

Los Alamos

NATIONAL LABORATORY

*Environmental Management
Policy & Public Involvement, MS M773*
Los Alamos, New Mexico 87545
Telephone: (505) 667-2347
FAX: (505) 667-3395

Date: August 16, 1995
Refer to: EM:95-575

Ms. Barbara Driscoll
U.S. Environmental Protection Agency
Hazardous Waste Management Division
RCRA Permits Branch (6H-PN)
1445 Ross Avenue
Dallas, TX 75202-2733

Dear Ms. Driscoll:

SUBJECT: SUMMARY OF COMMENTS - JUNE 21, 1995 PUBLIC MEETING

Enclosed is a summary of the comments from the June 21, 1995, public meeting that was held at the Pojoaque High School Gym, from 6:00 p.m. to 9:00 p.m. The primary purpose of this public meeting was to inform the public about the Laboratory's request to EPA to perform expedited cleanup actions of six sites, to discuss the permit modification process with them, and to continue to foster a dialogue that is based on mutual trust and understanding.

The following forms of advertising were used to publicize our public meeting:

- public notices were published in five local newspapers to advertise the meeting (Attachment A).
- a total of 2,098 notices were mailed to our stakeholders to inform them of this meeting (1,854 listed on our external mailing list and 244 listed on our internal Laboratory mailing list).
- paid public service announcements were aired on four local radio stations for three days.
- news briefs were listed in local newspapers and community calendars.
- flyers were posted in restaurants, laundromats, grocery stores, libraries, and bookstores.
- the five local document repositories were provided copies of the requests for permit modification.



12647

2517
~~RCRA Permits~~
General

Ken Hargis opened the meeting by welcoming everyone and by introducing Dave McInroy, the Environmental Restoration (ER) Project's regulatory compliance manager. Dave gave a brief introduction about the ER Project. He talked about the permit modification process, and told the attendees how important it was for them to provide their input to EPA.

Information sheets and posters were available on each of the six sites including photographs of the sites. Technical staff members Ray Brewer, Carol LeDelfe, Lynda Sobojinski, and Merlin Wheeler made five minute presentations on each of these sites. After their presentations, informal discussions among small groups of people seated at roundtables were held. The ER Project representatives were available at each poster display and at the roundtables to discuss individual questions. Facilitators were also present at each table to aid with discussion and to write down issues and comments from the people at each table.

The attendance list for the public meeting indicated 32 people were present (Attachment B). The evaluation forms are attached for your review and information (Attachment C). The content of public comments, questions, and issues were recorded on "tear sheets" (Attachment D) at each roundtable and are summarized below:

- How many of the 2100 sites have been cleaned up?
- Does the Environmental Restoration Project have sites behind the Los Alamos Inn?
- Are the sites surrounded by a fence or some type of marker?
- Are animals tested for contamination?
- How does the Environmental Restoration incorporate public participation into the remedy selection for these sites?
- Who determines the cleanup time frame?
- Is more work being created for the Laboratory?
- Can most of the contamination be taken care here?
- How does the Project know about depth of pits, core samples, history, and geophysics?
- Are there mixed waste concerns?
- Is the Laboratory spending too much money on planning, time, comment periods?
- How can the Laboratory do its cleanup work cheaper? Are public comment periods important? How many people representing the public are expected to attend this type of meeting?
- Why does the government always seem to respond to a squeaky wheel (if there isn't anything going on, people won't attend)?
- Laboratory employees are people too. These persons feel more comfortable because they understand the process a lot better than others, and feel more comfortable living in Los Alamos because they know there is no real risk.
- Measure the quality of public meetings. Everyone has his or her own ax to grind.

Additional comments from the evaluation forms:

- Consider putting the appropriate Los Alamos National Laboratory address on the back of the comment cards so that people can send them later. Some folks may want time to put their thoughts together on their responses. Limit attendance by Laboratory and contractor personnel and indicate the reason for participation by the New Mexico Environment Department. Few members of the public attended, only a few activist personnel with their own agenda. Public participation seems to be minimal, which suggests that the majority of the public is not concerned with the process/project. The reading room in Los Alamos should change their hours of operation to accommodate those that work from 8:00 p.m. to 5:00 p.m.

On June 23, 1995, a tour of the expedited cleanup areas was held from 4:00 p.m. to 7:00 p.m. Five individuals signed up and participated in the tour. Sites visited included an inactive electrical equipment storage area, a 500-gallon cylindrical concrete septic tank; a runoff area from a former metal plating and etching facility; and a surface disposal area that was used for construction debris (all were designated as expedited cleanups).

