead the development and implementation of WIPP’s vision, priorities and program policies for the TRU waste management program mission for the DOE.”

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Franco said he looks forward to returning to Carlsbad and WIPP and facilitating further TRU waste deinventory. WIPP is America's only deep geologic repository for the permanent disposal of defense-generated TRU waste generated from the research and production of nuclear weapons. TRU waste temporarily stored at sites around the country is shipped to WIPP and permanently disposed in rooms mined out of an ancient salt formation 2,150 feet below the surface.

"My experience at both Hanford and WIPP allows me to help further the Department's TRU waste management program as cleanup across the nation is completed," said Franco. "Born and raised in the Carlsbad area, I welcome the opportunity to build relationships and work with communities throughout New Mexico and other states with interest in WIPP."

"I'd also like to thank Ed who has done an outstanding job ensuring that WIPP operations continued seamlessly, leading the site's American Recovery and Reinvestment Act efforts and achieving the 10,000th safe shipment of TRU waste to WIPP," said Huizenga. "I'm confident that together Joe and Ed will be a dynamic and effective leadership team at Carlsbad."

"I'm pleased to have served as the DOE CBFO Interim Manager this past year. I look forward to continuing service as the Deputy Manager with Joe and the CBFO and WIPP Team as we continue our mission and progress with reducing the nation's nuclear waste footprint safely, compliantly and efficiently," said Ziemianski.

The DOE created the Carlsbad Area Office in late 1993 to lead the nation's TRU waste disposal efforts. In September 2000, the office was elevated in status to become CBFO, taking on new responsibilities. The CBFO coordinates the TRU program at waste-generating sites, national laboratories, and other participants involved in characterizing and disposing of TRU waste at the WIPP site located 26 miles southeast of Carlsbad, New Mexico