

General May 2000

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DRAFT ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT



for

CONSTRUCTION OF FEDERAL EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT AGENCY (FEMA) TEMPORARY EMERGENCY HOUSING IN LOS ALAMOS and WHITE ROCK, NEW MEXICO FEMA-1329-DR-NM & FEMA-3154-EM-NM

Prepared for:

Federal Emergency Management Agency
Region VI
Denton, Texas

Prepared by:

U.S. Army Corps of Engineers
Albuquerque District
Albuquerque, New Mexico

May 2000



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FINDING OF NO SIGNIFICANT IMPACT
for
CONSTRUCTION OF FEDERAL EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT AGENCY (FEMA)
TEMPORARY EMERGENCY HOUSING IN
LOS ALAMOS and WHITE ROCK, NEW MEXICO
FEMA-1329-DR-NM & FEMA-3154-EM-NM

BACKGROUND

In accordance with 44 Code of Federal Regulations (CFR) for the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA), Subpart B - Agency Implementing Procedures, Section 10.9, an environmental assessment (EA) was prepared pursuant to Section 102 of the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) of 1969 as implemented by the regulations promulgated by the President's Council on Environmental Quality (40 CFR Parts 1500-1508). The purpose of the EA was to analyze the potential environmental impacts of the construction of FEMA temporary emergency housing in Los Alamos and White Rock, NM, and to determine whether to prepare an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) or Finding of No Significant Impact (FONSI). Los Alamos County is located in north central New Mexico approximately 35 miles northwest of Santa Fe.

The Cerro Grande forest fire started on May 4, 2000, and quickly spread to the northeast toward Los Alamos, NM. As the fire approached, over 20,000 residents were evacuated from Los Alamos and White Rock. On the evening of May 10, 2000, the fire reached Los Alamos, destroying approximately 190 structures, some of them multi-family dwellings, on the northwestern side of the city. At the request of the Governor, the President declared an emergency declaration FEMA 3154-EM-NM on May 10, 2000, and declared a major Federal disaster on May 13, 2000, FEMA-1329-DR-NM. Damage assessments from the fire indicated that over 400 dwelling units were destroyed or damaged. To provide temporary emergency housing for the people displaced by the fire in Los Alamos, FEMA is proposing to develop temporary mobile home parks to accommodate a maximum of 400 units in Los Alamos and White Rock, NM.

FINDINGS

FEMA has made the following determinations from the information contained in the EA:

The proposed project as described in the EA, will not result in any significant adverse impacts to existing land use, water resources (surface water, groundwater, Waters of the United States, wetlands, and floodplains), air quality, noise, biological resources (vegetation, fish and wildlife, state and Federally listed threatened or endangered species and critical habitats), safety, hazardous materials and waste, cultural resources, or result in disproportionately high or adverse effects on minority or low-income populations. The proposed action is also in compliance with all relevant Federal, state and local laws.

CONDITIONS

The following conditions must be met as part of this project. Failure to comply with these conditions may jeopardize Federal funds:

- 1) That the findings of this EA and FONSI apply only to the sites that have been specifically described and evaluated. Any other areas considered at a later date as a site for emergency disaster housing resulting from the May 2000 Cerro Grande fire must be evaluated for compliance with NEPA and other applicable Federal, State and local environmental and historic preservation laws, regulations, and Executive Orders.
- 2) If subsequent owners of the proposed temporary housing sites evaluated in this EA wish to convert any of them to permanent housing sites, the applicant is required to hold a public hearing and consider the public's comments prior to the action. In addition, they must reinitiate consultation with the New Mexico State Historic Preservation Officer and coordinate with other interested parties on the appropriate disposition of affected, or potentially affected, historic and cultural resources prior to the action.
- 3) That the sites be developed sequentially in the following order to respond to changes in demand and minimize impacts: 1) Fairgrounds East; 2) Fairgrounds West; 3) Los Alamos Middle School; 4) Middle White Rock; 5) Overlook Park.
- 4) That the Middle White Rock site be developed to maintain a 25 foot wide vegetative buffer strip of existing vegetation along the entire perimeter of the site and that large mature trees identified by USACE staff be preserved. On all other sites, a 25-foot intermittent vegetative perimeter buffer will be maintained where trees are present.
- 5) No significant cultural resources are known to presently occur at the proposed sites. If however, during construction, unanticipated historic or cultural materials are encountered, construction activity will cease immediately within 30 feet of the remains until their ultimate disposition is determined in consultation with the New Mexico State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO) and other interested parties.
- 6) That the Los Alamos Middle School and Overlook Park site boundaries be clearly delineated on the construction drawings to avoid the archaeological sites located adjacent to these areas. In addition, the USACE resident engineer will be on-site to supervise the layout and construction in order to insure avoidance of these archaeological sites.
- 7) The Kwage Mesa site will not be developed as a temporary emergency-housing site because of extensive cultural resources located on the site. Intensive consultation with the SHPO will be required in order to undertake development at this site.
- 8) Signage needed to control traffic will be identified prior to site development in cooperation with the County and installed as part of the project prior to occupancy.
- 9) That a Stormwater Pollution Prevention Plan (SWPPP) be prepared for the proposed sites and that a Notice of Intent (NOI), Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) form 3510-6 be submitted to the appropriate agency at least 48 hours prior to any ground-disturbing activity.

10) The contractor will be required, as part of the contract agreement, to abide by provisions of the Environmental Protection Section (1410) of the construction specification which requires:

- a) Implementation of measures to prevent spillage and runoff of chemicals, fuels, oils, greases, and bituminous materials.
- b) Any hazardous materials and waste on the site associated with the construction activities would be stored in appropriate containers or facilities.
- c) Fueling of construction equipment would occur on site and all hazardous materials will be handled and disposed of in accordance with applicable local, state, and Federal regulations.
- d) The contractor will maintain all vehicles on site in good working order to minimize pollutant emissions.
- e) The contractor will implement dust suppression measures during construction.
- f) Sedimentation and erosion control will be implemented during construction to reduce runoff. Long-term erosion control will be incorporated into the site layout.

CONCLUSIONS

The actions identified for this proposed project have been reviewed and, to the best of our knowledge, do not have the potential for significant cumulative effects when the proposed action is combined with other past, present, and reasonable foreseeable future actions in accordance with 44 CFR Part 10.8 (d) (3) (x).

