

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF ENERGY

DRAFT LONG-TERM MANAGEMENT AND
STORAGE OF ELEMENTAL MERCURY
ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT STATEMENT

PUBLIC HEARING

MARCH 8, 2010

5:30 P.M.

EUNICE COMMUNITY CENTER

1115 AVENUE I

EUNICE, NEW MEXICO

Facilitator: Linda Robinson

Panel Member:

William Levitan, U.S. Department of Energy

1 MS. ROBINSON: We have as our first
2 speaker tonight, Curtis Schrader, City Manager for
3 Eunice.

4 MR. SCHRADER: Thank you. I appreciate
5 the flexibility in the schedule, and I also appreciate
6 the fact that y'all are conducting this public hearing
7 here in Eunice. We consider WCS to be part of our
8 community, because we are the closest community to their
9 site. And even though, as Mr. Levitan mentioned, there
10 is a state border between us, we feel like they are as
11 much a part of our community as if they were here in New
12 Mexico and here closer to the city. We consider them a
13 good community partner. Many of their employees live in
14 our community. They do business with other companies
15 here in the city. Many of their employees come here to
16 Eunice to eat and to buy other goods and services, so we
17 appreciate them being a part of our community.

18 As far as comments, I definitely am
19 supportive of your preferred alternative. As I stated
20 at the public hearing in Andrews last summer, I am
21 confident that the decision that is made regarding
22 wherever the site is selected, whether it is WCS or one
23 of the other six sites, that good science and good data
24 and good facts will be used to make that decision. From
25 what I have seen in the draft EIS, I am still confident

1 that is going to happen.

2 We have many facilities that are located
3 here in Southeast New Mexico and West Texas, and a lot
4 of the same reasons that you have listed for choosing
5 Andrews County were also reasons why other facilities
6 have been located here, and that is again due to good
7 science and good data and good facts. And I am
8 confident that is going to continue to be the process,
9 and, if WCS is still the selected site and it is
10 something they still want to do, I am confident that the
11 mercury is going to be transported, stored and monitored
12 in a safe and effective way that is not going to impact
13 us or them. Thank you.

14 MS. ROBINSON: Thank you, Mr. Schrader.
15 Can you all hear me in the back? Okay. We are going to
16 go back to our normal order. And so now this is not
17 going to be on the record from now on, until I tell you
18 again.

19 (Discussion off the record.)

20 MS. ROBINSON: We will first have the
21 mayor of Eunice to give his first comments, Matt White.

22 MR. WHITE: Thank you very much for being
23 here tonight. I appreciate that. I appreciate you
24 holding the meeting here. We were very concerned about
25 the issue just because we wanted the local citizens to

1 be able to express their own concerns and ask questions.

2 I would like to say that WCS has always
3 been very open with us. They have worked very closely
4 with the city on all concerns, and we support -- I
5 support this project. I can't speak for all of the
6 citizens, but I speak for myself. I do support this
7 project.

8 We have done a lot of research on the LES
9 and WCS on ground water and all the hazardous
10 environments, and I agree with my City Manager on sound
11 science. Everything I have seen is it has always been
12 very up front, and they have always told us exactly what
13 is going on. So I do appreciate the meeting tonight and
14 thank you for your answers.

15 MS. ROBINSON: Thank you, Mayor. And I
16 didn't name the second person. Next will be Peggy
17 Pryor, who will be followed by Rose Gardner. So Peggy
18 Pryor. No, you wish not to? Rose, this is your
19 surprise time. You are welcome to read your comments.

20 MS. GARDNER: "After reading the draft EIS
21 on the storage of elemental mercury, it is apparent that
22 the DOE has already made its decision on this matter.
23 The preferred alternative being WCS as identified in the
24 draft is disappointing but not unexpected. Two of the
25 six factors noted on Page 24 of the Summary particularly

1 stand out to me: remote location and low population
2 density in surrounding area. The plant is remote to
3 Dallas and San Antonio, Texas, but it is only six miles
4 from where I live. And I have family that live a few
5 hundred feet from the Highway 18 intersection, about
6 three miles east of the site. So it is not remote from
7 people at all. The factor listed as low population
8 density in the surrounding area is probably correct, but
9 when it is your family living there, their lives are as
10 important as those in a moderate or high density
11 population in proximity to the risk and dangers
12 associated with the WCS plant and the LES/URENCO plant
13 right down the street. The dangers of elemental mercury
14 are listed in the draft. My objections relative to this
15 storage option continue to be in respect to the safety
16 and well-being of my family and the community of Eunice.
17 One could almost interpret these factors as a way of
18 saying we are expendable in case of an accidental
19 release at the site. I would never have believed that
20 my community would be known as a home to a hazardous
21 waste dump and a nuclear waste dump, but that is what
22 has happened to Eunice. Not only are we subjected to
23 the pollutants in our air because of the oil and natural
24 gas production, now we will have to contend with
25 possible spills or accidents involving transportation of

1 oil and oil byproducts, hazardous waste of all kinds,
2 nuclear waste and now mercury transportation by truck
3 and rail. Last year there was a train derailment near
4 here. I truly hope that all citizens on the road to Lea
5 County and Andrews County stake extra care when
6 traveling. People make mistakes. Accidents do happen."

7 MS. ROBINSON: Thank you, Ms. Gardner. I
8 notice it was written, so if you would be willing to
9 turn it in, that would help the court reporter. There
10 were no other people signed up tonight. Does anyone
11 feel they have a comment to give? Okay. Well, I
12 appreciate you all coming.

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1 THE STATE OF TEXAS)
 2 COUNTY OF ECTOR)

3
 4 I, Debra Guthrie, Certified Shorthand Reporter Number
 5 3910 for The State of Texas, do hereby certify that the
 6 above and foregoing pages contain a full, true and
 7 correct computer-assisted transcription of my
 8 computerized stenotype shorthand notes taken on said
 9 occasion.

10 I further certify that I am neither counsel for, related
 11 to, nor employed by any of the parties or attorneys in
 12 the action in which this proceeding was taken, and
 13 further that I am not financially or otherwise
 14 interested in the outcome of the action.

15 Witness my hand this 16th day of March, 2010.

16
 17 *Debra D. Guthrie*
 18

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