Stop “Forever WIPP”

Radioactive and Hazardous Materials Committee
August 5, 2022
Clovis, NM

Don Hancock
Southwest Research and Information Center
WIPP’s Mission

• “Start Clean, Stay Clean” to dispose of up to 175,564 m$^3$ of defense transuranic (TRU) waste – 100,969 m$^3$ as of 7/30/2022
• Safely transport waste by truck through more than 20 states without serious accidents or releases
• Safely remove TRU waste from DOE sites
• Safely close, decontaminate, and decommission the WIPP site beginning in 2024 – DOE wants no disposal end date
Other repositories are necessary for legal and technical reasons

- WIPP 1979, 1992, 1996 laws
- Future waste generation, as there is no policy to stop TRU waste production
- Reduce transportation risks and costs
- No state, including New Mexico, is willing to host the only repository
- “No plan” for another TRU repository
  – Ike White, DOE EM-1, 5/17/22
DOE Waste Exceeds WIPP limits

Land Withdrawal Act Statute Limit (Max = 175,564 m³)

Before Recalculation

After Recalculation

DSP-TRU Waste
Future Waste for WIPP
Waste Already in WIPP

DSP-TRU is diluted surplus plutonium transuranic waste that was generated by defense program activities.
Petition to Governor Michelle Lujan Grisham

New Mexicans call on Governor Michelle Lujan Grisham to stand up for public health and the environment by stopping the expansion of the nuclear waste facility called the Waste Isolation Pilot Plant (WIPP) in southeastern New Mexico.

New Mexicans oppose the nuclear waste expansion at WIPP because:

1. The federal government’s plans would transport more nuclear weapons waste to WIPP than is allowed.*

2. The plutonium nuclear waste in the WIPP expansion is still dangerous for hundreds of thousands of years and endangers the health of our families and future generations.

3. Unless New Mexico says ‘NO’ to WIPP expansion, other disposal locations will not be developed, and WIPP and NM will always be the only dump site, which is not fair. New Mexico never agreed to bear the burden of being the only nuclear waste dump site in the country.

4. The federal government has not been transparent about its WIPP expansion plans, and has repeatedly refused to discuss the plans publicly, including in hearings on the WIPP Permit. Many New Mexicans are not even aware of those plans. We deserve a transparent and fair process that includes the voices of all impacted communities.

We strongly support, and urge our Governor to take all necessary actions, including denying permits for the piecemeal expansion.

* Federal law and legal agreements with New Mexico clearly limit how much waste WIPP can take, as described in the April 2020 National Academy of Sciences Report - Review of the Department of Energy’s Plans for Disposal of Surplus Plutonium in the Waste Isolation Pilot Plant
Who Signed the Governor’s Petition?

Each dot represents one ZIP code; not one signer.

Las Cruces 88001, 88005
Edgewood 87015
Carlsbad 88220
Algodones 87001
Polaris 87028
San Ysidro 87053
Vallecitos 87569
Placitas 87043
Pecos 87552
La Joya 87028
Lamy 87540
Ramah 87321
Abiquiu 87510

La Jara 87027
Roswell 88203
Cerrillos 87010
La Luz 88337
Tijeras 87059
Chacon 87713
Santa Fe Park 87004
Ranches de Taos 87557
Moriarty 87035
Los Alamos 87544
Farmington 87401
Embudo 87531
El Prado 87529
Quay County 88401

Silver City 88061
Coyote 8701
Almagordo 88310
Rio Rancho 87124
Socorro 87801
Santo Domingo Pueblo 87052
Santa Cruz 87565
Pena Blanca 87041
Los Ojos 87551
La Plata 87418
Glorieta 87535
Gallup 87301
Chimayo 87522

Santa Fe 87501, 87502, 87503, 87504, 87505, 87507
Albuquerque 87121, 87122, 87123, 87125, 87116, 87115, 87114, 87111, 87109, 87105
April 8, 2022

The Honorable Jennifer M. Granholm
Secretary
U.S. Department of Energy
1000 Independence Ave. SW
Washington, D.C. 20585

Dear Secretary Granholm,

On March 1, 2022, a petition with 1,146 signatures expressing concerns with the expanding mission of the Waste Isolation Pilot Plant (WIPP) in Carlsbad, New Mexico by the U.S. Department of Energy (DOE) was delivered to my office. I have attached the cover page of this petition for your reference.

Specifically, the New Mexicans who signed the petition raised concerns about the transportation of the surplus plutonium waste stream between the DOE’s Savannah River Site in South Carolina and the WIPP. They also raised concerns that the disposal of this waste stream will exceed the volume limits set in place by the federal Land Withdrawal Act. The petitioners would like to see the DOE develop a new disposal site in a state other than New Mexico.

The petition reflects ongoing frustration among New Mexicans regarding the lack of meaningful and transparent public engagement from the DOE on waste clean-up, shipments, and long-term plans for the WIPP. Because the issues raised in the petition can only be addressed by DOE, I am passing this petition along to you. As Governor, I take these concerns seriously and request that the Department of Energy take action to address the issues raised by New Mexicans.

I thank you for your consideration and look forward to your reply.

Sincerely,

Michelle Lujan Grisham
Governor

State Capitol • Room 400 • Santa Fe, New Mexico 87501 • 505-476-2200
“Based on the potential category waste stream inventory estimates in the 2021 ATWIR, final facility closure could begin no earlier than CY 2083.”
Doubling WIPP’s Underground Capacity
The Permittees object to any inclusion or reference to a final facility footprint beyond Panels 11 and 12 in the Administrative Record:

- Waste volume to fill doubled capacity
- “other repositories”
- “prioritization of generator site shipments”
- and four other issues

“The C&C Agreement has no current role in DOE’s present or future plans for the WIPP.”
Worker Contamination Claims

As of 07/31/2022
Combined Part B (Cancer) & E (Toxics)

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<th>CLAIMS</th>
<th>CASES</th>
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<tr>
<td>Applications Filed</td>
<td>188</td>
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<tr>
<td>Total Compensation Paid</td>
<td>48</td>
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</table>

| Total Dollars | $5,595,000 |
| Total Medical Bills Paid | $1,552,593 |
| Total Paid    | $7,147,593 |

*Applications filed represent 86 unique workers

As of 08/5/2018

| Total Paid    | $3,305,600 |

*Applications filed represent 57 unique workers
Public Asks

• DOE to openly and regularly discuss plans for existing waste, future waste generation, surplus plutonium, plutonium pit waste, and other repositories

• NMED Permit renewal limits the time period of WIPP disposal operations, improves safety requirements, and limits future expansion

• State officials take actions to ensure that WIPP limits are upheld and DOE begins siting another TRU waste repository
Contact Information

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