Based on the attached EA and other above described sources, FEMA determined that the proposed project qualifies as a major Federal action that will not significantly affect the quality of the natural and human environment. As a result of this FONSI, an EIS will not be prepared (44 CFR Part 10.8) and the proposed project as described in the attached EA may proceed.

APPROVAL:

Kyle M. Mills, P.E.
Environmental Officer
FEMA Region VI

R. L. "Buddy" Young
Regional Director
FEMA Region VI

Date _____

Date _____

ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT
for
CONSTRUCTION OF FEDERAL EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT AGENCY (FEMA)
TEMPORARY EMERGENCY HOUSING IN LOS ALAMOS AND WHITE ROCK
NEW MEXICO

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1.0 INTRODUCTION

1.1 PROJECT AUTHORITY

In accordance with 44 Code of Federal Regulations (CFR) for the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA), Subpart B - Agency Implementing Procedures, Section 10.9 an environmental assessment (EA) was prepared pursuant to Section 102 of the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969 (NEPA) as implemented by the regulations promulgated by the President's Council on Environmental Quality (40 CFR Parts 1500-1508). The purpose of the EA was to analyze the potential environmental impacts of the construction of FEMA temporary emergency housing in and around Los Alamos, New Mexico, and to determine whether to prepare an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) or Finding of No Significant Impact (FONSI).

1.2 PROJECT LOCATION

Los Alamos and White Rock, New Mexico, are located in north central New Mexico, about 34 miles north of the state capitol, Santa Fe, in the southwestern United States (Figure 1). Both are in Los Alamos County, which lies on the Pajarito Plateau, a gently sloping tableland formed when ash from volcanic eruptions consolidated into tuff, a relatively soft rock. Mountains including Jemez Mountain, Santa Clara Peak, Rodondo Peak and the San Pedro Mountains flank the towns.

2.0 PURPOSE

2.1 PURPOSE AND NEED FOR THE PROPOSED ACTION

The Cerro Grande forest fire is the largest in New Mexico's recorded history. It started on May 4, 2000 and quickly spread to the northeast toward Los Alamos, NM. As the fire approached, over 20,000 residents were evacuated from Los Alamos and White Rock. On the evening of May 10, 2000, the fire reached Los Alamos, destroying approximately 190 structures, both single-family and multi-family dwellings, on the northwestern side of the city. At the request of the Governor, the President declared an emergency declaration for Los Alamos County on May 10, 2000, FEMA 3154-EM-NM. On May 13, 2000 the President, at the Governor's request, declared a major disaster declaration FEMA-1329-DR-NM. Damage assessments from the fire indicated that over 400 dwelling units were destroyed or damaged. To provide temporary emergency housing for the people displaced by the fire in Los Alamos, FEMA is proposing to develop temporary mobile home parks to accommodate up to 400 units in Los Alamos and White Rock area.

3.0 ALTERNATIVES CONSIDERED

3.1 NO ACTION

Implementation of the no action alternative would entail no construction or preparation of sites for temporary emergency housing of fire victims. Consequently, people displaced by the Cerro Grande fire would have to remain in the alternative temporary housing they have found with friends or family members, hotels or apartments available in Los Alamos, White Rock or Santa

Fe areas. Initial surveys have shown that on May 22, 2000 there were 22 rental units available in Los Alamos, 12 rental units available in White Rock and 125 rental units in Santa Fe. These units include hotels and apartments and the number available is constantly changing.

3.2 THE PROPOSED ACTION

The proposed action is to construct temporary emergency housing for people displaced by the Cerro Grande fire. Six sites are being considered for development in the Los Alamos and White Rock areas. This alternative would provide up to 300 total temporary emergency housing units. The existing alternative housing described in the Section 3.1 above would remain available as an option for fire victims.

Not all of the proposed alternative sites listed below would be developed at the same time; some might not be developed at all if they are not needed. Site preparation would include clearing, grading, construction of internal gravel roads, and any additional construction activities necessary for the placement of utilities (telephone lines, sewer and water lines). Work would be done from start to finish on only 50 units at a time at each site selected. This will allow completed lots to be available quickly and ensure there is an identified need for the additional units.

The temporary emergency housing at the proposed project sites would consist primarily of manufactured homes. Manufactured homes would be placed on the proposed site at a density of approximately six homes per acre. Temporary electrical hookups, water and sewer service systems would also be developed on the site to support the units.

3.2.1 FAIRGROUNDS EAST

The Fairgrounds East site (Figure 2, Photos 1 and 2) is on the Los Alamos County Fairgrounds on the northeast side of Los Alamos. It is south of the stables and rodeo grounds, north of Ildefonso Road and reaches to the edge of a steep slope to the east and south. North Mesa Park road separates this site from Fairgrounds West described below. The site is about 9 acres in size and could accommodate approximately 50 units. There is access at the site to water, sanitary sewer, electric and gas utilities. There are no apparent access restrictions for hauling. Vehicles could gain access to the site from San Ildefonso Road.

3.2.2 FAIRGROUNDS WEST

The Fairgrounds West site (Figure 2, Photos 1, 3 and 4) is on the Los Alamos County Fairgrounds on the northeast side of Los Alamos. It is south of the stables and east of the soccer fields. San Ildefonso Road borders the site to the south and would provide vehicular access to the temporary emergency housing sites. This site is about 8 acres in size and could accommodate approximately 45 units. There is access at the site to water, sanitary sewer, electric and gas utilities. There are no apparent access restrictions for hauling. Vehicles could gain access to the site from San Ildefonso Road.

3.2.3 LOS ALAMOS MIDDLE SCHOOL

The Los Alamos Middle School site (Figure 2, Photo 5) is on the northeast side of Los Alamos just west of the fairgrounds. North Mesa Road lies to the north and San Ildefonso Road lies to the

south, both of which could provide vehicular access to the temporary emergency housing. The school parking lot is immediately west of the site; athletic fields border the site on the east. This site is about 19 acres in size and could accommodate approximately 155 units. There is access at the site to water, sanitary sewer, electric and gas utilities. There are no apparent access restrictions for hauling.

3.2.4 MIDDLE WHITE ROCK

The Middle White Rock site (Figure 4, Photos 6, 7, and 8) is about 8 miles from the area where the homes were destroyed. It is bordered by Bryce Avenue, Rover Boulevard, Canyon Drive and Louise Avenue. This site is about 22 acres in size and could accommodate approximately 130 units. There is access at the site to water, sanitary sewer, electric and gas utilities. There are no apparent access restrictions for hauling. Vehicles could gain access to the site from any of the roads listed above bordering the site.

