ESHID-600234

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NMED
Hazardous Waste Bureau

*National Nuclear Security Administration*
Los Alamos Field Office, MS A316
Environmental Projects Office
Los Alamos, New Mexico 87544
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*Date*: FEB 23 2015
*Refer To*: ADESH-15-028
*LAUR*: N/A
*Locates Action No.*: N/A

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

**Subject: Request for an Extension to Submit the Well Completion Report for Coreholes CrCH-1 through CrCH-5 and Approval to Report Information from CrCH-6 in the R-67 Well Completion Report**

Dear Mr. Kieling:

On September 26, 2014, the New Mexico Environment Department (NMED) approved with modifications Los Alamos National Laboratory's (the Laboratory's) Drilling Work Plan for Chromium Project Coreholes, submitted by the U.S. Department of Energy (DOE) and Los Alamos National Security, LLC (LANS) to NMED on July 30, 2014. NMED's approval with modifications required DOE/LANS to submit the completion report for all six required coreholes by April 3, 2015. DOE/LANS request that the date to submit the completion report for Coreholes 1 through 5 be extended to May 29, 2015. DOE/LANS also request that completion information for Corehole 6 be included in a separate completion report associated with a pending new groundwater monitoring well R-67. DOE/LANS request this extension under Section III.J.2 of the March 2005 Compliance Order on Consent (Consent Order).

The corehole drilling campaign began on August 19, 2014, and has been proceeding on an aggressive schedule since then. Coreholes 1, 2, and 3 are now complete with piezometers installed, and Corehole 4 is being constructed. However, the current execution schedule projects that Corehole 5 will not be completed until late March.

The approach to accomplish the corehole objectives, drilling of the upper part of each hole with the dual-rotary rig followed by continuous coring through the lower portion of the boring to total depth, has allowed drilling to depths never before achieved using sonic drilling technology. This approach has also pushed the drilling equipment to its limits and has resulted in several drilling-equipment breakdowns and modifications to the sonic drilling rig. Additional technical

challenges have been encountered and addressed, including finding the appropriate sonic drilling rate to avoid melting the lexan core sleeves and difficult geologic conditions that have resulted in extremely slow drilling rates.

Because Corehole 6, now collocated with regional groundwater monitoring well R-67, is sited in critical habitat for the Mexican Spotted Owl, drilling cannot begin until mid-May at the earliest. The Laboratory requests that it be allowed to submit the results for the coring portion of Corehole 6/R-67 as a part of a standard regional groundwater monitoring well completion report. The work plan for this combination corehole and standard 5-in.-diameter regional groundwater monitoring well is currently in preparation and will be submitted to NMED shortly. It will explain how the coring portion of R-67 will be reported in the well completion report for this well. The combined completion report will be submitted to NMED within the required time frame of 150 days following well completion, as stipulated in the Consent Order. DOE/LANS request that NMED approve this proposed schedule and reporting change for Corehole 6.

Sincerely,

Michael T. Brandt, DrPH, CIH, Associate Director
Environment, Safety, and Health
Los Alamos National Laboratory

Sincerely,

Peter Maggiore, Assistant Manager
Environmental Projects Office
Los Alamos Field Office

MB/PM/DM/SS:sm

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