

Notes from Virtual Visit to the Waste Isolation Pilot Plant (WIPP), New Mexico held on Wednesday 9th March 2011

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Background and overview

This 'virtual visit' was organized by the Nuclear Decommissioning Authority (NDA) for the West Cumbria Managing Radioactive Waste Safely (MRWS) Partnership, to allow members and their colleagues learn more about the Waste Isolation Pilot Plant (WIPP) and the nearby community of Carlsbad, New Mexico. The agenda (Appendix 1) aimed to cover key areas of interest for the Partnership, namely:

- disposal methods and safety precautions
- monitoring arrangements
- inventory
- impacts of the facility
- community involvement
- community benefits

A full list of attendees can be seen below (Appendix 2).

Whilst this report does not provide a verbatim record it records a summary of main points raised and aims to convey the tone of the discussions.

Handouts on the day consisted of material from the WIPP website which can be found at:

<http://www.wipp.energy.gov/>

along with information from websites opposed to nuclear and related issues:

http://www.cardnm.org/hmtopright_a.html

<http://www.nuclearactive.org/CCNS/ccnsindex.html>

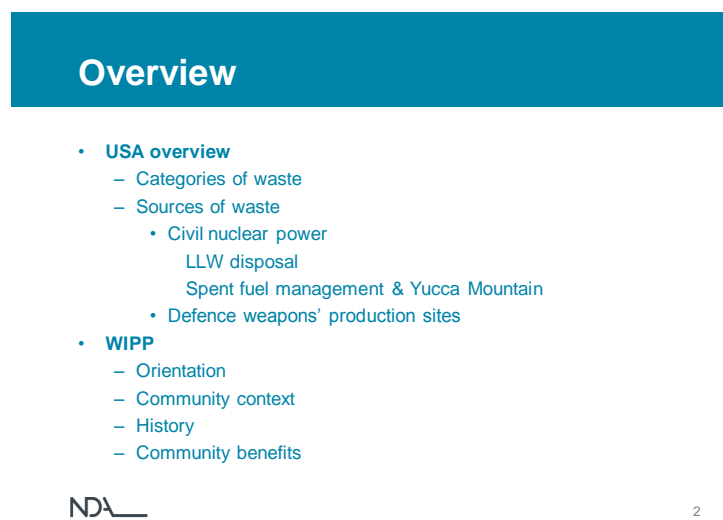
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1. Presentation by John Mathieson, Head of International Relations, NDA

John Mathieson welcomed everyone to the meeting and started with a presentation designed to give an overview about the management of nuclear waste in the U.S and an introduction to Carlsbad and how it was selected as the repository site. He explained it was to take transuranic (TRU) waste from the US defence programme and is broadly similar to long-lived ILW.

Presentation slides were as follows:



Caution: Waste classification

UK		US Commercial		US DOE	
LLW	Near surface	LLW Class A	N/s	LLW - Not HLW or TRU	n/s
ILW	SL Deep	LLW Class B/C	n/s		
	LL Deep	LLW Greater than Class C	Not n/s (?)	Transuranic (TRU)	WIPP
HLW (SF)	Deep	HLW / SF			?

NDA N.B. broad comparisons only!

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Commercial waste / Spent Fuel

NDA
Nuclear Decommissioning Authority

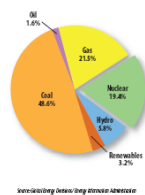
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US Commercial Reactors

104 Reactors in 31 States



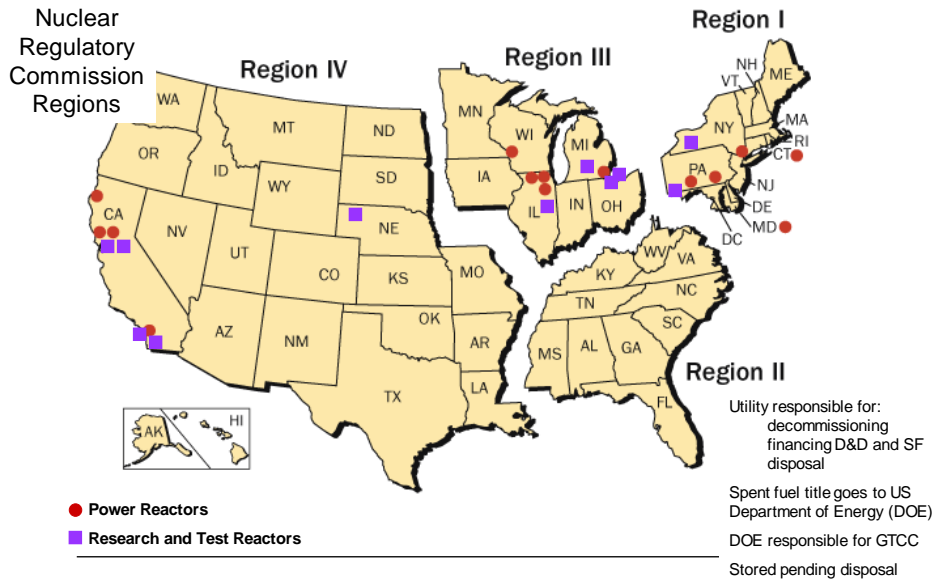
U.S. Electricity Generation by Fuel Type