3.2.5 OVERLOOK PARK

The Overlook Park site (Figure 5, Photos 9 and 10) is in eastern White Rock, about 8 miles from the area the homes were destroyed. It is bordered by Meadow Lane to the west, Overlook Road to the north, and White Rock Canyon to the east and south. This area is about 12 acres in size and could accommodate approximately 70 units. There is access at the site to water, sanitary sewer and electric utilities, but no access to gas. There are no apparent access restrictions for hauling. Vehicles could gain access to the site from Meadow Land and Overlook Road.

3.2.6 SITES CONSIDERED AND DISMISSED FROM FURTHER CONSIDERATION

Additional sites that had general physical characteristics required for development of mobile home parks and in or near Los Alamos and White Rock were also considered. One site considered was the picnic area north of the Los Alamos Middle School along North Mesa Road. This site was dismissed because the site was not large enough for the size of housing units proposed for the temporary emergency housing. Los Alamos County has indicated that they intend to develop sites for travel trailers at this site without Federal assistance for use by disaster victims as needed.

The Kwage Mesa site (Figure 3) was also considered because of its 25-acre size and level topography. It is an undeveloped parcel immediately east of the rodeo grounds and is bordered by Bayo Canyon to the north and a finger of Pueblo Canyon to the south. This site has severe restrictions for development. Utilities would need to be brought in over 3000 feet just to reach the portion of the mesa that would be wide enough to develop. Ingress and egress would be through the narrow area near the rodeo grounds and Bayo Canyon trail. In addition to these physical restrictions to development, cultural resources were found on the property. This combination of characteristics led to the dismissal of this site from further consideration.

4.0 DESCRIPTION OF EXISTING RESOURCES AND PROJECT IMPACTS

4.1 CLIMATE/GEOLOGY/SOILS

In general, Los Alamos County has a temperate mountain climate with a mean annual precipitation of 18 inches. A two-month rainy season occurs in July and August followed by drier, cooler weather in the fall. Snow covers the ground for about two months in the winter and spring is characterized by windy, dry conditions.

Los Alamos County lies on the Pajarito Plateau, a gently sloping tableland formed when ash from volcanic eruptions consolidated into tuff, a relatively soft rock. Water erosion has carved steep-sided canyons that generally run northwest to southeast through this plateau. Mesa tops typify the area between these canyons.

The proposed sites occur on well-drained soils that formed in material weathered from basalt and other volcanic debris. These soils generally have low shrink-swell potential so the construction of foundations for temporary emergency housing units should not be a problem.

4.2 WATER RESOURCES

4.2.1 SURFACE WATER

The Fairgrounds East and West and the Los Alamos Middle School sites are located on the North Mesa that is bounded on the north by Bayo Canyon and on the south by Pueblo Canyon. These drainages generally run from west to east and flow only during snowmelt runoff and rain events. They are tributaries to Los Alamos Canyon that joins Guaje Canyon, a right bank tributary to the Rio Grande River. The Middle White Rock and Overlook Park sites are located on a mesa bounded by Canada del Buey on the north and Pajarito Canyon on the south. Both are ephemeral drainages that flow during snowmelt runoff and during rain events but also appear to be partially fed by groundwater. Canada del Buey was flowing during a reconnaissance trip on May 22, 2000. These are both right bank tributaries of the Rio Grande River.

Preparation of the proposed temporary emergency housing sites would require the removal of much of the existing vegetation throughout the interior of the site. This vegetation inhibits erosion and reduces downstream sedimentation. Direct and indirect impacts resulting from the proposed action would include increased erosion on the sites and associated sedimentation in the aforementioned drainages. The contribution of sediment from these sites would be insignificant compared to the potential that exists from the large areas in the upper watershed that were denuded by the Cerro Grande Fire. However, in order to minimize erosion and sedimentation, a Stormwater Pollution Prevention Plan (SWPPP) would be prepared for the selected sites and the measures indicated in the plan would be implemented for the proposed action. The SWPPP would contain specific construction measures (e.g., silt fences, drainage swales, hay bales, etc.) to reduce or eliminate run-off impacts during proposed construction activities and reduce the potential for soil erosion after construction. The construction contractor would also be required to implement protective measures to prevent spillage of chemicals, fuels, oils, greases,

bituminous materials, waste washings, herbicides, insecticides, or any other materials associated with construction activities, and keep these materials from entering drainages. With implementation of measures identified in the SWPPP and the incorporation of best management practices (BMP) to reduce spillage, it is unlikely that the proposed project would have significant adverse impacts on surface waters.

The no action alternative would not result in any increased erosion from the existing sites because no construction activities would occur.

4.2.2 GROUNDWATER

Groundwater in the Los Alamos and White Rock areas consists of a regional aquifer, shallow alluvial systems beneath canyon bottoms, and as perched groundwater beneath both mesas and canyons. Perched groundwater is kept above the regional aquifer level by an impervious layer in the soil or bedrock. Eleven supply wells in the regional aquifer provide water to Los Alamos National Lab, Los Alamos, White Rock, and Bandelier National Monument. Depth to the regional aquifer below the mesa tops ranges from 600-1200 feet. The regional aquifer is separated from intermediate perched groundwater zones by 350-620 feet of tuff, basalt, and sediments.

Construction of water, sewer, lift station lines or any ground surface preparations would not exceed 8 feet. Aquifer depth, subsurface geology, and implementation of the aforementioned contingency plans, would minimize potential adverse impacts to groundwater in the proposed project area.

The no action alternative would not result in any potential impacts to groundwater because no construction activities would take place.

4.2.3 WATERS OF THE UNITED STATES

The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) has reviewed the locations of the proposed sites and has determined that no waters of the United States exist within these areas. Therefore, the placement of dredged or fill material into these sites will not require authorization under Section 404 of the Clean Water Act. This determination will be valid for 2 years unless new information warrants revision of the determination within that time.

Since there are no wetlands at the proposed sites, compliance with Executive Order (E.O.) 11990, Protection of Wetlands, would be achieved.

The no action alternative would not entail compliance with Section 404 of the Clean Water Act since no construction activities would take place.

