



**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

Thursday, July 21, 2011

**Concerned Citizens for Nuclear Safety Granted Place At The Table  
In LANL Hazardous Waste Permit Appeal**

*SANTA FE, N.M.*— Yesterday, Concerned Citizens for Nuclear Safety (CCNS), represented by the New Mexico Environmental Law Center (NMELC), has been granted its motion to intervene in appeals filed by the U.S. Department of Energy (DOE) and Los Alamos National Security, LLC regarding a ten-year hazardous waste management permit at Los Alamos National Laboratory (LANL). The Permit was issued by the Secretary of the New Mexico Environment Department (NMED) to the appellants. The appeals challenge certain aspects of the Permit.

“We expected no less,” says Jonathan Block, NMELC Staff Attorney. “CCNS was a dynamic party in the NMED hazardous waste permit hearings for LANL beginning in 2007, and has an important role to play in the federal court case.”

“The protection of our communities, water, air and soil from LANL pollutants is of utmost importance to CCNS,” says Joni Arends, CCNS Executive Director. “Our appeal supports the NMED position that it has the authority to regulate the entire 63-area ‘Area G’ waste storage site. We oppose, however, the NMED position that allows LANL to use the antiquated open air burning of hazardous waste as a disposal method. CCNS also opposes the NMED position that the groundwater monitoring is adequate.” (Photos of Area G are available at: <http://www.climatestorytellers.org/stories/subhankar-banerjee-robert-gilkeson-another-kind-of-fukushima/photohtml/photo01.html>)

The Permit was issued by the NMED on November 30, 2010 after three and a half years of public process. There were several versions of draft permits, along with opportunities for public comments, 40 days of negotiations between the parties, and a 15-day public hearing in Santa Fe, Albuquerque, Ohkay Owingeh, Pojoaque, and Los Alamos. The Los Alamos National Security, LLC, “co-operator” of LANL, opposed the CCNS motion to intervene.

“Our clients will defend the interests of all people in the vicinity who are concerned about nuclear safety and want a final, safe and effective clean-up of the highly toxic waste disposed of all around the LANL site,” says Block.

Negotiations are scheduled to begin on August 24<sup>th</sup> before a Federal District Magistrate Judge.

[www.nmelc.org](http://www.nmelc.org)

*The mission of the New Mexico Environmental Law Center is to protect New Mexico's natural environment and achieve environmental justice for New Mexico's communities through legal representation, policy advocacy and public education. The New Mexico Environmental Law Center's attorneys have handled over 100 critical cases in low-income and minority communities fighting pollution and environmental degradation. The NMELC charges few, if any, fees to its clients, most of who are from Hispanic and Native American communities. The NMELC celebrated its 20<sup>th</sup> anniversary in 2008. Membership and gifts help New Mexico communities protect their natural environment and their health from toxic pollution, the degrading effects of growth and liabilities created by irresponsible mining.*

**INTERVIEWS ARE AVAILABLE UPON REQUEST**

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