



Department of Energy

Washington, DC 20585

December 12, 2011

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

Dear Mr. Phelps:

Thank you for your September 19, 2011, letter that applauds the Department of Energy's (DOE) Environmental Management (EM) cleanup work and recommends the identification of "unique assets" for retention with community input into those decisions. Although no specific assets were mentioned in the recommendation, I hope that you have made your concerns known to your local EM Site-Specific Advisory Board (EM SSAB) contacts and site managers.

EM does evaluate potential reuse of assets as it plans its cleanup efforts. Decisions regarding assets for retention are based on several considerations including the potential for future use of the assets, potential value for reuse, and the cost of maintaining the assets in safe condition. As always, the EM budget must be managed and allocated toward mission goals of compliance, cleanup, and closure of its mission sites. Preservation activities are considered within this context.

Community input regarding deactivation and decommissioning (D&D) activities is gathered during Comprehensive Environmental Response, Compensation and Liability Act (CERCLA) and National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) processes, which precede Records of Decision (RODs) for cleanup. Information on the status of RODs and opportunities for input during the CERCLA and NEPA processes will be shared by the EM SSAB Deputy Designated Federal Officials at your site. This is your best opportunity for early input. Although your board is encouraged to make recommendations at any point in the cleanup process and all recommendations will be considered carefully, once cleanup plans are in place, changes regarding facility D&D become more complex.



Again, thank you for your recommendation. If you have any questions, please contact Ms. Melissa A. Nielson, Director, Office of Public and Intergovernmental Accountability, at (202) 586-0356 or Ms. Cate Alexander, Designated Federal Officer, Environmental Management Site-Specific Advisory Board, at (202) 586-7711.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "David Huizenga". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large initial "D".

David Huizenga
Acting Assistant Secretary for
Environmental Management

cc: M. McCormick, RL
S. Samuelson, ORP
C. Alexander, EM-42
M. Nielson, EM-42