Thank you for your commitment to the Environmental Restoration Project. If you have any questions, please call me at 505-667-2347.

Sincerely,



Kenneth M. Hargis, Program Manager
Policy & Public Involvement

Attachment A	Public notices announcing the June 21, 1995, public meeting
Attachment B	Attendance list from the June 21, 1995, public meeting
Attachment C	Evaluation forms for the June 21, 1995, public meeting
Attachment D	Tear sheets from the June 21, 1995, public meeting

Cy: W/attachments

T. Taylor, LAAO, MS A316
J. Jansen, EM/ER, MS M992
T. Glatzmaier, EM/ER, MS M992
D. McInroy, EM/ER, MS M992
P. Shanley, ESH-19, MS K498
P. Trujillo-Oviedo, CIO, MS A117
RPF, MS M707
CIC-10, MS A150

ATTACHMENT A

Public notices from the June 21, 1995, Public Meeting



Request for Modifications of Los Alamos National Laboratory Hazardous Waste Operating Permit

Los Alamos National Laboratory (LANL) has submitted to the U. S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) a request for a Class 3 Permit Modification to the Hazardous and Solid Waste Amendments (HSWA) portion of its Resource Conservation and Recovery Act (RCRA) permit. The HSWA Module requires LANL to investigate potentially contaminated sites and if the site presents a threat to human health and the environment, alternative remedies must be considered.

The request is to perform expedited cleanup actions of 6 sites. Expedited cleanups typically address larger-scale sites that are more expensive to clean up and are listed in the HSWA Module. These cleanup actions will minimize costs and allow for the quick removal of potential health and environmental risks associated with past Laboratory operations.

The request for permit modification and the history of LANL's compliance with the permit being modified is available from Barbara Driscoll of the EPA, RCRA Permits Branch (6H-PN), 1445 Ross Avenue, Dallas, Texas 75202, (214) 665-7441. The request for permit modification is also available for review at the locations below.

LANL's Community Reading Room
1350 Central Avenue, Suite 101
Los Alamos, NM

Santa Fe Public Library
145 Washington Avenue
Santa Fe, NM

Mesa Public Library
2400 Central Avenue
Los Alamos, NM

Española Public Library
314A Oñate Street NW
Española, NM

Governor's Office
San Ildefonso Pueblo
San Ildefonso, NM

Comments must be submitted by July 31, 1995, to Barbara Driscoll at the EPA. This request will be discussed at a public meeting on

Wednesday, June 21, 1995
6 p.m. to 9 p.m.

Pojoaque Valley High School gymnasium
(Located at the intersection of US 84/285 and NM 502 in Pojoaque)





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Laboratory Hazardous Waste Operating Permit**

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Pojoaque Valley High School gymnasium
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June 15, 1995

Thrifty Nickel



Request for Modification of Los Alamos National Laboratory Hazardous Waste Operating Permit

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Wednesday, June 21, 1995
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ATTACHMENT B

Attendance list from the June 21, 1995, Public Meeting

SIGN-IN SHEET

Environmental Restoration Class 3 Permit Modification
Expedited Cleanup Public Meeting
Pojoaque Valley High School Gym
Wednesday, June 21, 1995 - 6:00 p.m. to 9:00 p.m.

Name	Address	Telephone #	Are you representing the ER Project - Y or N	How did you hear about this meeting? (If a newspaper, indicate which one.)
1. Al Shapiro	Rt. #11 Box 210 - XSF Española, NM 87532		No	Mail
2. TOM SWITLIK	816 Calle Chamisa #226		No	Postcard
3. Terry Wallace	146 Monte Rey S		No	Postcard
4. W. F. Spurgeon	Ellicott City, MD		Yes	from LANL
5. Anthony E. Salazar	Box 50803, Española		NO	LANL
6. DAVID SIEFKEN	7926 Jones Branch Dr. McLean, VA		NO	ERM

Name	Address	Telephone #	Are you representing the ER Project - Y or N	How did you hear about this meeting? (If a newspaper, indicate which one.)
7. Everett Trollinger	MSA316	667-5801	YES	DOE/LAAO
8. Deborah Criswell	^{DOE/} AL/ERD	845-4752	Yes	DOE/AL
9. KIM WADE	^{A117} DIR-510	665-9036	yes	
10. ROMAN VALDEZ	Rt 5 Box 216 SANTA FE	455-7527		No newspaper
11. Rob. Dno. Q				ALo LPA
12. AL PRATT	1214 Big Red Ln Los Alamos		Y	Radio
13. Carol LaDelfe		662-7445	Y	Radio
14. Peter LaDelfe		662-7445	N	Hearsey