4.2.4 FLOODPLAINS

The proposed sites are not located within the vicinity of any established 100-year flood hazard area according to the effective Flood Hazard Boundary Map for *Los Alamos County, New Mexico, and Unincorporated Area*, Community Number 350035 and Panel Numbers 0002 and 0004, dated July

26, 1977. There would be no adverse impacts associated with the occupancy and modification of floodplains in Los Alamos County, NM, and, therefore, compliance with E.O. 11988, *Floodplain Management Guidelines*, would be achieved.

The no action alternative would not affect any established 100-year flood hazard area because no construction would take place.

4.3 AIR QUALITY

Los Alamos County falls within the EPA's New Mexico Air Quality Control Region (ACQR) Number 3. No substantial emission of urban/industrial air pollution occurs within the project area and the air quality could generally be classified as good.

An ambient air monitoring site (#37C – AIRS# 35-028-1002) located at the Bandelier/Los Alamos National Laboratory north of NM Highway 4 was operated from October 1989 through October 1994 and measured ozone, sulfur dioxide, nitrogen dioxide, particulate matter less than 10 microns in diameter and meteorological conditions. National standards for ambient air quality were not violated at this monitoring site for these criteria pollutants.

The county is considered an attainment area for all criteria pollutants. Construction activity associated with the proposed project would produce pollutant emissions. Heavy equipment would produce small amounts of hydrocarbons and exhaust fumes. It would be expected that some air pollutants would increase in the project areas, however the concentrations of these pollutants would not cause the region to reach non-attainment status. The construction contractor would be required to maintain the vehicles on the sites in good working order to minimize pollutant emissions. Fugitive dust would also result from proposed construction activities. The contractor would be required to address dust suppression activities. Adverse impacts to air quality resulting from the proposed activity would be short-term and not permanent.

The no action alternative would result in some longer commutes by the displaced people than under the proposed action and therefore a very small amount of additional car emissions. However, since the no action alternative would not involve construction activities and emissions, it would result in fewer emissions overall and less impacts to air quality.

4.4 NOISE

Noise is defined as “unwanted sound” and in the context of protecting public health and welfare, implies potential effects on people and, in general, the environment. Noise is one of the major concerns associated with construction-related activities. Low noise levels are present within the proposed project sites, which are all near or within residential areas. Noise levels in the proposed temporary emergency housing sites principally originate from the vehicular traffic along the residential streets.

Residents near any of the sites selected would experience an increase in noise levels during the proposed construction activities. The construction noise would be substantially greater than the noise from traffic at these sites. Because of the emergency nature of the project a 24-hour work

schedule is likely and would disrupt residents in the area. The work would be done quickly, thus the disruption would be temporary.

The Los Alamos Middle School Site is also near the only middle school serving the two communities. The increase in noise levels during construction will disrupt summer class sessions, but will be temporary in nature.

Once temporary emergency housing is established, additional noise would be generated from the vehicles and activities of people inhabiting the completed units. While noise at any of the selected sites would increase, noise levels would not be expected to result in any significant long-term adverse impacts to residents in the adjacent areas, because the sites would eventually be vacated.

The no action alternative would not result in any increase in noise because no construction activities would take place.

4.5 BIOLOGICAL RESOURCES

4.5.1 VEGETATION

The proposed sites are all located on mesa tops that fall within the Great Basin Conifer Woodland biotic community (Brown and Lowe, 1977). This cold-adapted evergreen woodland community is characterized by juniper and pinyon.

The Fairgrounds and Los Alamos Middle School sites are relatively open juniper savannah type plant communities that contain only scattered juniper trees. The understory is predominantly composed of grasses such as the non-native smooth brome (suggesting disturbance), and native muhleys, dropseeds, and Junegrass. The South Ildefonso site is an area that is less disturbed and dominated by pinyon-juniper with an understory of the aforementioned grasses. The Middle White Rock site is relatively undisturbed pinyon-juniper woodland with some large pinyons with diameter at breast height of 14-16 inches. Understory species include big sagebrush and grama grasses. The Overlook Park site is largely composed of athletic and picnic areas so native vegetation is lacking.

Site preparation for construction of temporary emergency housing would require clearing and grading. As noted previously, the clearing would be done for groups of 50 housing units at a time, so an entire site would not be cleared and graded all at once. At the Fairgrounds East and West and Los Alamos Middle School sites, these activities would result in the removal of all vegetation except for narrow bands of trees that now intermittently border these sites. Because most of the vegetation on these sites is very common in the area and is composed of predominantly grass and forb species, removal would not adversely impact regional species diversity or richness. Vegetation is important not only as habitat for wildlife, but also as an enhancement to the quality of life for urban residents. Trees are generally restricted to steeper slope areas that are not suitable for construction and therefore would remain as buffer areas. The manufactured homes would be sited so mature trees are left undisturbed to provide a buffer to

improve the aesthetic quality for both permanent and temporary residents in the area.

Complete clearing and grading at the Middle White Rock site would result in the removal of some very large pinyon and juniper trees. Selective clearing and grading is recommended at this site in order to preserve these larger trees. This would maintain some of the aesthetic quality of this area and provide some shade to the temporary residents.

No significant affect to native vegetation would occur from construction activities at the Overlook site because most of this site is developed as soccer fields (turf) and little native vegetation exists.

The no action alternative would not result in any potential impacts to vegetation because no construction activities would take place.

4.5.2 FISH AND WILDLIFE

Common wildlife species occurring in the Great Basin Conifer Woodland biotic community in Los Alamos County include mammals such as elk, mule deer, black bear, bobcat, fox, mountain lion, desert cottontail, rock squirrel, and pinon mouse. Common bird species include scrub jay, brown towhee, dark-eyed junco, white-crowned sparrow, and robin.

All of the proposed sites are of very limited value to large mammal species due to the small size of the sites and the general urban landscape. Smaller mammal species such as desert cottontail, rock squirrel, and pinon mouse and the aforementioned bird species probably occur at the proposed sites. Construction activities, even with selective clearing and grading, would destroy the value of the existing habitat for these smaller mammal and bird species. Mobile species would probably move to nearby suitable habitat areas while small rodent species would probably be lost due to construction. The displacement or reduction in animal numbers would not significantly adversely impact the regional animal communities or the viability of any particular species due to the small areas affected.

The no action alternative would not result in any potential impacts to fish and wildlife because no construction activities would take place.