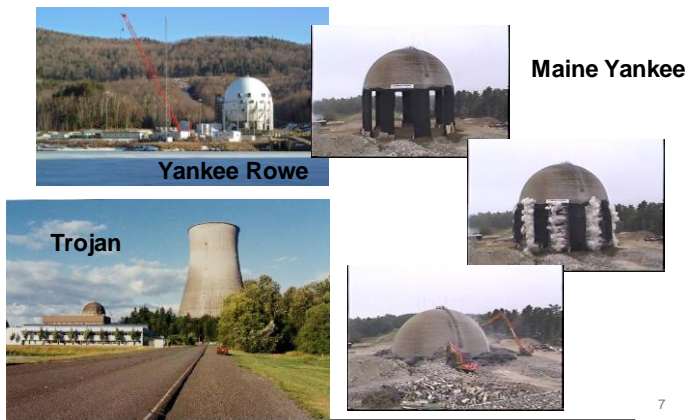
NDA

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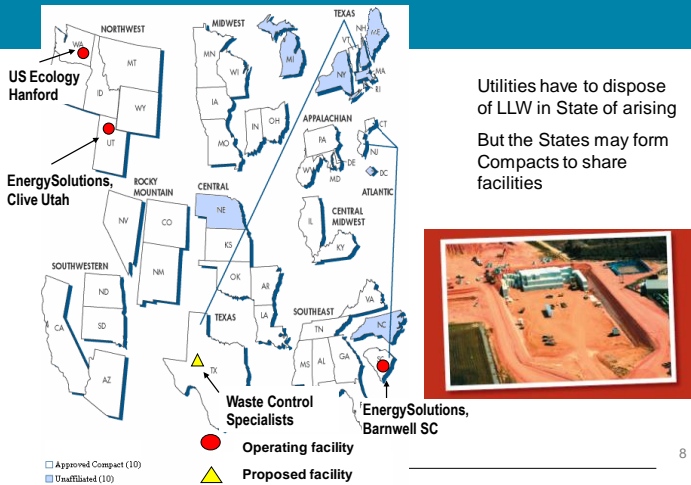
US Commercial Reactors Undergoing Decommissioning



Decommissioning Waste Challenges



Commercial LLW Sites in US (all near surface)



USA – Commercial Spent Fuel & Yucca Mountain



- Dry repository site
- Deep geological disposal (tuff)
- SF from civil NPPs & defence HLW
- "Selected" in 1982 / 1987
- License application (LA) 2008
- Pres. Obama – "Yucca not an option"
- Blue Ribbon Commission established to look at options
- DOE attempts to withdraw LA March 2010
- NRC Licensing Board rejects DOE application to withdraw (Congress will have to do)
- BRC report 2012

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Weapons Complex Waste

NDA
Nuclear
Dismantling
Authority

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Weapons Complex Waste



- **Arises from nuclear weapons' production sites**
- **Responsibility of United States Department of Energy (DOE)**
 - Office of Environmental Management (EM)
- **DOE responsible for:**
 - Spent Fuel (including commercial)
 - (was Office of Civilian Radioactive Waste Management, now Office of Used Fuel Management)
 - HLW
 - Transuranic (TRU) – disposal at WIPP
 - GTCC (including commercial) – concept consultation just started
 - LLW (as defined)
 - U/Pu
- **DOE LLW disposed of at "dozens" of sites (and some commercial sites) – main ones:**
 - Hanford, Savannah River, Nevada Test Site, Los Alamos NL, Oak Ridge NL, Idaho NL
- **(DOE-NDA Bilateral agreement)**

NDA

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The Waste Isolation Pilot Plant (WIPP)
 Operated by the DOE Carlsbad Field Office,
 Managed by Washington TRU Solutions LLC



Carlsbad (1)

- Originally as the Town of Eddy, founded 1888
- Named after spa town of Karlsbad (now Czech Republic) due to mineral springs
- "... Carlsbad dominated the U. S. production of potash. With the decline in the potash market in the 1960s, the residents and leaders of Carlsbad lobbied for the Waste Isolation Pilot Plant (WIPP). Congress authorized the WIPP project in 1979 and construction of the project began in 1980."
- www.carlsbadnm.com

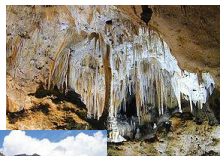


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Carlsbad (2)

- "Located on the beautiful Pecos River, Carlsbad offers hiking, golfing, river recreation and lots of sunshine! Carlsbad Caverns National Park and the Guadalupe Mountains National Park are nearby. Great schools, low crime and a friendly, small-town atmosphere also make Carlsbad a great place to live!"
- Population 24,952
- Elevation 3,100 feet (~1,000m) above sea level
- Sunshine: 350 days
- Visibility: 40-50 miles
- WIPP located 26m east of Carlsbad
 - 26 sq mile site
 - 650m deep in bedded salt



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WIPP Management



Washington TRU Solutions LLC

Washington TRU Solutions LLC (WTS) is a partnership between Washington Government Environmental Services Company and Weston Solutions.

WTS is the managing and operating contractor for the U.S.