Name	Address	Telephone #	Are you representing the ER Project - Y or N	How did you hear about this meeting? (If a newspaper, indicate which one.)
15. DAVE BROXTON	57 Valle Vista LA		N	Radio
16. MAXINE EWANKOW	799 6 th St. Apt. 11 LOS ALAMOS NM		N	FRIEND
17. Danny Katzman	732 San Diego		N	at work.
18. Lisa Mathew	1505 15 th St Suite B LA		Y	work -
19. Kelly Black	138 Monte Rey Dr. S.		Y	at work
20. COURTLAND FEGMIRE			N	mailing
21. Tom Straw			N	Mailing & friend
22. DON KRIER			N	work
23. Wanda Cody			N	Carmen

Name	Address	Telephone #	Are you representing the ER Project - Y or N	How did you hear about this meeting? (If a newspaper, indicate which one.)
24. Gary Kleiver	Nome	665-2085	Public Affairs	
25. T B NELSON	SANTA FE	674 2949	YES	
26. DON + Lois COFFIN	LA		+2	<input checked="" type="radio"/> NO
27. Gerald Martinez	S.I.	667-9839	ESS-1	
28. Nick Martinez	S.I.	455-7566	student	
29. Barbara Hoditschek	Rt1 Box 201	455 2491	NMED	
30. Beverly Parson	Quintana P.O. Box 96077	Phoenix 852-2562		<input checked="" type="radio"/> NO Cheryl Rojas
31. David McInay		667-0819	Y	WORK
32. REYNAL GILLEN			N	Espanola cable TV

ATTACHMENT C

Evaluation forms from the June 21, 1995, Public Meeting

Thank you for attending this meeting. We appreciate your time and effort. Please take a couple of minutes to complete this card so that we may evaluate the effectiveness of this meeting and other opportunities for future interactions.

Please indicate how you feel about the following statements. Do you *strongly agree, agree, are neutral, disagree, or strongly disagree.*

I trust the LANL ER Project to make reasonable cleanup decisions. SA A N D SD

I have an active interest in LANL's ER Project activities. SA A N D SD

Information on LANL's environmental issues is readily available to the public. SA A N D SD

Land contaminated by LANL activities will be cleaned to appropriate levels. SA A N D SD

Please answer the following questions with as much detail as you are comfortable sharing. Use the back of the card if you need more space.

- 1) What could have been done differently this evening to make this a more positive experience for you?
- 2) Did this activity provide an opportunity for you to exchange ideas and information with LANL staff and other members of the public? Why or why not?
- 3) Do you feel that both the members of the public and the LANL staff who attended this meeting gained a greater understanding of the concerns of the other?

Presenters need to prepare more thoroughly 

Thank you for attending this meeting. We appreciate your time and effort. Please take a couple of minutes to complete this card so that we may evaluate the effectiveness of this meeting and other opportunities for future interactions.

Please indicate how you feel about the following statements. Do you *strongly agree, agree, are neutral, disagree, or strongly disagree.*

I trust the LANL ER Project to make reasonable cleanup decisions. SA A N D SD

I have an active interest in LANL's ER Project activities. SA A N D SD

Information on LANL's environmental issues is readily available to the public. SA A N D SD

Land contaminated by LANL activities will be cleaned to appropriate levels. SA A N D SD

Please answer the following questions with as much detail as you are comfortable sharing. Use the back of the card if you need more space.

- 1) What could have been done differently this evening to make this a more positive experience for you?
see back
- 2) Did this activity provide an opportunity for you to exchange ideas and information with LANL staff and other members of the public? Why or why not?
yes
- 3) Do you feel that both the members of the public and the LANL staff who attended this meeting gained a greater understanding of the concerns of the other?
yes

yes 

Thank you for attending this meeting. We appreciate your time and effort. Please take a couple of minutes to complete this card so that we may evaluate the effectiveness of this meeting and other opportunities for future interactions.

Please indicate how you feel about the following statements. Do you **strongly agree, agree, are neutral, disagree, or strongly disagree.**

I trust the LANL ER Project to make reasonable cleanup decisions.

SA A N **D** SD

I have an active interest in LANL's ER Project activities.

