



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

OCT 09 2007

Mr. Juan Reyes, Director
Radiation Protection Division
1310 L. Street NW
Room 507
Washington, DC 20005

Subject: Withdrawal of Panel Closure Planned Change Request

Dear Mr. Reyes:

On October 7, 2002, the Department of Energy/Carlsbad Field Office (CBFO) requested the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) approve a modification of Condition I of the Waste Isolation Pilot Plant (WIPP) Certification decision. The CBFO requested EPA approve changes to the design of panel closure at the WIPP. In addition, on January 11, 2007, CBFO requested EPA to delay the permanent closure of panels to allow Hydrogen (H₂) and Methane (CH₄) monitoring of filled panels, with design of final panel closures depending on the results of monitoring.

Based on recent communications with your staff, we withdraw our Planned Change Request to modify the panel closure design. The EPA, on February 22, 2007, in a letter from Mr. Juan Reyes to Dr. David Moody, stated that H₂ and CH₄ monitoring in the panels would provide useful information for long-term performance. The details on how H₂ and CH₄ monitoring will be conducted will be included in a Class 2 permit modification request to be submitted to the New Mexico Environment Department (NMED). The EPA will be provided with a copy of the permit modification request when it is submitted to the NMED.

We anticipate that a final closure will be identified in the 2014 timeframe. At that time we will submit a subsequent change request addressing Condition 1 of the certification.

We appreciate the effort already expended by your staff in the review of our January 11, 2007, submittal. If you have any questions regarding this matter, please contact Mr. Russell Patterson at (505) 234-7457.

Sincerely,

David C. Moody
Manager

cc:

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*ED denotes electronic distribution

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Mr. Juan Reyes

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