- **DOE Budget**
 - Funding ~US\$230m / yr (~£144m)
 - Closure: 2035-2044
 - Lifecycle cost US\$6.7-7.3Bn (~£4.2-4.4bn)
 - Economic assistance to NM (road improvements)
 - '1997 to date US\$231m (~£144m)
 - FY11 US\$28m (~£17.5m)

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WIPP Regulation

- **Environmental Protection Agency (EPA)**
 - Radioactive waste and certification
 - Original Certification in 1998
 - Recertified Nov 2010
- **New Mexico Environmental Department**
 - Hazardous (toxic) constituents
- **Nuclear Regulatory Commission**
 - Certifies Type B shipping containers
- **Department of Transportation**
 - Highway transportation and Type A containers

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WIPP – TRU generator sites



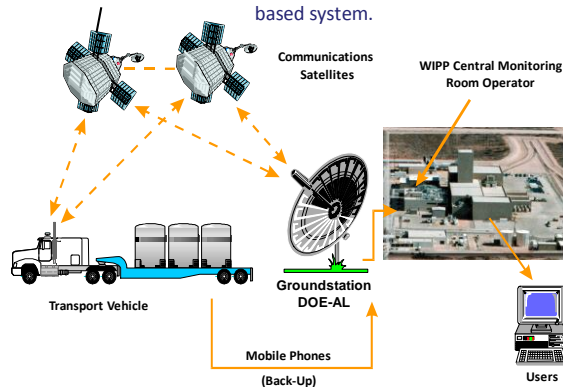
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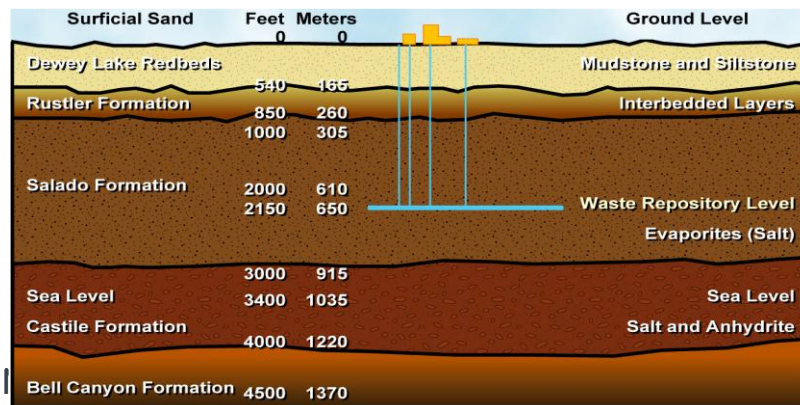
Introduction and Background

All TRUW shipments are closely monitored and tracked by TRANSCOM, a satellite-based system.



Introduction and Background

The WIPP repository is located 650 m below the ground surface in a 600-m-thick, 250-million-year-old, laterally extensive, virtually impermeable, bedded salt formation.



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Summary

- Experience available through the CBFO:
 - ❖ 12 years of safely transporting and disposing of long-lived radioactive waste.
 - ❖ 30 years of repository construction, including 2 shafts, a URL, and 6 panels with 42 disposal rooms.
 - ❖ 36 years of surface- and laboratory-based site characterizations and model developments.
 - ❖ Over 50 years of safely characterizing, handling, and packaging long-lived highly radioactive waste.

NDA

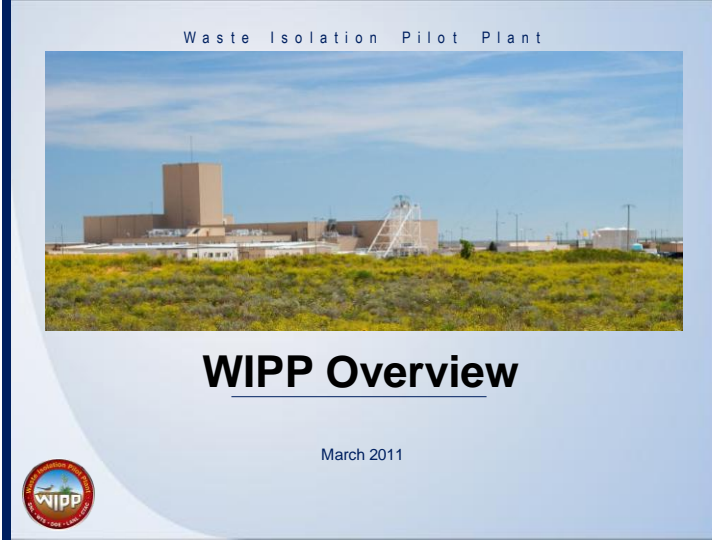
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2. Presentation by Tim Hedahl, Commercial Director of the LLWR

From the perspective of someone who worked at WIPP for over 5 years before coming to work in the UK, Tim Hedahl's presentation focused on specifically on the WIPP site itself and how the Carlsbad community felt about the repository; he was supported by Steve Rose and by Dick Raaz also from LLWR.

