



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

June 23, 2021

Mr. Ricardo Maestas, Acting Chief  
Hazardous Waste Bureau  
New Mexico Environment Department  
2905 Rodeo Park Drive East, Building 1  
Santa Fe, New Mexico 87505

Subject: Notification of Planned Change to the Permitted Facility Regarding the  
Excavation of the West Mains, Hazardous Waste Facility Permit Number:  
NM4890139088-TSDF

Dear Mr. Maestas:

The purpose of this letter is to provide notification to the New Mexico Environment Department (NMED) of planned physical alterations to the permitted facility in accordance with Permit Part 1, Section 1.7.11. (20.4.1.900 New Mexico Administrative Code incorporating Title 40 of the Code of Federal Regulations §270.30(l)). The U.S. Department of Energy (DOE) and Nuclear Waste Partnership (NWP) LLC, the Permittees, intend to excavate five main access drifts referred to as the West Mains to the west of the W-170 to W-2970 (See Enclosure 1).

The Permittees plan to submit a Permit Modification Request (PMR) for two replacement panels in the near future. This planned PMR will include a description of the West Mains, Panels 11 and 12, address applicable regulatory requirements, and request changes to the waste transfer routes. Two of the main access drifts are planned for transuranic (TRU) mixed waste transport.

The West Mains will have the following nominal dimensions:

S-400	16 feet wide, 14 feet high
S-550	16 feet wide, 14 feet high
S-700	25 feet wide, 14 feet high
S-850	25 feet wide, 14 feet high
S-1000	16 feet wide, 14 feet high

Excavating the West Mains is part of the process used to develop and maintain the Waste Isolation Pilot Plant (WIPP) underground facility infrastructure. During construction, the excavation of the West Mains will have no impact on management of TRU mixed waste as the excavation work will occur in an area of the underground that is physically separate, and in a separate ventilation circuit, from ongoing TRU mixed waste operations.

The excavation will occur in the construction ventilation circuit (Construction Circuit) which is separated from the disposal ventilation circuit (Disposal Circuit) by means of air locks, bulkheads, and salt pillars. The pressure differential maintained between the Construction Circuit and the Disposal Circuit will continue to ensure that leakage is toward the Disposal Circuit pursuant to Permit Attachment A2, Section A2-2a(3). The excavation of the West Mains will not impact requirements listed in the Permit.

The Permittees anticipate that the excavation of the West Mains will begin in calendar year 2021.

We certify under penalty of law that this document and enclosure were prepared under our direction or supervision according to a system designed to assure that qualified personnel properly gather and evaluate the information submitted. Based on our inquiry of the person or persons who manage the system, or those persons directly responsible for gathering the information, the information submitted is, to the best of our knowledge and belief, true, accurate, and complete. We are aware that there are significant penalties for submitting false information, including the possibility of fine and imprisonment for knowing violations.

If you have any questions, please contact Mr. Michael R. Brown at (575) 706-0072.

Sincerely,

*//Signatures on File//*

Reinhard Knerr  
Manager  
Carlsbad Field Office

Sean Dunagan  
President and Project Manager  
Nuclear Waste Partnership LLC

Enclosure

cc: w/enclosure  
N. Barka, NMED           \*ED  
D. Biswell, NMED        ED  
M. McLean, NMED        ED  
CBFO M&RC  
\*ED denotes electronic distribution