

the issues," said Benny Abruzzo, an owner and general manager of the Santa Fe Ski Area.

"When they didn't get the answers they wanted, they left," said David Neslin, referring to the opponents. Neslin is a Denver attorney who represents the ski area.

Lucy Moore, a Santa Fe-based professional mediator, ran the meeting.

"I've seen much worse," she said after the meeting ended.

The proposed expansion would stretch over 10 years, increase the area by about 300 acres and allow construction of four new chairlifts, including one in the Big Tesuque drainage area adjacent to existing ski trails.

As required by federal regulations, Defler called the public meeting of all parties involved in the expansion and the appeal.

But Tuesday, opponents refused to discuss compromises unless Defler was willing to reconsider his decision and not allow expansion into the Big Tesuque drainage.

Sugarman demanded Defler "withdraw your decision" and "commit to a reanalysis," of the expansion before he and others would negotiate.

"I am willing to listen to new information on what to do with Big Tesuque," Defler said, but added, "I am not willing to take Big Tesuque out first."

At that point representatives from the city, county and Tesuque Pueblo left, saying

ther discussion.

County Commission Chairman Richard Anaya said, "It's a waste of our time to continue on."

Defler said the expansion involves more than the Big Tesuque basin.

"We've all lost by not discussing those (issues)," he said.

He said comments received by the Forest Service are split about evenly between those who favor the expansion and those who oppose it.

If the Big Tesuque expansion was removed from the approval, Neslin said the ski area probably would appeal that change.

See **TALKS** on **PAGE 3**



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BELEAGUERED OWNER: Benny Abruzzo, partial owner and operator of the Santa Fe Ski Area, listens to opponents speak against the Ski Area expansion.

Canyon Survey Tracks LANL's Nuke Waste

■ *Studies to gauge movement since '40s before evaluating health effects*

BY TOM RAGAN
Journal Staff Writer

LOS ALAMOS — A survey is under way to determine the migration patterns of plutonium, uranium and other hazardous materials that were dumped since the Manhattan Project and could be traveling through nearby canyons.

Geologists, hydrologists and drillers Monday began testing soil and ground water in

the Los Alamos and Pueblo canyons to determine how fast the contaminants have spread since they were discarded seven miles west of the canyons in the mid-1940s, when the first atomic bomb was designed.

The pilot project will cost \$300,000 and should be completed by mid-summer. It is part of a \$62 million Environmental Restoration Project the lab has approved for the 1996-1997 fiscal year, said Gary Kliewer, a public information officer for the lab.

By 1997, 28 buildings will be leveled at the S Site, one of the original work areas of the laboratory and which once stood for "sawmill." It's an area where conventional

See **PROJECT** on **PAGE 3**



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FOUR DECADES OF FALLOUT: Safety Officer John Hayes operates a flame ionization detector as a team drills for soil samples in the floor of Pueblo Canyon. The monitor checks for hazardous vapors.

County Ap Slope Build

BY JOHN J. LUMPKIN
Journal Staff Writer

The Santa Fe County Commission passed a sweeping set of home building rules for unincorporated areas of the county Tuesday.

The measures are intended to modernize water and erosion management and prevent visible construction on slopes, county officials said.

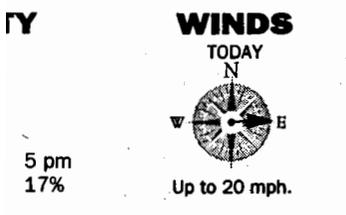
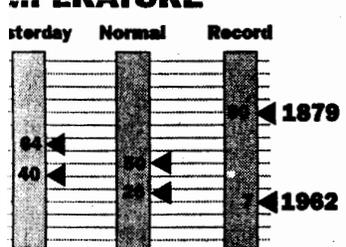
Supporters of the measure have argued it will preserve the beauty of hillsides in the county by preventing development there; opponents have said it too severely restricts landowners' rights.

Public comment on the measures in January led to some changes

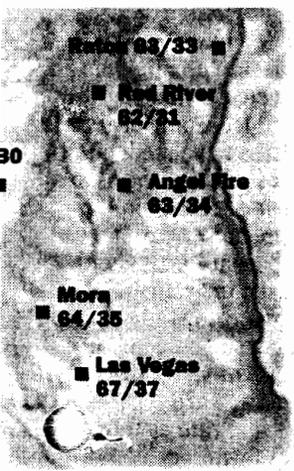
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Project Tracking LANL's N-Waste



T...
in and snow tonight.
night low temperatures will be
e middle 20s and 30s.



oves Broad g Limits

100 cubic feet per second during
100-year storm. An approved
endment from Commissioner
arcos Trujillo halved the distance
it was originally a 50-foot setback
m arroyos.

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explosives were made.
Last week, the demolition of eight
buildings in that area got under way
and should be completed in the next
three weeks. The buildings have
been out of service since the 1950s,
or "decommissioned," as the govern-
ment refers to it.

A guard station on West Jemez
Road, once the back gate during the
days when Los Alamos was a closed
city, will be the only structure on
the roster of decommissioned build-
ings to be spared by the bulldozer.

But dealing with the fate of haz-
ardous waste isn't as easy as level-
ing a building.