Presentation slides were as follows:




Waste Isolation Pilot Plant



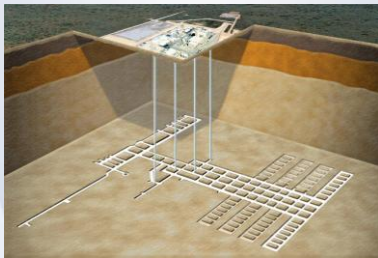
WIPP Overview

March 2011



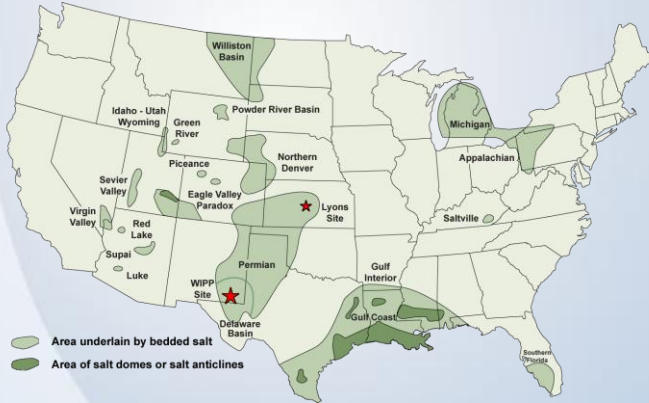
The slide features a photograph of the Waste Isolation Pilot Plant (WIPP) facility, showing several large industrial buildings and a tall chimney stack against a clear blue sky. The foreground is filled with yellow wildflowers. Below the photo, the title 'WIPP Overview' is centered, followed by the date 'March 2011' and a circular logo with 'WIPP' in the center and 'WASTE ISOLATION PILOT PLANT' around the perimeter.

A national solution



- WIPP is America's only deep geologic repository for the permanent disposal of defense-generated transuranic (TRU) radioactive waste left from research and production of nuclear weapons.

Salt is the reason for WIPP's location



- Stable geology
- Lack of water
- Easy to mine
- Plastic quality of salt allows it to close in on the waste

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TRU Waste



- Clothing, tools, rags, debris, residues and other items contaminated with man-made radioactive elements that are heavier than uranium
- Other TRU waste materials

Periodic Table of the Elements

1	H	He																	0																								
2	Li	Be	B	C	N	O	F	Ne											10																								
3	Na	Mg	Al	Si	P	S	Cl	Ar											18																								
4	K	Ca	Sc	Ti	V	Cr	Mn	Fe	Co	Ni	Cu	Zn	Ga	Ge	As	Se	Br	Kr											36														
5	Rb	Sr	Y	Zr	Nb	Mo	Tc	Ru	Rh	Pd	Ag	Cd	In	Sn	Sb	Te	I	Xe											54														
6	Cs	Ba	La	Ce	Pr	Nd	Pm	Sm	Eu	Gd	Tb	Dy	Ho	Er	Tm	Yb	Lu	Hf	Ta	W	Re	Os	Ir	Pt	Au	Hg	Tl	Pb	Bi	Po	At	Rn											86
7	Fr	Ra	Ac	Th	Pa	U	Np	Pu	Am	Cm	Bk	Cf	Es	Fm	Md	No	Lr											118															

* Lanthanide Series
 * Actinide Series

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Types of TRU waste

- Contact-handled (CH)
 - Primarily emits alpha radiation and can be handled under controlled conditions without any shielding beyond the container itself
 - Less than 200 grams of plutonium per drum
 - Most is mixed with hazardous materials regulated by the Resource Conservation and Recovery Act
 - About 96 percent of waste to be disposed at WIPP



CH waste is disposed in columns on the disposal room floor. Disposal began in March 1999.

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Types of TRU waste *(continued)*

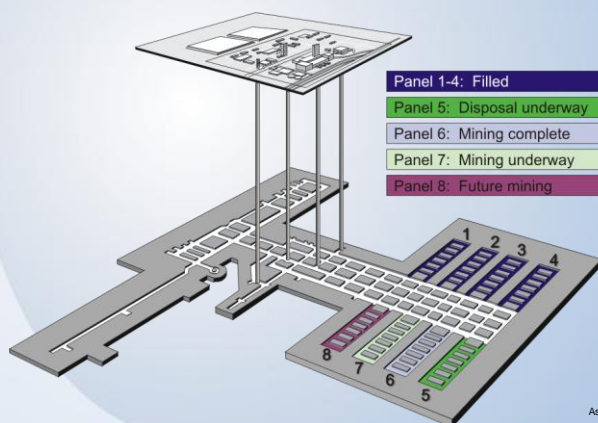
- Remote-handled (RH)
 - Emits more penetrating radiation than CH-TRU
 - Transported and handled in certified casks that provide shielding to protect workers and the public from exposure to high doses of radiation
 - Maximum allowable dose rate is 1,000 Rem per hour
 - About four percent of waste to be disposed at WIPP



RH waste is disposed in pre-drilled boreholes in the walls of the disposal room and sealed with a concrete shield plug. Disposal began in January 2007.

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The Underground



As of 8-9-10

WIPP Transportation System

“...The [WIPP transportation] system is safer than that employed for any other hazardous material in the U.S....”

