UNITED STATES ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20460

MAR 2 1 2019

Mr. Todd Shrader
Manager, Carlsbad Field Office
U.S. Department of Energy
P.O. Box 3090
Carlsbad, New Mexico 88221-3090

OFFICE OF
AIR AND RADIATION

Subject: Approval of Planned Change Notice for Run-of-Mine Panel Closure System Installation and Abandonment of Waste Emplacement in Panel 9 at the Waste Isolation Pilot Plant

Dear Mr. Shrader:

Thank you for your letter on January 30, 2019 regarding the Waste Isolation Pilot Plant's (WIPP) plans: (1) to install the run-of-mine panel closure system (ROMPCS) in panels 1, 2, 7, 8, and equivalent panels 9 and 10; (2) to abandon transuranic (TRU) waste emplacement in panel 9; and (3) to stop emplacement of the ROMPCS for panels 3, 4, 5 and 6. We have reviewed the information and analyses and approve the changes to the panel closures identified in the planned change notice.

Per the October 8, 2014 rulemaking (79 *Federal Register* 60750-60756).), EPA has approved a ROMPCS design of 100 feet of salt. If any design changes deviate from this specific rule, the Department of Energy (DOE) would need to notify EPA through a planned change notice and request for new EPA review and approval.

In addition, with the cessation of TRU waste emplacement in panel 9, EPA would like to learn about DOE's future plans for panel 9's replacement. EPA requests a schedule for implementation for the various ROMPCS activities. If you have questions, please have your staff contact Tom Peake (202-343-9765).

Sincerely,

for Lee Ann B. Veal
Director
Radiation Protection Division

cc: Electronic Distribution
Betsy Forinash, DOE EM
Alton Harris, DOE EM
Kirk Lachman, CBFO
Mike Brown, CBFO
Russ Patterson, CBFO
Jonathan Edwards, EPA ORIA

Tom Peake, EPA RPD
Ray Lee, EPA RPD
Ingrid Rosencrantz, EPA RPD