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Date: SEP 19 2011
Refer To: EP2011-0320

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: Request for Extension to Compete Regional Groundwater Monitoring Well R-62

Dear Mr. Kieling:

The purpose of this letter is to request an extension from the September 19, 2011, due date to complete well R-62 to October 11, 2011.

Over this past weekend, the Los Alamos National Security (LANS) LLC, drilling subcontractor had significant technical issues with retracting the 16-in.-diameter drill casing while constructing R-62. It was planned that this 16-in.-diameter casing could be extracted in 1 to 2 days and the well could be completed on schedule. Several attempts to remove this casing have now been made using increasingly powerful methods, and thus far it has moved up only 10 ft. We are now in danger of parting the 16-in. casing within the borehole and possibly losing the well.

Therefore, our viable remaining option is to leave the 16-in. casing in place while ensuring we have a substantial seal at the base of the 16-in. casing to keep perched groundwater from moving downward. This morning, Monday, September 19, 2011, a meeting was held with personnel of the U.S. Department of Energy–Los Alamos Site Office, LANS, and Mr. Michael Dale of your staff to discuss this remaining option. An agreement was reached on a method to abandon the 16-in.-diameter drill casing and remain protective of the regional aquifer. The details are currently being prepared in a plan which will be reviewed by the New Mexico Office of the State Engineer (NMOSE) and approved by the New Mexico Environment Department before we proceed.

The parties at the meeting, including Mr. Dale, believe it may take up to an additional 3 wk to obtain NMOSE approval and conduct the agreed-upon steps to complete well R-62, thus the 21-day extension request. In addition, this delay will impact the completion dates of the remaining wells currently being planned by our drilling subcontractor. Therefore, we also request an extension from September 30, 2011, to October 21, 2011, for SCI-3; from October 30, 2011, to November 20, 2011, for R-66; from December 6, 2011, to January 15, 2012, for R-65;from

January 11 to 20, 2012, R-10i; and from January 6 to 27, 2012, for plugging and abandonment of TW-3.

If you have any questions, please contact Ted Ball at (505) 665-3996 (tedball@lanl.gov) or Hai Shen at (505) 665-5046 (hai.shen@nnsa.doe.gov).

Sincerely,

B. G Schappell for MJG

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

Sincerely,

Cheryl J Rodgers for

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

MG/GR/CD/TB:sm

Cy: Laurie King, EPA Region 6, Dallas, TX
Steve Yanicak, NMED-DOE-OB, MS M894
Tom Skibitski, NMED-OB, Santa Fe, NM (date-stamped letter emailed)
Hai Shen, DOE-LASO, MS A316 (date-stamped letter emailed)
Annette Russell, DOE-LASO (date-stamped letter emailed)
Ted Ball, EP-CAP, MS M996 (date-stamped letter emailed)
Craig Douglass, EP-CAP, MS M992 (date-stamped letter emailed)
Michael J. Graham, ADEP, MS M991 (date-stamped letter emailed)
William Alexander, EP-BPS, MS M992 (date-stamped letter emailed)
RPF, MS M707 (electronic copy)
Public Reading Room, MS M992 (hard copy)