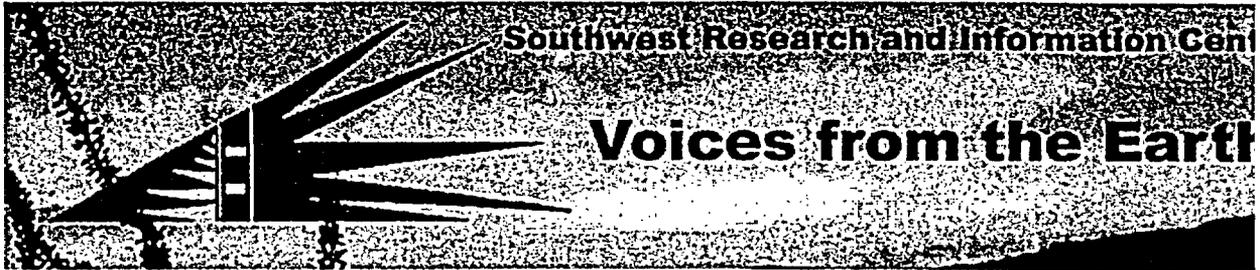


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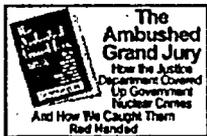
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Fact sheet on
LES' proposed
Uranium
Enrichment
Plant as
mentioned on
KKOB radio
12/17/03

**ACTION
NEEDED!**
Say "NO" to
High-Level
Waste at WIPP
8/11/2004

Voices from the
Earth: Current
Issue



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The Ambushed
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Investigators
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the Justice
Department's
cover-up of
deadly
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contamination
at Rocky Flats
Nuclear
Weapons Plant.

More Money = Less Performance at WIPP

Over the past five years, Congress has appropriated more than \$920 million for the Waste Isolation Pilot Plant (WIPP), giving it even more money that Presidents Clinton and Bush requested. People might believe that large amount of money is to support and reward outstanding performance. On the contrary, WIPP should be given a failing grade, especially since the lack of money is not a reason for the poor performance. WIPP's budget clearly has much more to do with rewarding and encouraging political power than any results for waste emplacement in the world's first nuclear waste repository.

As the table indicates, for the last four full fiscal years (FY1998-2001 - October 1, 1997 to September 30, 2001), Congress appropriated almost \$729 million, more than \$1-million more than the president requested. In the budget requests for those years, the Department of Energy (DOE) performance measures included projected disposal of at least 6,942 cubic meters of transuranic waste at WIPP. Instead, by September 30, 2001, WIPP emplaced 2,584 cubic meters or 37 percent of the projected amount. The "best" year (FY2001) achieved 56 percent of the performance measure. By any measure, it should be considered a failing performance.

WIPP BUDGET REQUESTS, APPROPRIATIONS, PERFORMANCE MEASURES									
	FY1998	FY1999	FY2000	FY2001	FY2002	FY2003	TOTALS (98-01)	TOTALS (98-02)	TOTALS (98-03)
DOE BUDGET REQUEST	\$162,885	\$183,591	\$186,404	\$194,498	\$164,570	\$193,228	\$727,378	\$891,948	\$1,085,176
APPROPRIATION	\$173,700	\$185,405	\$178,975	\$190,886	\$192,670		\$728,966	\$921,636	
% of Request	107%	101%	96%	98%	117%		101%	103%	
PERFORMANCE MEASURE (in cubic meters)	388-592	1900-3800	1,204	3,450	5,326 4709*	4,605	6,942	12,268	
ACTUAL DISPOSAL (in cubic meters)	0	276	370	1,938	**755		2,584	3,339	

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Look at the land. Our grandfather lived here. So do we. It is our land here, her we used to live. Stranger, touring around you will not come, you will not come. We lived over these hills, we still do, because the forest is our life.

Huaorani chant,
translated by
Laura Rival

% of Performance Measure	0%	7-14%	31%	56%			37%		
Sources: Presidential Requests to Congress & FY02 Appropriations, WIPP WASTE INFORMATION SYSTEM * Revised PM in FY03 Budget Request / ** As of January 16, 2002									

Unfortunately, no one in the administration or Congress seems care about excessive funding and poor performance. DOE has provided no adequate explanation of its lack of performance and why Congress should not reduce the budget in response to "overpaying" in previous years.

For the current FY2002 (fiscal year), President Bush requested \$164.570 million and set a performance measure of 5,326 cubic meters being disposed at WIPP for the year. As of January 16, 2002 (through more than a quarter of the fiscal year), WIPP had disposed of 755 cubic meters or about 14% of the year's performance measure. So it seems highly unlikely that anything near that performance measure will be emplaced this year. Moreover, in the FY2003 budget request, the expected amount of waste disposed at WIPP for FY2002 is reduced to 4,709 cubic meters.

Just as the administration does not seem to believe that WIPP needs to achieve its performance measures to justify its budget, Congress has increased funding because Senators Bingaman and Domenici and Representative Skeen continue to support WIPP despite the poor performance. For this year (FY2002), they increased the budget for WIPP by 17 percent to \$192.6 million without requiring any improved performance.

In releasing his FY2003 Budget on February 4, the president proclaimed that the budget inaugurates "a new era of accountability in the stewardship of taxpayer dollars." Federal programs, except for the Pentagon and "homeland security," are held to a two percent increase. Nonetheless, WIPP funding would increase by five percent, while a 2.2 percent decrease (to 4,605 cubic meters) is projected in the amount of waste emplaced at WIPP. The decrease would be 13.5 percent if compared with the amount of disposal projected in the budget request a year ago. The FY2003 Budget request also gives the Carlsbad Office the lowest performance rating of any DOE site for FY2001, meeting only 31 percent of its key milestones, as compared with 73 percent met by all sites combined. There is no explanation of why the lowest performance merits the highest percentage increase given to any site.

Meanwhile, the DOE budget includes a new \$800 million "environmental cleanup reform" fund that is taken from money previously designated for sites. The fund would go to sites in which states change existing agreements that have dates or performance requirements that DOE may not meet. Even though there is no such

*I want to stamp
on the ground
hard enough to
make that oil
come out. I want
to skip the
legalities,
permits, red
tape, and other
obstacles. I want
to go
immediately and
straight to what
matters: getting
that oil.*

**Rick Bass,
Petroleum
Geologist**

1989, taken
from *Amazon
Crude*,
Judith Kimerling

agreement between DOE and New Mexico, Inés Triay, the WIPP Project Manager, hopes to obtain additional money, if Congress approves the new fund. However, many citizen groups and at least some states are opposing that "extortion/slush fund," so Congress may not approve it.

If the past is any guide, the New Mexico congressional delegation will support even more funds for WIPP, despite its performance record. Will anyone else in Congress question the basis for such funding?