SA A N D SD

Information on LANL's environmental issues is readily available to the public.

SA A **N** D SD

Land contaminated by LANL activities will be cleaned to appropriate levels.

SA **A** N D SD

Please answer the following questions with as much detail as you are comfortable sharing. Use the back of the card if you need more space.

- 1) What could have been done differently this evening to make this a more positive experience for you?

A cooler room

- 2) Did this activity provide an opportunity for you to exchange ideas and information with LANL staff and other members of the public? Why or why not?

Not many public here.

- 3) Do you feel that both the members of the public and the LANL staff who attended this meeting gained a greater understanding of the concerns of the other?

No.



Thank you for attending this meeting. We appreciate your time and effort. Please take a couple of minutes to complete this card so that we may evaluate the effectiveness of this meeting and other opportunities for future interactions.

Please indicate how you feel about the following statements. Do you **strongly agree, agree, are neutral, disagree, or strongly disagree.**

I trust the LANL ER Project to make reasonable cleanup decisions.

SA **A** N D SD

I have an active interest in LANL's ER Project activities.

SA A N D SD

Information on LANL's environmental issues is readily available to the public.

SA **A** N D SD

Land contaminated by LANL activities will be cleaned to appropriate levels.

SA **A** N D SD

Please answer the following questions with as much detail as you are comfortable sharing. Use the back of the card if you need more space.

- 1) What could have been done differently this evening to make this a more positive experience for you?

Limit attendance by LANL & LANL contractor personnel. Also cause NMEC to participate.

- 2) Did this activity provide an opportunity for you to exchange ideas and information with LANL staff and other members of the public? Why or why not?

Yes. Unfortunately very few members of the "real" public attended. Mostly LANL personnel and a few activist personnel with them for agenda.

- 3) Do you feel that both the members of the public and the LANL staff who attended this meeting gained a greater understanding of the concerns of the other?

Yes, however public participation seems to be minimal. Suggest that the majority of the public is not concerned with the process/program.

Thank you for attending this meeting. We appreciate your time and effort. Please take a couple of minutes to complete this card so that we may evaluate the effectiveness of this meeting and other opportunities for future interactions.

Please indicate how you feel about the following statements. Do you *strongly agree, agree, are neutral, disagree, or strongly disagree.*

I trust the LANL ER Project to make reasonable cleanup decisions.

(SA) A N D SD

I have an active interest in LANL's ER Project activities.

(SA) A N D SD

Information on LANL's environmental issues is readily available to the public.

(SA) A N D SD

Land contaminated by LANL activities will be cleaned to appropriate levels.

(SA) A N D SD

Please answer the following questions with as much detail as you are comfortable sharing. Use the back of the card if you need more space.

- 1) What could have been done differently this evening to make this a more positive experience for you?

N/A

- 2) Did this activity provide an opportunity for you to exchange ideas and information with LANL staff and other members of the public? Why or why not?

N/A

- 3) Do you feel that both the members of the public and the LANL staff who attended this meeting gained a greater understanding of the concerns of the other?

MA



We encourage your oral and/or written participation in the Environmental Protection Agency's public review process for the Los Alamos National Laboratory's permit modification. You may submit your written comments to Barbara Driscoll directly (address on the back), or you may give or mail them to the Environmental Restoration Project Office, MS M773, Los Alamos, New Mexico 87545, and we will mail them to Ms. Driscoll. Feel free to add more pages. **Thank you.**

I keep trying to get information from the lending room at Los Alamos but it never opens except when I'm at work. Why won't LANL allow me easy access to information?



Carmen -

You may want to consider putting the appropriate LANL address on here (maybe even postage paid) so that people can send them in later. Some folks may want time to put their thoughts together on their response.