4.5.3 STATE AND FEDERALLY LISTED THREATENED, ENDANGERED OR PROPOSED SPECIES AND CRITICAL HABITATS

Three agencies have primary responsibility for the protection of animal and plant species in New Mexico. The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS), under authority of the Endangered Species Act of 1973, maintains a list of animal and plant species which have been listed or are proposed for listing as Endangered or Threatened based on present status and potential threat to future survival. The New Mexico Department of Game and Fish, under the authority of the Wildlife Conservation Act of 1974, maintains a list of animal species whose prospects of survival or recruitment in New Mexico are in jeopardy. The New Mexico Energy, Minerals and Natural Resources Department maintains a

list of State-Endangered plant species protected under the New Mexico Endangered Plant Species Act (9-10-10 NMSA) and regulation New Mexico Forestry and Resource Conservation Division Rule No. 91-1.

No designated or proposed critical habitat of Federally listed species occurs within or near the proposed temporary emergency housing areas.

No Federally listed plant species occur in Los Alamos County. Two plant species occur in the county that are of special concern under State of New Mexico regulations (Sivinski and Lightfoot 1995). The State-endangered wood lily occurs in mature coniferous forests above 7,500 feet in elevation. The giant helleborine orchid (*Epipactis gigantea*), a State rare and sensitive species, inhabits springs and seeps. No suitable habitat for either plant species occurs at any of the sites considered in the proposed action.

USFWS and New Mexico Department of Game and Fish lists include 10 Federal- or State-listed animal species that may occur within Los Alamos County (Table 1). Based on species' known distribution patterns, ecological requirements and the existing habitat within the proposed temporary emergency housing areas, only three of these animal species have the potential to occur within the proposed action areas.

Table 1. Federal and State endangered, threatened, or proposed animal species known to occur in Los Alamos County. An asterisk (*) indicates a species that has the potential to occur in proposed temporary emergency housing areas.

Common and scientific name	Federal (USFWS) status ^a	State of New Mexico status ^b
Whooping Crane (<i>Grus americana</i>)	E	E1
Southwestern Willow Flycatcher (<i>Empidonax traillii extimus</i>)	--	E1
American Peregrine Falcon (<i>Falco peregrinus anatum</i>)*	E	E2
Bald Eagle (<i>Haliaeetus leucocephalus</i>)*	T	E2
Mexican Spotted Owl (<i>Strix occidentalis lucida</i>)	T	--
Mountain Plover (<i>Charadrius montanus</i>)	PT	--
Wood lily (<i>Lilium philadelphicum</i> var. <i>andinum</i>)	--	E
Jemez Mountain salamander (<i>Plethodon meomexicanus</i>)	--	E2
Broad-billed Hummingbird (<i>Cyanthus latirostris magicus</i>)	--	E2
Gray Vireo (<i>Vireo vicinior</i>)	--	E2
Spotted Bat (<i>Euderma maculatum</i>)*	--	E2

^a Federal (USFWS) status: E = Endangered; T = Threatened; and PT=proposed threatened.

^b State of New Mexico status: E = Endangered plant taxa. E1 = Endangered animal taxa whose prospects of survival or recruitment within the state are in jeopardy. E2 = Endangered animal taxa whose prospects of survival or recruitment within the state are likely to become jeopardized in the foreseeable future [equivalent to "threatened"].

The American Peregrine Falcon is a year-round resident of New Mexico and nests on tall, steep,

rocky cliffs associated with forest or woodland in mountainous areas, including the Jemez Mountains (NMDGF 1988). Nesting habitat exists in Pueblo Canyon that runs west to east, south of the proposed temporary housing sites in Los Alamos. In migration and winter this species may be found statewide, but more commonly occurs in the eastern plains of New Mexico. Bald Eagles migrate along mountain ridges and rivers in New Mexico during spring and fall, and are present from early December through early March at reservoirs and along major river systems. Eagles commonly hunt for fish and waterfowl during winter along the Rio Grande River near Los Alamos County, and are known to roost within White Rock Canyon. These two species could occasionally fly over or through proposed temporary emergency housing areas during hunting forays or migration; however, there is no existing potential nesting or roosting habitat, nor preferred foraging habitat, in the immediate vicinity of the proposed action areas.

Spotted bats most commonly inhabit coniferous forests and alpine areas, but have been observed in a variety of habitats throughout New Mexico. The species is known to occur within the Los Alamos National Laboratory and Bandelier National Monument (Bogan et al. 1996). Spotted bats roost in coniferous forest and, especially, cliffs or canyons. While showing some preference to forage near water and wet meadows, they are known to forage in several habitat types, including pinyon-juniper woodland and urban areas. While this species may fly over or through the proposed temporary emergency housing sites, the proposed action would not affect roost sites nor the species distribution or survival.

No Federal or State endangered, threatened, or proposed threatened species were observed during site surveys of the proposed project site. Because of the relatively low probability of occurrence of listed species in the action area and the lack of potential impact discussed above, the proposed action would have no effect on Federal or State endangered, threatened, or proposed threatened species.

The no action alternative would have no effect on Federal or State endangered, threatened, or proposed threatened species.

10.6 CULTURAL RESOURCES

New Mexican history has been divided into four generally recognized cultural-temporal periods: the *PaleoIndian* (ca. 12,000 BC- 5,000 BC), the *Archaic* (ca. 5,000 BC-AD 500), the *Pueblo* (ca. AD 500-AD 1500), and the *Historic* (ca. AD 1500- present). The first three time periods are known only from archaeological data and span the time period between the earliest documented human occupation of the area to the arrival of European explorers in the 1500's. The Historic Period postdates European contact and is known from written records as well as archaeological materials. Historic properties dating to the Archaic, Formative and Historic Period are common in the vicinity of the proposed project areas. Sites and materials dating to the PaleoIndian Period have not yet been identified within Los Alamos County, possibly reflecting a lack of use of the area at that time. Intensive use of the area by Native Americans prior to European contact is well documented by the great number of large archaeological sites dating to the Formative Era located within and around the County. The intensity of this occupation is reflected in the continued importance of the region to Native Americans living in New Mexico to the present day. The well known role of Los Alamos in the development of nuclear weapons during World War II and the subsequent Cold War contributes to the historical significance of the community and surrounding vicinity.

