



U.S. DEPARTMENT OF **ENERGY**

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Greater-Than-Class C Low-Level Radioactive Waste Public Hearings Set

CARLSBAD, N.M., April 21, 2011 – The U.S. Department of Energy (DOE) is holding public hearings on a draft Environmental Impact Statement for the Disposal of Greater-Than-Class C (GTCC) Low-Level Radioactive Waste (LLRW) and GTCC-Like Waste (DOE/EIS-0375D, Draft EIS) as required under the National Environmental Policy Act. Public hearings in New Mexico will take place at the following locations and times.

- April 26, 2011 – Carlsbad, N.M. at the Pecos River Village Conference Center, Carousel House, 711 Muscatel Avenue, 5:30-9:30 p.m.
- April 27, 2011 – Albuquerque, N.M. at the Marriott Pyramid North, 5151 San Francisco, NE., 5:30-9:30 p.m.
- April 28, 2011 – Santa Fe, N.M. at the Cities of Gold Hotel Conference Center, 10-B Cities of Gold Road, 5:30-9:30 p.m.

GTCC LLRW consists of a small volume of low-level radioactive waste generated throughout the United States as the result of U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission (NRC) and Agreement State licensed activities, including production of electricity from nuclear power plants; the production and use of radioisotopes for diagnostics and treatment of cancer and other illnesses; oil and gas exploration; and other industrial uses.

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“GTCC-like” waste consists of DOE owned or generated LLRW and potential non-defense transuranic waste which is similar to GTCC LLRW and for which there is currently no available disposal capability.

The DOE’s draft EIS, put together after public scoping meetings were held in 2007, evaluates potential alternatives for disposal at six federally owned sites and generic commercial sites. The draft EIS analyzes methods (geologic repository, above grade vault, enhanced near surface trench, and intermediate depth borehole) for disposal at locations including the Hanford Site, Idaho National Laboratory, Los Alamos National Laboratory, Nevada National Security Site, Savannah River Site, the Waste Isolation Pilot Plant (WIPP) and the WIPP vicinity. In addition, the draft EIS evaluates generic commercial disposal sites in four regions of the U.S. The DOE is also examining a no action alternative.

GTCC LLRW and GTCC-like waste does not include spent nuclear fuel or high-level waste. The total volume of GTCC LLRW and GTCC-like waste currently in storage is approximately 1,100 cubic meters. Over the next 60 years, the draft EIS estimates that on average, an additional 175 cubic meters will be generated each year from commercial and DOE activities, primarily from cleanup operations.

DOE does not have, and does not identify, a “preferred alternative” for the disposal of GTCC and GTCC-like waste. DOE will include a preferred alternative in the final EIS based on the analysis in the draft EIS and public comments received. The preferred alternative could be a combination of two or more alternatives, based on the characteristics of the waste and other key factors. Before DOE makes a final decision on a disposal method or location, DOE must submit a report to Congress that includes a description of the alternatives under consideration and await action by Congress.

Public comments are being solicited until June 27, 2011. The draft EIS and related information are available at the GTCC EIS website at <http://www.gtcceis.anl.gov>.