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Immediate Release

Contact: Adam Rankin, NMED Communications Director
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Waste Isolation Pilot Plant Permit Hearing Rescheduled and Public Comment Period Extended

(Santa Fe, NM) — The New Mexico Environment Department (NMED) has changed the hearing date for the draft permit incorporating modifications to the existing Hazardous Waste Facility Permit for the U.S. Department of Energy's (DOE) Waste Isolation Pilot Plant (WIPP) near Carlsbad from March 29, 2006, to May 31, 2006. The date was changed to allow time for DOE, NMED, and entities requesting a hearing to attempt to resolve issues of contention that gave rise to the hearing requests.

The hearing will convene at 9:00 a.m., May 31 at the Stevens Inn in Carlsbad, and continue in Carlsbad through 5 p.m. June 6. Public comment will be taken each day (except June 4) 11:30 a.m. and 3:00 p.m., and at 7:00 p.m. on May 31, June 1, 2, and 3. The hearing will reconvene in Santa Fe at the Santa Fe Community College Board Room (Room 223) on June 7, and continue through June 9 or until all persons have been afforded an adequate opportunity to present comment. Public comment will be taken on June 7 and 8 at 6:00 p.m., and on June 8 and 9 at 11:30 a.m., 3:00 p.m.

The public comment period has also been extended through the close of the hearing. Comments should include the individual's name and address and be sent to James P. Bearzi, NMED Hazardous Waste Bureau, 2905 Rodeo Park Drive East, Building 1, Santa Fe, NM, 87505; faxed to (505) 428-2567; or e-mailed to james.bearzi@state.nm.us.

NMED's proposed permit modification and a detailed fact sheet are available online at www.nmenv.state.nm.us/wipp.

For further information, contact Adam Rankin, NMED Communications Director, at (505) 827-0314.

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