



Department of Energy
National Nuclear Security Administration
Office of General Counsel
Washington, DC 20585



April 6, 2020

Jay Coghlan
Executive Director
Nuclear Watch New Mexico
903 W. Alameda #325
Santa Fe, NM 87501

Dear Mr. Coghlan,

Thank you for your letter of April 1, 2020, requesting an extension of the comment period on the Draft Los Alamos National Laboratory Site Wide Environmental Impact Statement Supplement Analysis (LANL SWEIS SA). I have been asked to respond on behalf of the Secretary and the NNSA Administrator. First, I want you to know that I share your concern over risks and dangers of the novel coronavirus. I hope that you and the members of Nuclear Watch New Mexico remain safe and protected. We look forward to the day when we will all resume our daily routines after this difficult time.

As you know, the Los Alamos National Laboratory and the National Nuclear Security Administration (NNSA) as a whole perform vital national security missions for our country. While we are doing everything we can to protect our workforce and the surrounding community, we cannot abandon the tasks which form a foundation for national security. The pit production project is one of those critical missions, and we are moving forward both at Los Alamos and the Savannah River Site, albeit in a manner that takes the risks of the COVID-19 pandemic into account. The NEPA activities that are required for the pit mission must therefore also continue to move forward. Fortunately, the opportunity for public comment can be carried out in a manner that does not contradict any of the social distancing and shelter-in-place guidelines, and it can be conducted in the same manner in which you requested the extension.

With regard to extending the comment period on the LANL SWEIS SA, for the reasons set forth above, NNSA cannot agree to a two month extension of the comment period. Given the importance of this effort at Los Alamos National Laboratory, a two month extension of the comment period would have a severe adverse impact on the detailed

planning and coordination of this effort. However, as I mentioned, I do understand that the members of Nuclear Watch New Mexico has faced disruptions, and, for that reason, NNSA is extending the comment period by 15 days.

Thank you for contacting us on this important matter. If you have any questions about this, please contact Ms. Nora Khalil, Associate Administrator for External Affairs, at (202) 586-7332.

Sincerely,

X *Bruce M Diamond*

BRUCE M. DIAMOND
GENERAL COUNSEL