*National Academy of Sciences,
WIPP Panel*



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Safest shipping containers on the road



- Nuclear Regulatory Commission certified
 - TRUPACT-II
 - TRUPACT-III
 - HalfPACT
 - RH-72B
 - CNS10-160B
- Proven leak tight after rigorous testing
 - 30-foot drop
 - Puncture bar test
 - 30 minutes in 1,475-degree jet fuel fire

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Shipments tracked by satellite



- Fully automated, nation-wide tracking to within 500 feet
- Five-minute updates
- States and tribes have access to password-protected Web site
- Drivers in constant communication with WIPP's Central Monitoring Room

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Emergency responders trained along pre-approved routes



- Since 1988, more than 30,000 first responders have been trained
 - Exercises
 - State, tribe and hospital personnel training
 - Outreach

As of 3-10-10

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CURRENT STATUS

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Safety

- More than 4 million hours worked without a lost time injury
- Recertified at the Star level in DOE's Voluntary Protection Program (maintained since 1994)
- More than 10.6 million safe loaded miles traveled to WIPP
- Low injury rate of 0.23 (as of 8-31-10) compared to 2009 DOE complex average 1.3



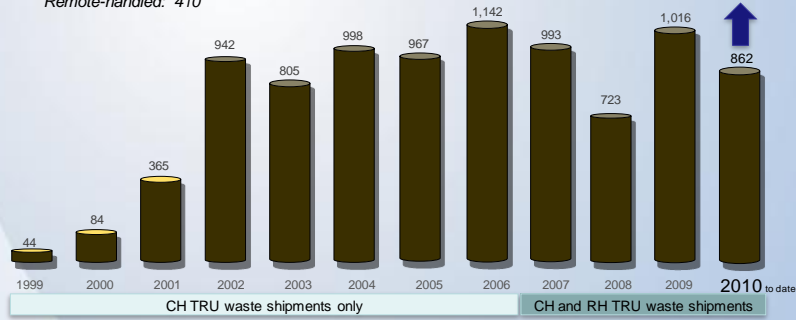
As of 9-17-10

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Shipments Received

Shipments received
at WIPP to date:
8,941

Contact-handled: 8,531
Remote-handled: 410



Shipments Received by Calendar Year

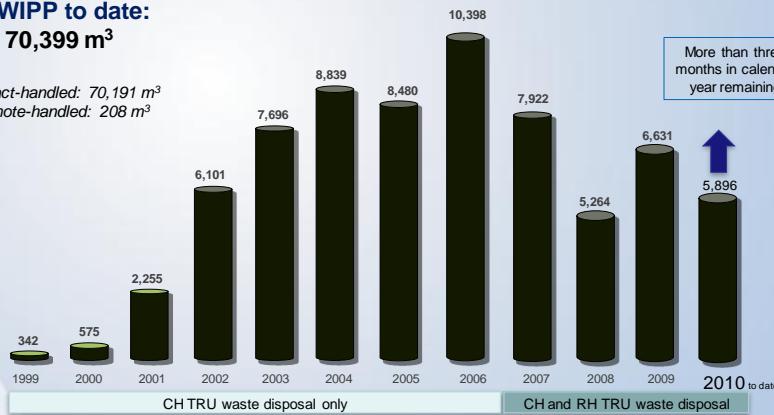
As of September 19, 2010

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Disposal

Volume of waste
disposed
at WIPP to date:
70,399 m³

Contact-handled: 70,191 m³
Remote-handled: 208 m³



Waste Disposed by Calendar Year (in cubic meters)

As of September 19, 2010

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National Cleanup



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Key Regulatory Processes



- Compliance Recertification Application (CRA)
 - Submitted to the Environmental Protection Agency by March 25
 - Required every five years until closure
 - CRA documents continued compliance with long-term disposal regulations
 - EPA issued completeness determination June 29
 - Decision anticipated by end of year



- Hazardous Waste Facility Permit Renewal Application
 - Ten-year permit issued in October 1999
 - NMED issued draft permit on April 27, 2010
 - Public hearing concluded in August 2010
 - NMED issuance of new permit anticipated in December 2010

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Community Aspects

- Success in opening WIPP due to strong state and local community support
 - State of New Mexico
 - Surrounding Counties – Eddy
 - City of Carlsbad
- Lobbying by County & City leaders for consideration to host a waste repository
 - Driven by area economic downturn
- Resulting success changed New Mexico's political strength for decades

Community Benefit

- DOE Funding for Independent Oversight of WIPP
- Cooperation and Consultation Agreement for State upgrades and improvements
 - Highway upgrades
 - Education improvements
 - Emergency response
 - Transportation improvements
 - Monitoring
- WIPP acceleration funds and business development projects

Questions & Answers

3. Overview from current WIPP staff

The UK meeting was then joined via a video link up to a group from WIPP comprising:

Bob Kerman, Technical Advisor

Susan Scott, Director of Public Affairs

Roger Nelson, Chief Scientific Advisor, USDOE

John Heaton, Community Leader

The staff of WIPP and John Heaton gave some background information about WIPP and their involvement with it. They spoke of their pride in assisting the local community to host the WIPP facility, and said that they jointly made 'every effort' to maintain the support of the local community. They cited participation and community support as being critical to the success of WIPP. Openness, transparency and independent oversight were identified as key factors in relation to community confidence, though there was an acknowledgement that such support was far less tangible outside the area of Carlsbad itself. It was suggested that the local community were very comfortable with the plant, understood what happened there and its record as a neighbour; however, further

away from the plant people understood less about it and were more inclined to express concerns, particularly transport issues.

Federal assistance to the community, in terms of funding was discussed and the WIPP group spoke about 'handshake agreements' over the years in relation to community benefits (mentioned were funding contributions, work for local companies, jobs for local people etc).

The delegation from WIPP was overwhelmingly positive and were apparently hard pressed to identify any negative impacts of the facility. There was a feeling amongst UK participants that this sounded 'too good to be true' which was followed up in the discussion.

