

5/31/2016

To: Kathryn Roberts, Director
Resource Protection Division ,NMED
PO Box 5469
Santa Fe, NM 87502

Via email to : kathryn.roberts@state.nm.us

Re; Public Comments about the 2016 LANL Consent Order

Dear Ms. Roberts,

As a tax-paying citizen, US Public Health physician and active member of Physicians for Social Responsibility, I felt compelled to submit comments on the NMED proposal to withdraw the 2005 LANS Consent Order, and replace it with a watered down version in 2016. The new Proposed Order requiring clean-up of LANL toxic sites would, instead of holding LANS' 'feet to the fire' to meet existing benchmarks and deadlines, allow the Lab to enjoy an open-ended arrangement whereby LANS apparently has until the end of time to comply. This is utter nonsense, especially when one considers that they've stalled the cleanup efforts for one reason or another since before the first 2005 Consent Order. The net effect is a 'get out of jail free' pass.

The Public has a legal right to expect NMED's Resource Protection Division to do its job to help protect all citizens of New Mexico. Further, DOE and LANS have collectively a legal if not a moral obligation to perform under existing rules. By abdicating its responsibility to the environment it "lives in", the Lab on the Hill puts every person living in the State and beyond its borders at risk for serious health consequences from decades-long toxic pollution of air, water and soil. The minority populations, whose historic Pueblos and Hispanic communities surround LANS, are particularly affected health-wise.

NMED, do the right thing and stop giving the Lab an 'EZ-pass' yet again so it can continue to ignore clean-up orders on the weakest of excuses. At this rate, areas of LANL/LANS should soon be Federally designated 'brownfield' CERCLA sites.

Respectfully,

Dr. Maureen Merritt DO, CMO, LCDR (ret.) USPHS
Board certified FP, OEM practitioner
Member, Physicians for Social Responsibility
Advisory board, Cold War Patriots