Project activities have been intensively coordinated with the New Mexico State Historic Preservation Officer (NMSHPO). As a result of pre-project planning agreements, cultural and historic resource issues and compliance with the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended, (NHPA) were evaluated. All potential temporary emergency housing construction sites were the subject of intensive cultural and historic resource inventory. Results of the survey were communicated to NMSHPO in an expedited fashion in the understanding that a formal report including completed New Mexico historic properties recording forms would be submitted to NMSHPO within five days of the completion of fieldwork. Construction will not be allowed within 60 feet of any historic or cultural property deemed eligible or potentially eligible for the National Register of Historic Places or any sites where eligibility could not be unambiguously determined. In the future, should subsequent owners of the properties (e.g., Los Alamos County) wish to make the development permanent, they shall reinitiate consultation with NMSHPO and other interested parties on the appropriate disposition of affected historic remains.

Pursuant to NHPA, FEMA will consult with interested Native American Tribes in the region regarding potential impacts to portions of the landscape significant to traditional tribal societies. Initial consultations have taken place with the Pueblo of Santa Clara and the Pueblo of San Ildefonso regarding the overall course of FEMA activities in the vicinity of Los Alamos. Both Tribes have expressed the importance of the landscape of the Pajarito Plateau to their cultural traditions and heritage. At present no Tribe has expressed concern over adverse impacts to specific Traditional Cultural Properties. Should such concerns be raised, FEMA will consult with the interested community with the goal of eliminating potential conflicts. Any adverse impact to a specific Traditional Cultural Property (as defined by criteria set forth in National Register Bulletin 38) shall be avoided in the same manner previously outlined for historic properties.

Information from the New Mexico Archaeological Records Management System indicates that a total of 1,750 historic properties have been identified within Los Alamos County. None of the proposed project areas had been inventoried for historic and cultural resources prior to the current project. A systematic cultural resources inventory of each of the proposed areas was completed in anticipation of the proposed action under discussion. In response to the shortened time-line and a desire to capture as much of the historic record as possible, the inventory crew employed a survey interval between five and ten meters. Each project area is treated separately as follows:

10.6.1 FAIRGROUNDS EAST

No historic features or sites were identified by the intensive inventory of this area. A single isolated artifact (Glaze bowl sherd) was noted by the survey. The area in which the artifact was found had been previously subjected to intensive disturbance. The artifact lacks sufficient context or data potential to warrant its inclusion on the National Register of Historic Places. No Traditional Cultural Properties have been identified within the proposed project area. FEMA is of the opinion that no historic or cultural properties will be affected by the proposed undertaking in this area.

10.6.2 FAIRGROUNDS WEST

No artifacts, features or sites were identified by the intensive inventory of this area. The area has been previously subjected to intensive disturbance. No Traditional Cultural Properties have been identified within the proposed project area. FEMA is of the opinion that no historic or cultural properties will be

affected by the proposed undertaking in this area.

4.6.3 LOS ALAMOS MIDDLE SCHOOL

A single prehistoric archaeological site and 6 isolated objects (including fire cracked rock, chert and chalcedony stone flakes) were noted by the survey. The historic property shall be avoided and covenants regarding future development of the area will be incorporated project documents upon conclusion of construction. The remaining isolated objects are distributed independently throughout the project area and have no demonstrable relation to the archaeological site. No Traditional Cultural Properties have been identified within the proposed project area. FEMA is of the opinion that no historic or cultural properties will be affected by the proposed undertaking in this area.

4.6.4 MIDDLE WHITE ROCK

No historic features or sites were identified by the intensive inventory of this area. A total of 5 isolated artifacts (2 greyware sherds, a single corrugated rim sherd, and one each chalcedony and basalt flakes) were noted by the survey. The area in which the artifact was found had been previously subjected to intensive disturbance. The artifacts lack sufficient context or data potential to warrant their inclusion on the National Register of Historic Places. No Traditional Cultural Properties have been identified within the proposed project area. FEMA is of the opinion that no historic or cultural properties will be affected by the proposed undertaking in this area.

4.6.5 OVERLOOK PARK

No historic artifacts, features or sites were identified by the intensive inventory of this area. Three isolated artifacts (including a chert biface, a chalcedony flake and a single greyware sherd) and an archaeological site dating to the Puebloan Period were identified adjacent to but outside of the proposed site. The locations of historic remains will be clearly identified on construction drawings for the proposed site and specific instructions given to all contractors regarding avoidance of the area. The artifact lacks sufficient context or data potential to warrant its inclusion on the National Register of Historic Places. No Traditional Cultural Properties have been identified within the proposed site. FEMA is of the opinion that no historic or cultural properties will be affected by the proposed undertaking in this area.

4.6.6 KWAGE MESA

The intensive cultural and historic resources inventory identified four historic properties within the first half-mile of the western end of the proposed, including a potential rubble mound and an extensive midden lens exposed in cattle trails located approximately eight inches below the modern surface. Both cultural manifestations are believed eligible for inclusion on the National Register of Historic Places. This area would provide the only access to the proposed site for both transportation and utilities and is extremely narrow. Improvements in both roads and utility lines would undoubtedly result in adverse impacts to these extensive and for this reason Kwage Mesa is considered unsuitable for the undertaking.

4.6.7 UNANTICIPATED REMAINS

No historic or cultural remains are likely to be encountered within any of the selected proposed sites. However, in accordance with the National Historic Preservation Act and New Mexico State law, should unanticipated historic or cultural materials be encountered during construction, all construction activities shall cease immediately within thirty meters (100 feet) of the remains until their ultimate disposition is

determined in consultation with the New Mexico State Historic Preservation Officer and all interested parties.

4.6.8 HISTORIC STRUCTURES

The community of Los Alamos was originally founded as part of America’s nuclear weapons development program during the Second World War. Built by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Albuquerque District, the original village was little more than an Army base well supplied with civilian scientists. Subsequent development and expansion has erased most of the structures associated with this important part of the Nation’s history. No historic structures of any kind are located within any of the proposed sites and the undertaking will not affect the historic architecture of Los Alamos.

The no action alternative would have no affect on cultural resources because no construction would take place.

4.7 ZONING AND LAND USE

The proposed sites are located within Los Alamos and White Rock and have been zoned public lands according to Los Alamos County Community Development (Table 2). The Fairgrounds East and West sites also carry a Recreation Wilderness District designation. This designation is intended to maintain, protect and preserve the scenic and environmental quality, open character and natural recreational value of undeveloped land; and to accommodate public and private recreational uses of an open nature. This property was formerly owned by the National Park Service (NPS). The property was transferred with a deed restriction that returns it to NPS ownership if and use changes are proposed. On May 24, 2000, Los Alamos County requested approval from the NPS to use the undeveloped portions of the site for temporary emergency housing for the fire victims of the Cerro Grande fire. Close coordination with county officials will continue to ensure the proposed emergency action remains in compliance with the county development code.