4. Discussion following presentations:

Local economic development:

- It was confirmed that the shipping containers used for transporting the waste were made by a company in Carlsbad. The meeting heard that the company is now involved in other high quality manufacturing contracts.
- There is also a records centre which has developed expertise and experience by handling all the records in relation to transportation of waste to WIPP and storage at the site. This centre has developed its portfolio outside the local area, adding 65 or so more jobs to the community.
- The meeting was told that Carlsbad had been declining economically until the development of WIPP in the '70s, though there were some concerns about the long term future when the site becomes full and is no longer operating as it does currently.
- The WIPP representatives said they felt that, should the repository close, the legacy left behind would be a diverse economy involved in such areas as biofuel research, and a good transport and good education system.
- Improvement of the road system around Carlsbad to facilitate efficient transportation of the waste has been of significant benefit to the population of Carlsbad and surrounding areas.
- There has been an acceleration fund aimed at helping small businesses to expand.

Interested communities:

- At the time that Carlsbad put themselves forward as a possible repository site only one other community was interested in hosting the facility – an area in Dakota. Later in the discussions the group heard that there was now a lot more interest from communities around the country about the possibility of hosting new nuclear facilities.
- It was also made clear that the community representatives had worked very hard over a number of years to bring the repository to Carlsbad.
- The Carlsbad delegation explained that the local community felt it important that allowing WIPP to become operational meant that to date 17 other DOE facilities had been successfully cleaned up and their local communities relieved of a burden.

Points of comparison:

- There was a discussion about the differences between WIPP / Carlsbad and the local context for MRWS in West Cumbria. It was agreed that the main differences were in terms of geology, topography, population density, types of waste under discussion etc. but a point in common is that WIPP and what is being discussed in West

Cumbria is a mined and engineered facility which requires interaction with the local population.

Inventory/future developments at WIPP:

- The inventory for WIPP is currently clearly defined – only defence programme related transuranic waste – see presentation slides for more details. Later the meeting was told that in the current circumstances where Yucca Mountain was no longer available as a site for civilian spent fuel, there is a move to consider proposing the WIPP facility to take this.

Negative impacts/opposition to WIPP:

- There appeared to be little that the WIPP delegation could identify as negative impacts of the facility in the context of what they described as overwhelming positive factors in hosting the site. Representatives in the UK were surprised and appeared somewhat sceptical about the extremely positive viewpoint coming from Carlsbad representatives. In turn the Carlsbad delegation felt frustrated that their views were not received and understood as genuine. This points to an interesting cultural difference that perhaps exists between the two areas and made some aspects of the discussion awkward.
- There was some acknowledgement that a minority of the community in and around Carlsbad felt there were negative impacts in terms of the risk of transporting waste, and some who were uncomfortable with the concept of nuclear altogether. This opposition/concern was portrayed as being almost non-existent in Carlsbad itself though acknowledged to be more widespread outside the local area.

Community benefits:

- Employment was characterised as the most significant benefit. Although when questioned by the Partnership about whether jobs had gone to local people the WIPP representatives spoke about people working at WIPP now *living* locally rather than being originally from Carlsbad/New Mexico.
- The WIPP delegation told the meeting that the DOE had insisted that anyone who worked on the safety case for the repository actually live in Carlsbad. Together with other WIPP employees this was said to have brought in a better educated and “more sophisticated” population which is now seeing the second generation of highly qualified individuals remaining in the community.
- The development of Carlsbad in terms of a more mixed population, development of schools, community groups etc was cited as a benefit alongside employment aspects.
- Training of ‘first responders’ had been done nationally (on most nuclear waste transport routes to WIPP) as well as in and around Carlsbad. It was claimed that this had also created a resource for dealing with non-nuclear hazardous incidents. The WIPP staff reported that as the safety record of the site was so good with no reported accidents, the first responders had been able to use their skills 100% for the benefit of the community.
- Various sources of funding associated with hosting the facility were talked about, some being ‘federal aid’ and some being from the site operating company. However, there was uncertainty about the future of some aspects of this funding given the current financial climate which prompted the WIPP representatives to encourage the Partnership to seek formal and long term assurances about community benefits if the MRWS progresses in West Cumbria.

Stakeholder engagement mechanisms:

- There did not seem to be a focused organisational structure to facilitate stakeholder engagement. It seemed to be facilitated by a range of independent committees/task force type mechanisms. The Community Representative from Carlsbad indicated that DOE had funded an independent environmental advisory group, which has now ceased. However, because of the trust that had developed over the years relations had become less formalised and no community engagement structure was felt necessary given that State and Environmental Protection Agency provides oversight of the facility.

5. Input from Janet Greenwald, CARD (Citizens Against Radioactive Dumping) - www.cardnm.org

Note NDA representatives were not present for this part of the agenda.

Janet Greenwald joined the meeting via a telephone link from Albuquerque, New Mexico.

She said that she and her organisation, CARD, had concerns about the siting of the WIPP facility being decided by the community of Carlsbad wanting the site to be there despite her view that the geology and hydrology is 'suspect'. She felt that the government developed the site there because they *could* rather than because it was the right place.

She explained that CARD was formed in 1978 by activists who lived near the WIPP site. It receives some funding from a foundation (along with other environmental groups) for some of its activities and research but would not accept funding directly from the Department of Energy or site operator at WIPP.

