



New Mexico Environment Department

Waste Isolation Pilot Plant (WIPP) Update **Radioactive and Hazardous Materials Committee Meeting** Megan McLean, Environmental Scientist September 13, 2024





Keys to Successful Renewal Negotiations

1. Early Planning
2. Attendance of high-level decision-makers
3. First-rate mediator
4. Limited participation of attorneys
5. Ability to edit permit language in real time
6. Good working relationships





Improvements to the WIPP Permit at Renewal

- The Permittees must conduct WIPP Community Forums three times per year in communities around New Mexico.
- The Permittees must report non-compliances with federal Department of Transportation requirements to NMED.
- The Permittees will obtain a list of oil and gas production wells and saltwater disposal wells surrounding the LWA boundary and provide the information in an annual report.
- Generator Site Technical Reviews (GSTRs) must be conducted to review generator/storage site waste characterization processes, and a GSTR schedule must be approved by NMED annually.



Improvements to the WIPP Permit at Renewal

- NMED's ability to suspend waste shipments should there be evidence of a threat to human health and the environment has been strengthened.
- Should an incident occur involving the release of contamination within a shipping container, NMED, generator/storage sites with similar waste streams, and the audit team will be provided with a report evaluating the incident and follow-up actions taken.





Improvements to the WIPP Permit at Renewal

- Should the Land Withdrawal Act (LWA) volumetric disposal limit be increased, or additional waste types be authorized in the LWA by federal statute, NMED will issue a notice of revocation and reissuance.
- The closure date of the facility is tied to the Permit term so that the permittees must make a case for another Permit term at each renewal and must provide an inventory of transuranic (TRU) waste from the DOE complex, including a basis for estimated quantities, to support the renewal application.
- Future waste panels shall be requested through a renewal application, as opposed to a permit modification, and must describe the final facility footprint.
- DOE must submit an annual report detailing progress toward the siting of another TRU waste repository in a state other than New Mexico.



Improvements to the WIPP Permit at Renewal

- The Permittees must certify annually that sufficient capacity exists in permitted panels for waste from Los Alamos National Laboratory (LANL), and LANL waste will be prioritized.
- A Legacy TRU Waste Disposal Plan was introduced into the permit to define the term “legacy waste” and to work with generator/storage sites and stakeholders to accurately inventory this waste once defined. In addition, Panel 12 will be reserved for legacy waste to the extent practicable.





Implementation of New Permit Conditions

Legacy TRU Waste Disposal Plan

- Info Exchange held December 13, 2023
- Fact Sheet mailed to WIPP & LANL mailing lists by NMED on April 22, 2024
- Fact Sheet updated July 23, 2024, to include survey link
- Presentations to State & Tribal Gov't Working Group May 8, 2024, and to National Transportation Stakeholder Forum June 6, 2024
- Update on activities provided at the July 30, 2024, WIPP Community Forum
- Consultation info update provided online on August 1, 2024
- Next Info Exchange scheduled for September 23, 2024, 1-3 on Zoom
- Plan due to NMED November 3, 2024, followed by a 60-day comment period
- Link to information: <https://wipp.energy.gov/Legacy-TRU-Waste-Disposal-Plan.asp>



Implementation of New Permit Conditions

WIPP Community Forums

1. Roswell March 19, 2024
 2. Carlsbad July 30, 2024
 3. Upcoming: Las Vegas October 24, 2024
- Presentation & Video Availability at <https://wipp.energy.gov/presentations.asp>



Implementation of New Permit Conditions

Graded Approach to Audits

- Class 2 Final Determination on June 25, 2024
- NMED worked closely with stakeholders and Permittees to improve permit language
- First audit schedule due October 1, 2024
(GSTR schedule also due October 1)

