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Date: DEC 07 2011
Refer To: EP2011-0401

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: Deviations to Monitoring Year 2010 Water/Cañon de Valle Watershed September 2011 Sampling Event

Dear Mr. Kieling:

This letter serves as Los Alamos National Laboratory's (the Laboratory's) notification to the New Mexico Environmental Department (NMED) of deviations to the Water/Cañon de Valle Watershed's Monitoring Year 2010 sampling event, conducted from September 6 to 22, 2011. These deviations resulted from force majeure caused by flooding after the Las Conchas fire. The sampling program for which variance is requested is presented in Table 6.4-1 of the 2010 Interim Facility-Wide Groundwater Monitoring Plan (IFGMP). Numerous groundwater samples could not be collected because the wells were inaccessible after the overtopping of wells by floodwater or because they were destroyed or buried by flood materials.

On August 25, 2011, the Laboratory performed reconnaissance of the watersheds and found blocked roadways prohibited access to wells WCO-1r, WCO-2, R-27i, and CDV-37-1(i). It was also determined that CDV-16-02657 and CDV-16-02658 were destroyed and that floodwaters had overtopped well casings at CDV-16-02656 and WCO-3r, possibly impacting the wells.

Debris blocking well CDV-37-1(i) were cleared in time for sampling in September. However, the remaining wells WCO-1r, WCO-2, R-27i, CDV-16-02657, CDV-16-02658, CDV-16-02656, and WCO-3r, could not be sampled in September and therefore resulted in a deviation to sampling requirements presented in the 2010 IFGMP.

Wells WCO-1r, WCO-2, R-27i, and CDV-37-1(i) are now accessible. Well CDV-16-0258 contains water and will be developed this month. The water level in WCO-3r was found to be present only in its sump and will be developed when water is present, presumably this spring. Future sampling of these wells will follow the schedule provided in the 2011 IFGMP. The need to replace wells CDV-16-02657 and CDV-16-02658 will be evaluated by Technical Area 16 260 Surface Corrective Measures Implementation Project and presented in future Laboratory correspondence with NMED.

These deviations will be documented in the periodic monitoring report that presents the results from the Water/Cañon de Valle 2010 September sampling event. If you have questions, please contact Steve Paris at (505) 606-0915 (smparis@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/DM/CD/SP:sm

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