



Department of Energy
Savannah River Operations Office
P.O. Box A
Aiken, South Carolina 29802

FEB 21 1997

Mr. Robert Slay
P.O. Box 192
Beech Island, South Carolina 29842

Dear Mr. Slay:

SUBJECT: Recommendation #32 - Waste Isolation Pilot Plant (WIPP) Disposal Draft
State Environmental Impact Statement (SEIS)-II

Thank you for submitting the Citizens Advisory Board's (CAB) thirty-second recommendation regarding the WIPP Disposal Draft SEIS-II.

We agree with the Board's perspective on the need for accurate information in the SEIS-II, and we have taken action to verify the dose calculations and to ensure that the updated inventory report data is used. As discussed at the CAB meeting at Hilton Head, it is not possible at this time to begin Transuranic (TRU) shipments with Pu-238, given the lack of an available technology to treat the waste. We will begin shipping Pu-239 TRU waste as soon as WIPP is available, and follow with Pu-238 waste as soon as technologically possible. We understand from discussions that our actions meet the intent of the recommendation in this regard. Our itemized response to your recommendation is enclosed.

Again, thank you for the Board's recommendations. We look forward to your continued involvement in making the Savannah River Site Waste Management Program successful in meeting the goals of the Site and its stakeholders.

If you have any questions on this response or would like to discuss the matter further, please contact me or William Noll at (803) 725-2219.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read "Mario P. Fiori", is written over a horizontal line.

Mario P. Fiori
Manager

OC-97-0053

Enclosure:
Response to CAB
Recommendation No. 32

Response to CAB Recommendation No. 32:

1. SRS will verify the dose calculations and health consequences to the Central Savannah River Area as presented in the WIPP SEIS-II. With respect to the inventory of Pu-238 and Pu-239, we have requested that the Department of Energy Carlsbad Area Office (CAO) use the most recent inventory report. The draft SEIS-II uses inventories from 1995, and CAO agreed to update the SEIS-II to the 1996 inventory report. They will also correct the error in the SRS current and projected TRU waste inventories.
2. In our TRU strategic plan (which was accepted by the CAB), SRS outlined a course of action for the preparation, certification, and transportation of TRU waste to WIPP for disposal. SRS recognizes that the Pu-238 is the most hazardous waste in our TRU inventory and will work to safely dispose of this waste as soon as possible. However, due to technical challenges which we are working to overcome, we will not be able to begin shipment of the SRS TRU waste to WIPP with our Pu-238 waste. While we work to develop innovative technologies or modify the current laws and regulations which prevent the shipment of this waste in its current form, we cannot delay the disposal of TRU waste (Pu-239) which is both shippable and meets the WIPP waste acceptance criteria.
3. With respect to the generation of TRU waste from the disposition of fissile plutonium from Rocky Flats, WIPP will include the project volume from this activity in the Final SEIS-II. Consequently, the waste from this mission will be identified in inventory reports for disposal in WIPP regardless of which site is chosen for dispositioning the material.

With respect to the recommendations you submitted for WIPP, SRS will forward your comments to WIPP and evaluate their responses.