Thanks. Deborah Gribold

ATTACHMENT D

Tear sheets from the June 21, 1995, Public Meeting

TEAR SHEETS FROM PUBLIC MEETING - June 21, 1995

- **How many of the 2100 sites have been cleaned up?** Dave McInroy answered, refer to Overview Projected Actions: four of the 2100 sites have been cleaned up according to last report; six more clean-ups have been proposed as of 6/20/95.
- **Do we have sites behind the Los Alamos Inn?** Yes.
- **Is the specific site behind the Los Alamos Inn contaminated?** The parking lot area contains low levels of contamination. There are no extremely contaminated areas.
- **Is the asphalt behind JCI contaminated?** General question, however, there was some discussion about the storage area behind JCI being reasphalted.
- **What is the process for asbestos sites?** The site is encased in cement and then the whole area is dug out. When the area is solidified there will not be any worry about future leaking or inhalation.
- **Are all these sites surrounded by a fence or some type of marker?**
 - Most of the sites on Laboratory property are marked in some way
 - No restrictions for animals
- **Are animals tested for contamination?**
 - Yes, they are monitored
 - Information in Environmental Monitoring Report
 - Huge range of animal and vegetation testing
- **Public participation in remedy selection - how?**
 - Common sense - does it make sense to the public?
- **How was the cleanup time frame determined?** Cleanup of all sites by the year 2008 seems ambitious.
 - Look at what needs to be done
 - Money available
 - Good idea of which sites need to be cleaned up
 - Prioritize sites

- **Is the ER Project simply creating more work for the Laboratory?**
 - What is the risk associated with cleanup activity
 - Future land use is important

- **Can most of the contamination be taken care of here?**
 - No, the waste must be sent off-site; it is temporarily stored on-site
 - Ongoing measurement of contamination at disposal areas at Laboratory - as long as it is on Laboratory property
 - If contaminants are released from Laboratory control, the site will be cleaned up
 - Most of PCB's will be incinerated
 - Laboratory is now looking possibly at capping disposal sites
 - No decision has been made yet regarding waste disposal
 - EPA makes the ultimate decision
 - Off-site disposal areas are subject to a separate set of regulations

- **Specific Expedited Clean-ups**

Oversight? DOE performs the review and the State is also involved

EPA's role: Review and approval of sampling and clean-up plans and makes the final approval on cleanup plans

EPA visits periodically

EPA reviews all processes and plans.

New companies (outside) come in with new technologies.

How do you know depth of pits at the surface disposal area?

Core samples? History and geophysics discussed.

- **Does the DOE pay the EPA people at Los Alamos?**

Oversight at LANL by the State, under the Agreement-in-Principle program funded by DOE. State personnel located at the Laboratory

- **Communication Improvement**

Site candidacy. Are there mixed waste concerns for Ray Brewer's site (Material Disposal Area M, Solid Waste Management Unit 9-013)? Yes... but not overwhelmed by it. Are we spending too much money (planning, time, and comment period)? How can we do it cheaper? Are public comment periods important?

- **How many public's directed to be here?**

Who is the public?

Laboratory employees are considered to be members of the public also. They live in the community and are also potentially at risk

What about the people in Taos and Santa Fe

Assess the benefits of face-to-face interaction

- Interact with the "outside" public
- Present information that is correct to put into perspective people's misplaced fear

Success is not equal to the number of people who attend your meetings

Quality of opportunity (to participate)

EPA/State judge by numbers (because validate process)

Controversy = numbers

Since the February 1995 meeting to the present, there has been an increase in confidence with the ER Project
ER responds to feedback, this is an important method of presenting material

There are fewer people because of support for mission

Problem of getting participation from more people

ER has shown progress

Who is the "silent majority"

Squeaking Wheel (activists)

Consistent fear of emerging public dissatisfaction

Public wanting to discuss mission

Role the media portrays in presenting the truth or facts

- **Budget and Decreasing Participation**

- Moving beyond the paperwork
- Photo portfolio to show success
- Squeak positively by showing success
- Success of no further action
- Sites that are off the list - % = completed action

- **Assessment vs. Remediation**

- who takes credit (credit for NFA's)

- **General comments in the larger group:**

Laboratory people are private citizens too. Don't you think we should ask who is from the Laboratory? An individual said that Laboratory people are feeling more comfortable because they understand the process a lot better than the public. Once people see it on a human basis it will be better understood. People working at the Laboratory feel more comfortable living in Los Alamos because they know there is no real risk.

If there isn't anything going on, people won't attend.

Government always responds to a squeaky wheel. When they stop, the monies stop. We read a few news releases that the project is stopping. The way to be rewarded is to provide answers to the American people.

Measure the quality of public meetings? Everyone has their own ax to grind. Don't see counting numbers as a convenient way. What is the alternative? When you get the portfolio-that is how you can measure-give me some 8x10 glossies. This will impress the Congress. We got to squeak in a positive mode. We should be able to take credit that we have taken sites off the list.

Build relationships through communication to increase trust and keep public interest strong.

The generation of funds is low due to no interest in issues of clean-up; program is too private which results in no interest. If interest was increased, funds would also increase. Money is spent on investigation instead of on remediation.