



DEPARTMENT OF ENERGY
National Nuclear Security Administration
Los Alamos Site Office
Los Alamos, New Mexico 87544



OCT 29 2010

Mr. Ralph L. Phelps
Chairman
Northern New Mexico Citizens' Advisory Board
1660 Old Pecos Trail, Suite B
Santa Fe, New Mexico 87505



RECEIVED
11/01/10

Dear Mr. Phelps:

Subject: Response to NNM CAB Recommendation 2009-12

The Department of Energy's Los Alamos Site Office has reviewed the Northern New Mexico Citizens' Advisory Board recommendation 2009-12. The Los Alamos Site Office response to the recommendation is provided in the attachment.

If you have any questions or concerns, you may contact M. Lee Bishop at (505) 606-1804 or Ed Worth at (505) 606-0398.

Sincerely,

George J. Rael
Manager
Environmental Projects Office

Attachment

cc w/attachment:
L. Bishop, LASO
E. Worth, LASO
M. Graham, LANS
Records Center, LASO
Official Contract File, LASO

EPO:7MS-144-285187

ATTACHMENT

Recommendation No. 2009-12

by the Environmental Monitoring, Remediation and Surveillance Committee

Recommendation to Hold a Planned DOE-EM Meeting on LANL Water Quality Programs in a Northern New Mexico Location

Background

The Northern New Mexico Citizens Advisory Board (NNMCAB) has been informed that DOE intends to hold a special meeting with Mr. Robert Gilkeson as an invited speaker, to discuss concerns he has raised regarding the monitoring wells and the water quality program in use by the Los Alamos National Laboratory (LANL) to meet the NMED Consent Order requirements for the environmental restoration of legacy waste sites at LANL. We have been informed that DOE experts will be invited and that the meeting will be held in the Washington, DC offices of DOE. The NNMCAB has previously provided recommendations to DOE requesting independent reviews of the Groundwater Monitoring Program in use at LANL (References 1 and 2). DOE's responses have been to decline such a review.

Recommendation:

The NNMCAB recommends that DOE-EM open the special meeting with Mr. Gilkeson to the public and change the location for the meeting to one of the Northern New Mexico communities, such as Los Alamos or Espanola.

Desired Outcome

The issue of groundwater monitoring is of great importance to the citizens of Northern New Mexico. By relocating this meeting and opening it to the public, DOE will:

1. Maintain transparency in DOE actions;
2. Allow members of the local community to express their views; and
3. Maintain good relations with all groups involved in LANL environmental restoration.

Response

We agree that the issue of groundwater is of great importance to the citizens of Northern New Mexico and this is reflected in the nearly three dozen new groundwater monitoring wells installed since 2008, and LANS and LASO's consistent support of the RACER data transparency project.

The CAB has been a leader and provides a platform for public communication, offering constructive criticism and advice along the way.

However, the specific meeting mentioned in this recommendation occurred in late 2009 in Washington, DC.

Since July 2009, the American Reinvestment and Recovery Act at LANL has greatly accelerated our installation of wells, and to date all 16 groundwater monitoring wells are complete.

A public information meeting and / or presentation to the CAB may be appropriate once data from these wells has been analyzed.

Finally, the CAB requested and LANS presented an update on groundwater networks for TA-21 and TA-54 at the CAB's July 28, 2010 full board meeting.

Moving forward, groundwater will continue to be a primary driver for remedy selection. On LASO and LANS pledge to keep the CAB and the general public informed as requested.