

During a public meeting of the Idaho Cleanup Project (ICP) Citizens Advisory Board (CAB) on Thursday, May 14, 2026, ICP CAB members were briefed on the proposed Waste Isolation Pilot Plant (WIPP) permit modifications, which would give priority placement to transuranic (TRU) waste shipments coming from the Los Alamos National Laboratory in New Mexico.

These proposed changes pose a significant risk to ICP's ability to complete its mission on schedule and within budget. If implemented, this would also place undue burden on taxpayers who will be responsible for covering the increased costs associated with these impacts to ICP and other cleanup sites across the country. These potential impacts include, but are not limited to, the following:

- Completion of legacy waste shipments will be delayed until 2086, which extends operations at the Advanced Mixed Waste Treatment Facility (AMWTP) at the Idaho National Laboratory (INL) site an additional 56 years.
- Storing and managing these aging containers at AMWTP during this extended period will significantly increase costs and could unnecessarily increase risk to the workers, the public and the underlying Snake River Plain Aquifer.
- Due to aging drums, container integrity issues will increase, resulting in increased costs to store and manage inventory. Additionally, reprocessing and shipping costs will continue to increase over the five decades, putting further burden on taxpayers to cover the costs.
- Potential restricted shipping ability could impact INL receipt, treatment, and shipment of offsite waste from LANL and other cleanup sites because this would impact the INL's ability to meet the offsite waste treatment obligations of the Idaho Settlement Agreement (ISA).

In total, ICP estimates that the proposed permit modification could have **an estimated \$5.8 billion impact** on operations at INL.

Other concerns include the impact the modification would have on the U.S. Department of Energy's (DOE) existing agreements with the State of Idaho, through the ISA and the Site Treatment Plan (STP). The ISA requires that "DOE will allocate to and make from the State of Idaho at least 55% of all transuranic waste shipments received at WIPP each year until

shipments are complete,” calculated on a three-year rolling average, and further provides that any unused shipping capacity will be prioritized for shipments from Idaho. Non-compliance with either of these agreements could result in **hundreds of thousands of dollars** in fines.

Historically, ICP’s shipments to WIPP have accounted for more than 50 percent of all shipments received at the repository since operations began, which has allowed DOE to remain compliant with the ISA. Since 2022, Idaho has consistently processed and shipped more than 70 percent of all waste sent to WIPP. This accomplishment is credited to ICP’s unique capabilities made possible by a highly skilled workforce capable of certifying TRU waste.

Given this record of performance and Idaho’s demonstrated capability to maintain ongoing safe and efficient shipments, the Board recommends that DOE works to ensure Idaho retains consistent access to WIPP.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Robert Skinner", with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Robert Skinner
Idaho Cleanup Project Citizens Advisory Board Chairperson