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ENVIRONMENT DEPARTMENT

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RON CURRY
Secretary
SARAH COTTRELL
Deputy Secretary

June 8, 2010

Terry A. Yonkers
Assistant Secretary – Installations, Environment and Logistics
Department of the Air Force
SAF/IE
1665 Air Force Pentagon
Washington, D.C. 20330-1665

Dear Assistant Secretary Yonkers:

Thank you for your recent letter in which you express the Air Force's commitment to timely respond to the Environment Department's April 2, 2010 direction concerning the Kirtland Air Force Base Fuel Spill. I too agree that our May 25, 2010 meeting was very productive, and believe we share a sense of urgency to get the site characterized and cleaned up as quickly as possible, without unnecessarily cutting corners. Consequently, the Department is keenly interested in how your vision for a comprehensive cleanup of the Fuel Spill unfolds, particularly given the limited relevant and appropriate hydrogeologic characterization data. We look forward to continued updates as to your progress in realizing your vision.

In the interim, the Department expects that a substantive response to our direction would include an aggressive plan to stop migration of and remediate the light nonaqueous phase liquid plume, keeping in mind a remediation goal of five years. Simultaneously, we expect the Air Force's Interim Measures Plan for vadose zone characterization to propose an expeditious yet comprehensive approach to determine the presence and extent of any secondary sources of contamination. A later plan – due July 7, 2010 – is to characterize the extent and magnitude of dissolved phase ground water contaminants. All the plans should, in part, be geared toward collection of data that will be valuable in designing remediation systems.

I look forward to seeing the fruit of the Air Force's renewed commitment to sound and responsible environmental management at Kirtland, and to protection of New Mexico's precious groundwater. Please do not hesitate to contact me should you wish to discuss this further, or have your staff contact James Bearzi at (505) 476-6016.

Sincerely,

Ron Curry
Cabinet Secretary