Table 2 Zoning and Land Use

Proposed Site	Zoning Type	Ownership	Surrounding Land Use
Fairgrounds East	Public Lands – Recreation Wilderness District	Los Alamos County	Public Land, residential, mobile home park
Fairgrounds West	Public Lands – Recreation Wilderness District	Los Alamos County	Public Land, residential, mobile home park, public school athletic fields
Los Alamos Middle School	Public Land	Los Alamos Public School	Public recreation (athletic fields)
Middle White Rock	Public Land	Los Alamos Public School	Residential
Overlook Park	Public Land	Los Alamos County	Residential, canyons (athletic fields)

4.8 SOCIOECONOMIC/AESTHETICS

The alternative sites being considered for development of temporary emergency housing are near existing residential areas. The temporary residents would therefore be close to stores, post offices, schools and other services necessary for urban living.

4.8.1 TRAFFIC

Traffic levels would increase in the neighborhoods where the proposed temporary emergency housing would be constructed, increasing driving times for both neighborhood, and temporary emergency housing residents. The increased population density in the neighborhoods would increase traffic levels, travel time, and inconvenience. For the Fairgrounds East and West, and the Los Alamos Middle School sites, traffic would increase along Ildefonso Road and North Mesa Road, which both intersect at the Ildefonso/Diamond roundabout. This could cause somewhat of a bottleneck at this intersection during rush hours. Temporary residents at any sites developed in White Rock would have different, and possibly longer, transit times to work, school and other daily activities.

All of the proposed sites would be designed to have internal gravel roads and all would have multiple access points for ingress and egress of emergency vehicles at all times. Entrances to the proposed manufactured home site would be controlled with signs on roads that provide direct access to existing roads.

Elementary school children living in temporary emergency housing units might have to change schools, or would have to be driven or bused farther to attend former schools. The latter option would alleviate potential crowding at Baranca Elementary School. Middle and high school students would not be affected because the Los Alamos schools serve both communities.

The no action alternative would not increase traffic levels in the vicinity of the proposed temporary emergency housing sites because displaced residents would be dispersed to available housing in Santa Fe. However, this would result in increased travel times to and from work and school for the displaced residents.

4.8.2 AESTHETICS

The Fairgrounds East and West and Los Alamos Middle School sites presently offer some "open space" visual relief from the urban landscape and recreational opportunities such as walking and biking to nearby residents. The relatively high density, appearance and style of the temporary emergency housing units themselves will adversely affect these qualities and would represent an adverse affect to these residents. However, Los Alamos is an area with much natural and "open space" visual qualities and there are substantial opportunities for hiking and biking in the nearby Santa Fe National Forest and Bandelier National Monument. To help reduce the negative impact, close coordination will be maintained to ensure that only the necessary amount of temporary emergency housing is developed. In addition, every attempt will be made to avoid removal of mature trees and to maintain vegetative buffers at the sites; therefore this is not considered to be a significant adverse affect.

The Middle White Rock site offers some fairly significant visual relief from the surrounding residential areas because of the many and large size of trees at the site. It also appears to offer substantial opportunity for walking and biking. Construction of temporary emergency housing at this site could impact these qualities. It is recommended that selective clearing be done to minimize the loss of these mature trees.

The White Rock Overlook Park site offers substantial recreational opportunities to the residents of White Rock. Developed picnic areas and athletic fields dominate this area; therefore construction at this site would represent a fairly significant impact to White Rock residents.

The no action alternative would not adversely affect aesthetic qualities or recreational opportunities of residents adjacent to the proposed sites because no construction would take place.

4.9 ENVIRONMENTAL JUSTICE

Executive Order 12898, Environmental Justice, provides that each Federal agency identify and address, as appropriate, disproportionately high and adverse human health or environmental effects of its programs, policies, and activities on minority populations and low-income populations in the United States.

The proposed action is not expected to have disproportional negative impacts on minority or low-income populations. The larger community might compare the level of commitment to the victims of the Los Alamos fire to the disparity in socioeconomic status between Los Alamos and other counties in New Mexico. This could lead to the perception of negative indirect impacts to minority and low-income populations outside the declared disaster area. The level of commitment is proportional to the level of assistance requested by the State of New Mexico and the level of need of the affected community, regardless of socioeconomic status.

4.10 SAFETY AND SECURITY

Hanta virus is a concern in the southwest United States. It is associated with the fecal material of small rodents. The virus can spread when dust is raised in closed areas, such as abandoned buildings or other confined spaces that have rodent fecal material present. There are no closed structures presently on the sites under consideration; therefore there would be no exposure to the Hanta virus for construction workers or residents. Skirts will be used on the manufactured homes. This will help prevent rodents from nesting beneath the homes and minimize the potential for Hanta virus exposure to the residents.

Safety and security issues associated with the proposed action that were considered included the health and safety of the individuals working on site development activities, placing utilities, relocating housing units, and the well being of the people living at or adjacent to the manufactured home sites. Potential safety hazards will be identified at the selected sites. Safety fencing will be included if it is determined to be necessary as part of the site design.

Safety during construction is a concern for the personnel associated with the proposed action. All construction activities would be conducted in a safe manner. Because phased construction will occur at the proposed sites, areas under construction will be fenced from areas already occupied. First aid

and other medical services would be readily available throughout the duration of this action. Safety and security of the residents of the manufactured homes is of utmost concern. Adverse impacts resulting from the safety and security issues associated with this project would be minimal.

4.11 HAZARDOUS MATERIALS AND WASTE

The proposed sites were examined by USACE personnel for the presence of hazardous materials and waste. No evidence was observed that would indicate surface or subsurface contamination. The proposed sites are not located near the Los Alamos National Laboratory activities, therefore no radiological exposure is anticipated for construction workers or residents.

Hazardous materials such as oil, fuel or paint may be used on the sites during the construction activities. Any hazardous materials and waste on the site associated with the construction activities would be stored in appropriate containers or facilities. Fueling of construction equipment would occur on site and all hazardous materials will be handled and disposed of in accordance with applicable local, state, and Federal regulations. Proper implementation of these regulations would prevent the occurrence of significant adverse impacts resulting from hazardous materials and wastes.