Repository Siting Annual Report

- Report due by end of calendar year 2024



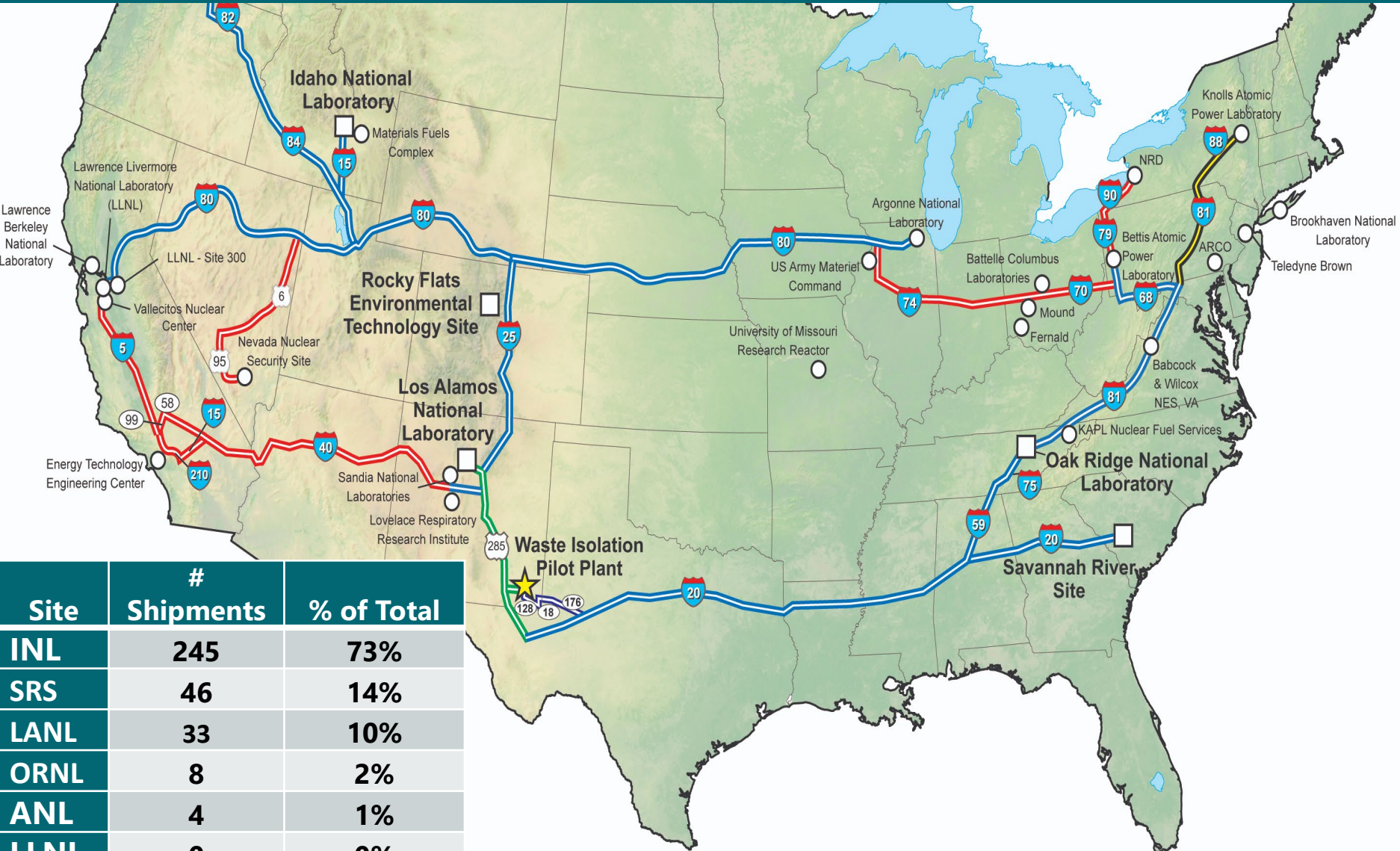
New Panels 11 & 12



- ❑ Approved by NMED in recent Renewal Permit
- ❑ Planned Change Request to EPA currently in a comment period
- ❑ Anticipated start of disposal in Panel 11 - Spring 2028



WIPP Shipment Update



Site	# Shipments	% of Total
INL	245	73%
SRS	46	14%
LANL	33	10%
ORNL	8	2%
ANL	4	1%
LLNL	0	0%
Total	336	100%

CY 2024 Shipments as of September 2, 2024



Thank You