The concerns she wanted to bring to the attention of the meeting were as follows:

- At the outset, discussions had taken place behind closed doors between politicians and others, leading to a lack of transparency about how decisions were made.
- Scientists who raised significant concerns about the suitability of the site in terms of geology/hydrology were 'sidelined' and their reports destroyed.
- Concerns about corruption in relation to jobs, donations, business deals.
- Reports of allegations concerning intimidation of people who spoke out against WIPP
- Communities along the transport routes used by WIPP trucks transporting waste not receiving any community benefits and having little preparation in case of accidents. Concerns about how long it would take for help to arrive in the case of an accident, and a lack of on-going monitoring to check radiation levels on transport routes.
- Potential change of inventory. WIPP has not been handling higher level waste, but are now lobbying to change that. Until now it has only handled defence related waste but she felt that volumes could greatly increase to the detriment of the local area if the site was also allowed to take commercial waste.

6. Key messages for the Partnership

At the end of the meeting after the link ups had ended the West Cumbria group felt the key messages were as follows:

- Importance of strong community representation to enable transparency and formal assurances with regard to community benefits
- Importance of understanding and identifying inventory, and mechanisms for decision making for potential alterations
- Need for scientific and political factors to work together
- The need for independent expert advice

7. Appendix one: Agenda

Agenda for Virtual WIPP visit Wednesday 9th March 2011

Venue: Herdus House, Westlakes Science & Technology Park, Moor Row, Cumbria

Time	Activity / Who
13.00 (45 mins)	Arrivals and Lunch
13.45 (10 mins)	<p>Welcome</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> John Mathieson (NDA) <p>Aims, agenda.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Richard Harris (3KQ)
13.55 (75 mins)	<p><u>Session One: Background and Orientation</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> John Mathieson(NDA) and LLWR (WIPP Veterans – Tim Hedahl, Steve Rose (Dick Raaz – after 1630) <p>Four ‘issue areas’:</p> <p>i - history: nuclear in USA, how country is different to UK, what similarities are, history of the WIPP site</p> <p>ii - practicalities at the site: what materials the site handles, disposal system, surface facilities etc - Show the WIPP video</p> <p>iii - community context: population, geography, topography, infrastructure, degree of support and opposition from community at large and specific groups.</p> <p>iv - approach to community benefits: what they've negotiated, how it works and by what mechanisms.</p>
15.10 (20 mins)	Preparation for Session Two (Site Operator) and Session Three (Community Representatives):
15.30 (20 mins)	BREAK (Refreshments)
15.50 (10 mins) 16.00 (60 mins)	<p>Settling down, ready for link up</p> <p>Meeting with Site Operator.</p> <p>Carlsbad Participation: Department of Energy (DOE) Carlsbad Field Office (CBFO) Chief Scientist Roger Nelson; Washington TRU Solutions, the WIPP management and operating contractor, Communications Manager Susan Scott; and Deb Gill, DOE CBFO chief of staff/public affairs</p> <p><i>Pre-determined questions/areas suggested:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>What are the key impacts of the site: economic, social and environmental (and reputational)?</i>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>How are impacts mitigated by both the operator directly and the community indirectly?</i> • <i>How is monitoring conducted and then the monitoring information published?</i> • <i>What arrangements are there for liaison and scrutiny by the community?</i> • <i>What has changed over the lifetime of the site?</i> • <i>What advice would they have for a community considering whether to have such a facility?</i>
17.00 (10 mins)	BREAK
17.10 (75 mins)	<p>Meeting with Community Representatives. Video link meeting. 10:30-11:30 a.m. Mountain Time (Local Carlsbad, N.M.)</p> <p>Subject: “Meeting With Community Representatives”</p> <p>Topics: How much control do they have over the facility’s operation, impact, benefit and inventory; to what extent are benefits focused locally, and how have they done this; what is their approach to retrievability; how appropriate are the community liaison mechanisms – do they work and could they be better; and what advice would they have for a community considering whether to have such a facility</p> <p>Carlsbad Participation: Mr. John Heaton, southeastern New Mexico community leader; Department of Energy (DOE) Carlsbad Field Office (CBFO) Chief Scientist Roger Nelson; and Deb Gill, DOE CBFO chief of staff/public affairs</p> <p><i>Suggested pre-determined questions/areas include:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>How much control do they have over the facility's operation, impact, benefit and inventory?</i> • <i>To what extent are benefits focused locally, and how have they done this?</i> • <i>What is their approach to retrievability?</i> • <i>How appropriate are the community liaison mechanisms: do they work? Could they be better?</i> <i>What advice would they have for a community considering whether to have such a facility?</i>
18.25 (5 mins)	Preparation for Session Four - ‘Alternative Community View”
18.30 (20 mins)	<p>Alternative community view. Telephone link up with Janet Greenwald from CARD – Citizens for Alternatives to Radioactive Dumping</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Key messages from Janet • Questions from West Cumbria
18.50 (10 mins)	Way Forward and Close
19.00	Finish

