



UNITED STATES
NUCLEAR REGULATORY COMMISSION
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20555-0001

March 11, 2020

Bob Estes Ph.D.
HPD Staff Archaeologist
New Mexico State Historic
Preservation Division
407 Galisteo St., Suite 236
Santa Fe, NM 87501

SUBJECT: NOTICE OF AVAILABILITY OF THE DRAFT ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT
STATEMENT FOR HOLTEC INTERNATIONAL'S CONSOLIDATED INTERIM
STORAGE FACILITY LOCATED IN LEA COUNTY, NEW MEXICO FOR PUBLIC
COMMENT (DOCKET NUMBER: 72-1051)

Dear Dr. Estes:

The U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission (NRC) staff has completed the draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS) for construction and operation of Holtec International's (Holtec) consolidated interim storage facility (CISF). The proposed CISF would be located in Lea County, New Mexico. As part of its review of the proposed action, the NRC staff has prepared a DEIS that includes analyses of potential impacts to historic properties from construction and operation of the CISF. The NRC staff will use the National Environmental Policy Act process to comply with its obligations under Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966, as amended (NHPA), as outlined in 36 CFR 800.8(c).

As discussed in Chapter 4 of the DEIS, the NRC has determined that the construction and operation of the CISF would not adversely affect historic properties near the site. In support of this determination, the NRC staff conducted a site visit, reviewed available archaeological literature, conducted a search and evaluation of archaeological records and collections maintained by the New Mexico State Historic Preservation Office and U.S. Bureau of Land Management, and contacted 11 Federally-recognized American Indian Tribes. Documentation of tribal consultation is presented in Appendix A of the DEIS. The updated Class III Report, along with the NRC staff recommendations, will be submitted to your office for concurrence prior to finalization of the EIS. While consultation under NHPA Section 106 is ongoing, the NRC staff's preliminary conclusion is that no historic properties would be affected by the proposed action.

A copy of the DEIS is available in the NRC's Agencywide Documents Access and Management System (ADAMS). ADAMS is accessible from the NRC website at <http://www.nrc.gov/readingrm/adams.html>. The ADAMS accession number for the DEIS is ML20069G420. If you prefer a CD or hard copy of the DEIS, please let us know.

A separate Notice of Availability of the DEIS will be placed in the *Federal Register* through the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency. The comment period will end on May 22, 2020.

Pursuant to 36 CFR 800.8(c), we are requesting comments on the DEIS and preliminary conclusions. Electronic comments on the DEIS may be submitted to the NRC by accessing <https://www.regulations.gov/> and searching for Docket ID NRC-2018-0052. Written comments should be submitted by mail to the NRC at:

ATTN: Program Management, Announcements
and Editing Staff
Office of Administration
Mail Stop: TWFN-7A60M
U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission
Washington, DC 20555-0001

Comments should be submitted by May 22, 2020. Should you have any questions concerning the staff's environmental review of Holtec's application for construction and operation of a CISF, please contact Ms. Jill Caverly at 301-415-7674 or via e-mail at Jill.Caverly@nrc.gov.

Sincerely,

/RA/

Cintha I. Román, Chief
Environmental Review Materials Branch
Division of Rulemaking, Environmental,
and Financial Support
Office of Nuclear Material Safety
and Safeguards

Docket No. 72-1051

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