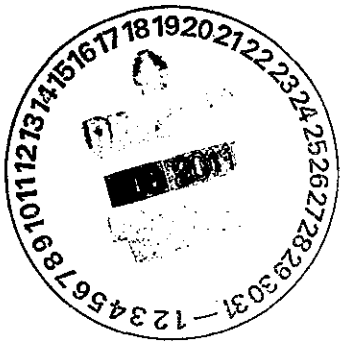
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Date: AUG 18 2011
Refer To: EP2011-0281

John Kieling, Acting Bureau Chief
Hazardous Waste Bureau
New Mexico Environment Department
2905 Rodeo Park Drive East, Building 1
Santa Fe, NM 87505-6303

Subject: Submittal of the Work Plan for Pilot Investigation of the Buckman Well Field Piezometers

Dear Mr. Kieling:

Enclosed please find two hard copies with electronic files of the Work Plan for Pilot Investigation of the Buckman Well Field Piezometers. This work plan was prepared following a meeting between the Laboratory, New Mexico Environment Department (NMED) and representatives of the City of Santa Fe on August 9, 2011, when the general approach was approved. The goal of this work is (1) to assess the general representativeness of the groundwater obtained from the piezometers at Los Alamos National Laboratory (the Laboratory) without development or removal of down-hole obstacles; (2) if the data are representative, to assess whether there is any indication of contamination from the Laboratory in these samples; and (3) to gather data to assess whether the groundwater in the Buckman well field has a component that originates beneath the Pajarito Plateau.

The scope of the work has evolved since NMED's letter, Approval with Modifications Work Plan for Alternative Monitoring Buckman Well Field (EPA ID # NM0890010515), was received by the Laboratory on September 1, 2010. The approval with modifications required that some rehabilitation work be performed on the piezometers before sampling. These additional activities raised concerns with the owners of the piezometers about potential damage to the piezometers. This issue led to many months of trying to determine which of the parties involved owned the piezometers and could grant permission for this additional work scope.

The Laboratory has prepared the attached pilot work plan that proposes to sample from four screens in three piezometers without any additional development or other down-hole activities. These screens sample different water-bearing zones, some of which are also sampled by Buckman well field water-supply wells. The work plan proposes analyzing for a suite of analytes that is not likely to be affected by foreign items in the piezometers. As part of this accelerated effort, the City of Santa Fe has agreed to notify the U.S. Geological Survey and the U.S. Forest Service of the upcoming sampling.

The Laboratory proposes that the attached pilot work plan and schedule are the basis for requesting an extension of the current October 18, 2011, due date to submit the summary report of the results of this pilot investigation to a new date of May 15, 2012. This report will include an analysis of the newly collected data as well as propose subsequent actions and dates as appropriate.

Additionally, a notice of intent (NOI) to discharge the purge water from the sampling rounds must be reviewed and approved by the NMED Groundwater Quality Bureau in time for the sampling to begin in September. The Laboratory will submit this NOI shortly.

If you have any questions, please contact Craig Douglass at (505) 665-2469 (craigd@lanl.gov) or Hai Shen at (505) 665-5046 (hai.shen@nnsa.doe.gov).

Sincerely,

Michael J. Graham, Associate Director
Environmental Programs
Los Alamos National Laboratory

Sincerely,

George J. Rael, Assistant Manager
Environmental Projects Office
Los Alamos Site Office

MG/GR/CD/TB:sm

Enclosures: Two hard copies with electronic files: Work Plan for Pilot Investigation of the Buckman Well Field Piezometers (LA-UR-11-4792)

Cy: (w/att.)
Laurie King, EPA Region 6, Dallas, TX
Steve Yanicak, NMED-DOE-OB, MS M894
Hai Shen, DOE-LASO, MS A316
Ted Ball, EP-CAP, MS M996
William Alexander, EP-BPS, MS M992
RPF, MS M707 (electronic copy)
Public Reading Room, MS M992 (hard copy)

Cy: (w/o att.)
Tom Skibitski, NMED-OB, Santa Fe, NM (date-stamped letter emailed)
Annette Russell, DOE-LASO (date-stamped letter emailed)
Craig Douglass, EP-CAP, MS M992 (date-stamped letter emailed)
Michael J. Graham, ADEP, MS M991 (date-stamped letter emailed)