8. Appendix two: List of Participants

Name	Organisation
Charles Holmes	Allerdale Borough Council
Cllr Mike Davidson	Allerdale Borough Council
Cllr Elaine Woodburn	Copeland Borough Council
Rev Lindsay Gray	Churches Together in Cumbria
Cllr Geoff Smith	Allerdale CALC
Steve Smith	Copeland Borough Council
Cllr Peter Kane	GMB Union
Stewart Kemp	Cumbria County Council
David Haughian	Cumbria County Council
Paul Walker	Copeland Borough Council
Cllr Alan Holliday	Copeland Borough Council
Cllr Ken Williams	Barrow Borough Council
Cllr Yvonne Clarkson	Copeland Borough Council
Gavin Thomson	Environment Agency
Ian Boydon	Osprey Communicatons
Bob Kerman	WIPP
Susan Scott	WIPP
Roger Nelson	USDOE
John Heaton	Carlsbad Community Representative
Janet Greenwald	CARD
Tim Hedahl	LLWR
Steve Rose	LLWR
Dick Raaz	LLWR
John Mathieson	NDA
Jay Redgrove	NDA
Richard Harris	3KQ
Jenny Willis	3KQ

9. Appendix three - Evaluation

Note of WIPP debrief telecom 22nd March 2012:

Richard Harris, Jenny Willis (3KQ)

John Mathieson, Jay Redgrove, Kelly Dodson (NDA)

The discussion was based on the following key questions:

KQ1 - What went well?

KQ2 - What could have been improved?

at each stage in the process.

1. - In advance (planning/preparation/logistics/coordination etc)

What went well?

- Stakeholder liaison: there was a good response – participants were ‘primed’ about the opportunity and knew what it was about from Partnership meetings. No confusions about timings/venue etc.
- Logistics on the day – prior arrangement of room/catering/IT support and link up etc.
- Pre-meeting teleconferences were useful in terms of expectations

What could have been improved?

- Have more detailed and advance joint planning or sole responsibility for the event
- “Virtual visit” was a misnomer – meant some stakeholders expectations could not be met

2. On the day (practicalities/facilitation/roles/venue/speakers/technology)

What went well?

Jenny fed in comments from participants (these are included below)

Other comments:

- Good turn out – right kind of number – fitted round the table!
- WIPP veterans – useful
- Good scene setting
- Duration was about right – any longer would have been protracted, if shorter then would have been rushed.

What could have been improved?

- Issue of cultural difference – (*experienced at the UK end as overly positive and ‘hard sell’*) It was felt that people could have been made more aware of this in advance, it was noted that this did overshadow the discussions with the staff from WIPP, and caused frustration on both sides.
- We did not seem to have the right people in the room at WIPP. There wasn’t much differentiation between them or what they had to say. The NDA had problems identifying other community representatives who could be available and also last

minute changes of participants at the WIPP end (which meant that the split sessions we planned did not take place).

- Mismatch of agendas and timing of meeting (e.g. WIPP Veteran (TimH) overrun presentation, WIPP team had a different times/agenda, campaigner had different time for call) – NDA couldn't pinpoint why this happened. A pre-meeting video link with WIPP team may have helped.
- Danger that responsibility for the event became fuzzy (NDA event/3KQ facilitating on the day) – more detailed/joint planning required or sole responsibility
- Should have made much more of the 'WIPP veterans' both on the day and in planning – they were in a good position to bridge the cultural gap and identify common areas of interest.
- Only 2 or 3 participants at the UK end were prepared to ask questions despite encouragement (why was that?)
- Logistics of video link up was difficult and ultimately let us down.

3. In follow up (reporting/actions/follow up etc)

Not appropriate to cover at this stage.

Direct feedback from participants at the meeting:

We received feedback from 12 of the 15 people who attended the meeting on behalf of the Partnership; 10 via email, 2 on telephone. What follows is a synthesis of the main views expressed:

Positive points:

- A few people felt that it was useful because in their minds they felt able to rule out future liaison with the US site due to lack of similarities with the situation in West Cumbria, however one person also noted:
'It was clear that the WIPP site would be significantly different to a geological disposal facility in Cumbria, particularly in terms of the site geology, the waste inventory, the surrounding landscape and culture of the local community. However, I thought that it gave the group a flavour of what a facility could look like (in terms of a high level design and footprint on the landscape) and the overall economic/ infrastructure/ social benefits that could be realised.'
- 'I found the background presentations and video inside the salt mine extremely interesting.'
- 'I felt that the WIPP representatives were able to respond to our technical questions, particularly around the transport of waste to the plant.'
- 'Speaking to Janet (CARD) provided an alternative viewpoint from the WIPP representatives. It was interesting to note that in general, her opposition to the plant was mainly on technical grounds. She didn't deny that the social and economic impacts of the facility were predominantly positive.'

Concerns:

Expectations:

- 2 or 3 participants had expected to be 'shown round' the facility in real time via the link up and were disappointed that this wasn't what actually happened.

Balanced view/People we talked to:

- 'the four people from WIPP were all saying the same thing'
- We should have sought a "neutral" party to discuss the positive/negative outcomes that had arisen since the plant was constructed. I could sense that people in the group were frustrated that the WIPP representatives focussed only on the positive outcomes.
- 'difficult to get the 'cons' out of people'
- 'In reality we didn't get to talk to anyone from the community and the opposition view was just as unhelpful.'
- 'There are always down sides to any industrial development and even more where nuclear are concerned but this was not apparent in the dialogue.'
- 'I think we need to look at who and why we need to speak to certain people and make sure we get the right people'

March 2011