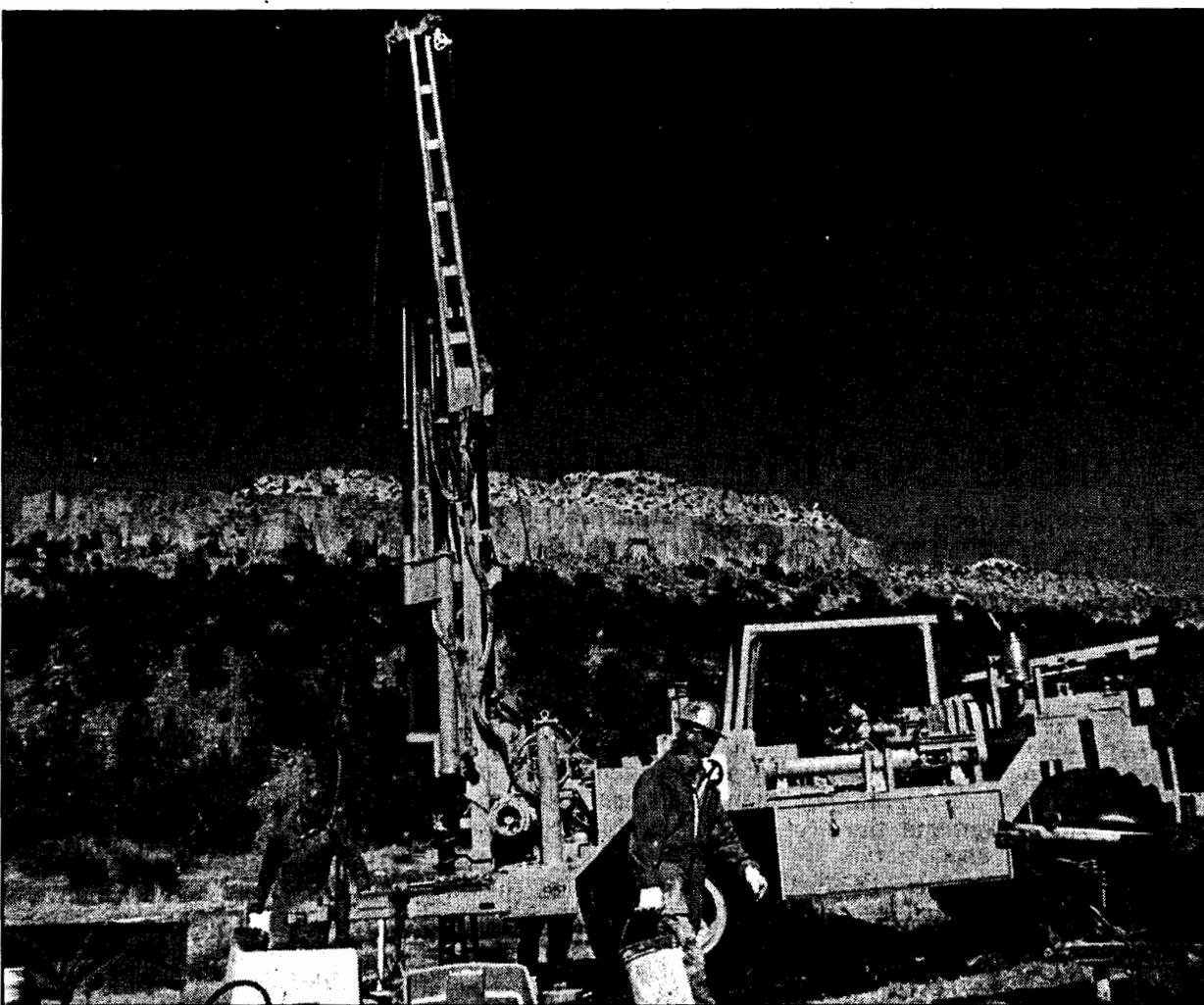
"We know we have a problem —
we know the stuff has been released
since 1943 because the folks back
then kept pretty good records,"
Kliwer said. "As soon as we find it,
we're going to see how it's moving
in and in which direction. And from
there, we'll be able to make an eval-
uation on the effects it has on
human health."

A study by the lab in 1981 con-
cluded that there were no health
risks tied to the dumping of plutoni-
um and uranium and other haz-
ardous wastes into Acid Canyon,
which sits next to the two canyons
that are now being studied, said Pat
Longmire, a geologist working on
the survey.

But the Environmental Protection
Agency requires the lab to keep
tabs on the post-World War II haz-
ardous wastes if it wants to keep
operating its present hazardous
waste treatment plant, Kliwer
said.

Today, the hazardous waste treat-
ment plant is located in a different
part of the lab than in the 1940s, and
the treated water is released into
the Mortan Dad canyon, according
to approved EPA regulations.

Although there are 19 canyons
that could serve as pathways for the
hazardous wastes, the lab decided



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START OF SEARCH: Shane White, center, and other lab-contracted employees collect samples from the bot-
tom of Pueblo Canyon below the Los Alamos Hill.

to survey these two canyons first,
then check the others in the fall.

"There are about 110 miles of
canyons, so we can't just sample all
of them," said Al Pratt, the leading
scientist working on the survey. "So
we're going to select representative
reaches in certain canyons and do a
characterization study."

In order to look for the myriad of
chemicals that were instrumental in

making bombs in the last four
decades, the group digs 60-foot
wells into the ground, then takes
core samples of the soil and the
groundwater and checks for conta-
minants, Longmire said.

Longmire said the wastes travel
about a fraction of an inch every
year, but certain factors could move
the wastes through the canyons at a
faster speed.

"Rainstorms could move it
through the soil at meters a day," he
said.

"We want to have the best scien-
tific information for people who
perform health risk analysis," he
said. "And in order to have that, you
have to know where the contami-
nants are ... and are they going to be
tightly bound to soil particles or
leached out of the soil."