



17-CAB-001

IDAHO CLEANUP PROJECT

CITIZENS ADVISORY BOARD

August 14, 2017

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James Owendoff
Acting Assistant Secretary for Environmental Management
U.S. Department of Energy
1000 Independence Avenue, SW
Washington, DC 20585

Subject: Shipments to WIPP

Dear Mr. Owendoff,

During a recent meeting of the Idaho Cleanup Project (ICP) Citizens Advisory Board (CAB), we were briefed on the current status of the resumption of waste operations at the Waste Isolation Pilot Plant (WIPP). While we understand the need to do so in a safe, controlled manner, we are also concerned that we have seen no clear path to accelerate waste placement activities and increase the number of shipments being made to WIPP. We understand the limitations imposed on the operation by the current ventilation system and the competing nature of waste placement operations and mine stabilization of maintenance activities. However we have heard nothing about managing this issue with methods such as the addition of a second or third shift of operations.

As you know, the Idaho Settlement Agreement contains two enforceable milestones regarding stored transuranic waste. The first is a requirement to ship a rolling average of 200 cubic meters per year of waste to WIPP. The second is to complete the removal of all 65,000 cubic meters of stored waste from the state by the end of 2018. The first milestone has already been missed, and it is a virtual certainty that the second will also be missed. Not only will it be missed, based on the current shipping estimates provided by WIPP, it will take several years to complete this milestone.

Due to the inability to meet the milestone regarding the treatment of sodium bearing waste, the state has taken action to suspend spent fuel shipments into the laboratory. Many people in the state see this as a serious threat to the future of the laboratory. If the state were to take similar action in response to the stored waste milestones, the laboratory's mission could be further hindered. We feel it is extremely important that EM take every possible measure to ensure the timely removal of the stored transuranic waste.

We request that DOE-EM information regarding these measures be contemplated to maximize the number of shipments WIPP receives, and approximate shipping schedules. Based on this information, we request that a firm date be established by which all the stored waste will be removed from Idaho.

Sincerely,



Keith Branter
ICP CAB Chair

cc: David Borak, DOE-EM
Brad Bugger, DOE-ID
Susan Burke, IDEQ
Dennis Faulk, EPA
Connie Flohr, DOE-ID
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