5.0 PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

The public was provided an opportunity to comment on the proposed action from May 26 to May 30, 2000. This comment period was lengthened from the minimum of 72 hours for emergency actions due to the Memorial Day holiday weekend. Staff was available 12 hours a day to answer questions and receive comments from the public. A public notice identifying the action, location of the proposed site, participants, location of the draft EA and FONSI, and who to call to provide comments was advertised in the Santa Fe New Mexican, the Los Alamos Monitor, posted at area Post Offices, and police and fire stations in Espanola and Los Alamos. Flyers were also distributed to owners of businesses and homes within the vicinity of the proposed activity. The public notice was presented in both English and Spanish. Copies of the public notices and flyers are included in Appendix B. Copies of all correspondence received and the Federal response are also included in Appendix B.

6.0 AGENCIES CONSULTED

County Agencies

Los Alamos County Community Development
Los Alamos County Solid Waste

State Agencies

New Mexico Dept. of Game and Fish
New Mexico Environment Department
 Surface Water Quality Bureau
 Air Quality Bureau
 Groundwater Bureau
 Hazardous and Radioactive Materials Bureau
 Solid Waste Bureau
 Underground Storage Tank Bureau
New Mexico Dept. of Energy, Minerals, and Natural Resources
State Historic Preservation Division

New Mexico Archaeological Records Management System (database)
New Mexico Highway and Transportation Department

Federal Agencies

Department of Energy, Los Alamos Area Office
United States Fish and Wildlife Service
U.S. Forest Service –Santa Fe National Forest
National Park Service, Bandelier National Monument
U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Albuquerque District, Regulatory Branch

Tribal Nations

Pueblo San Ildefonso – Governor Perry Martinez
Pueblo Santa Clara –Governor Denny Gutierrez
Pueblo of Cochiti
Pueblo of Nambe
Pueblo of Picuris
Pueblo of Pojoaque
Pueblo of Santa Clara
Pueblo of San Ildefonso
Pueblo of San Juan
Pueblo of Tesuque

7.0 CONCLUSION

The proposed project is to construct temporary emergency housing for inhabitants displaced by the Cerro Grande fire in May 2000. Construction activities associated with the proposed project would include land clearing, gravel road construction, placement of facilities to accommodate utilities, and placement of the manufactured housing units. The six proposed alternative sites are in Los Alamos and White Rock, New Mexico

Based on the findings of this EA and coordination with the appropriate agencies, it was determined that implementation of proposed project and contingency plans as described in this EA, would not have any significant adverse impacts to the human or natural environment. All requirements of the National Environmental Policy Act have been satisfied; therefore the preparation of an EIS would not be required.

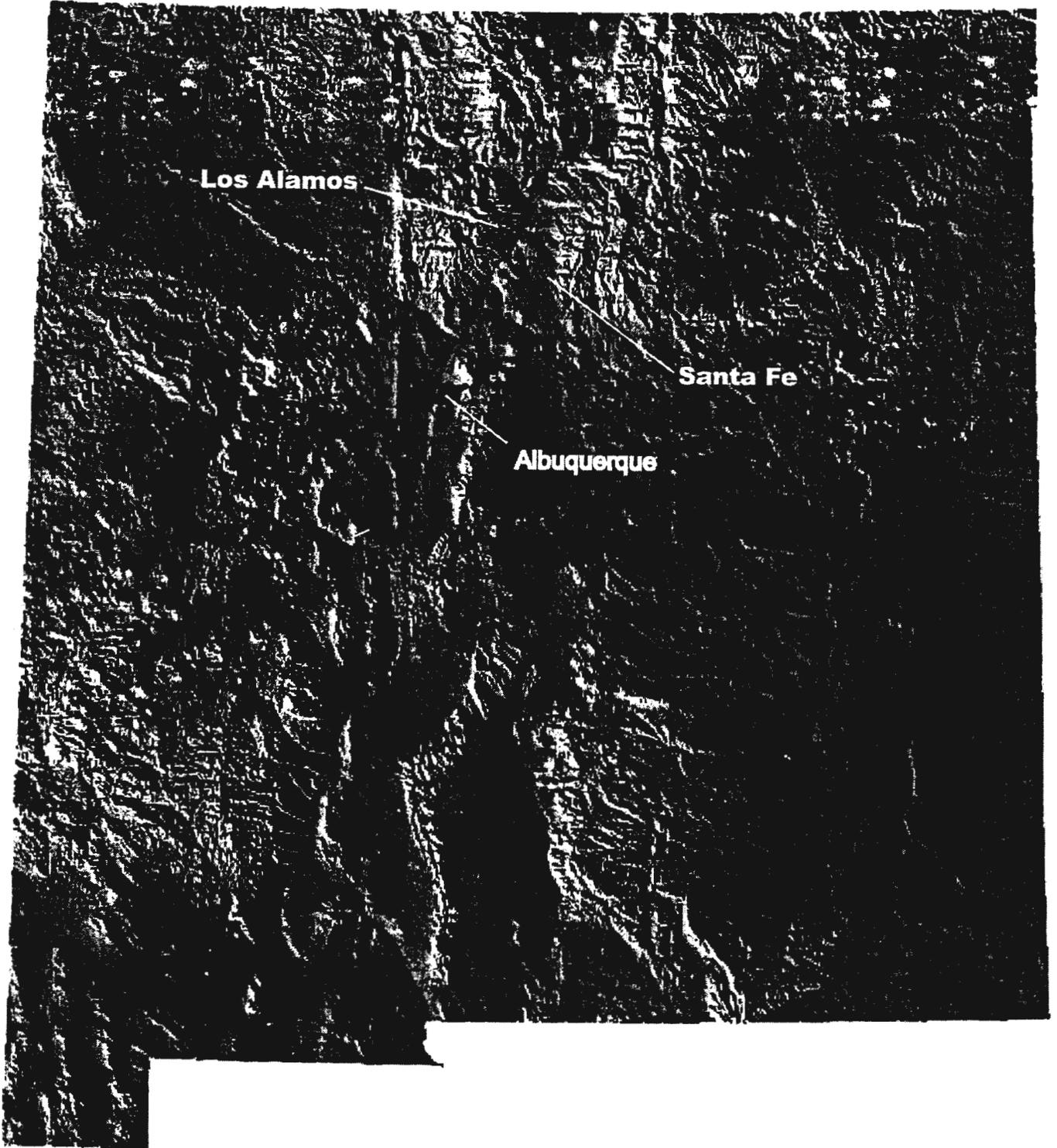
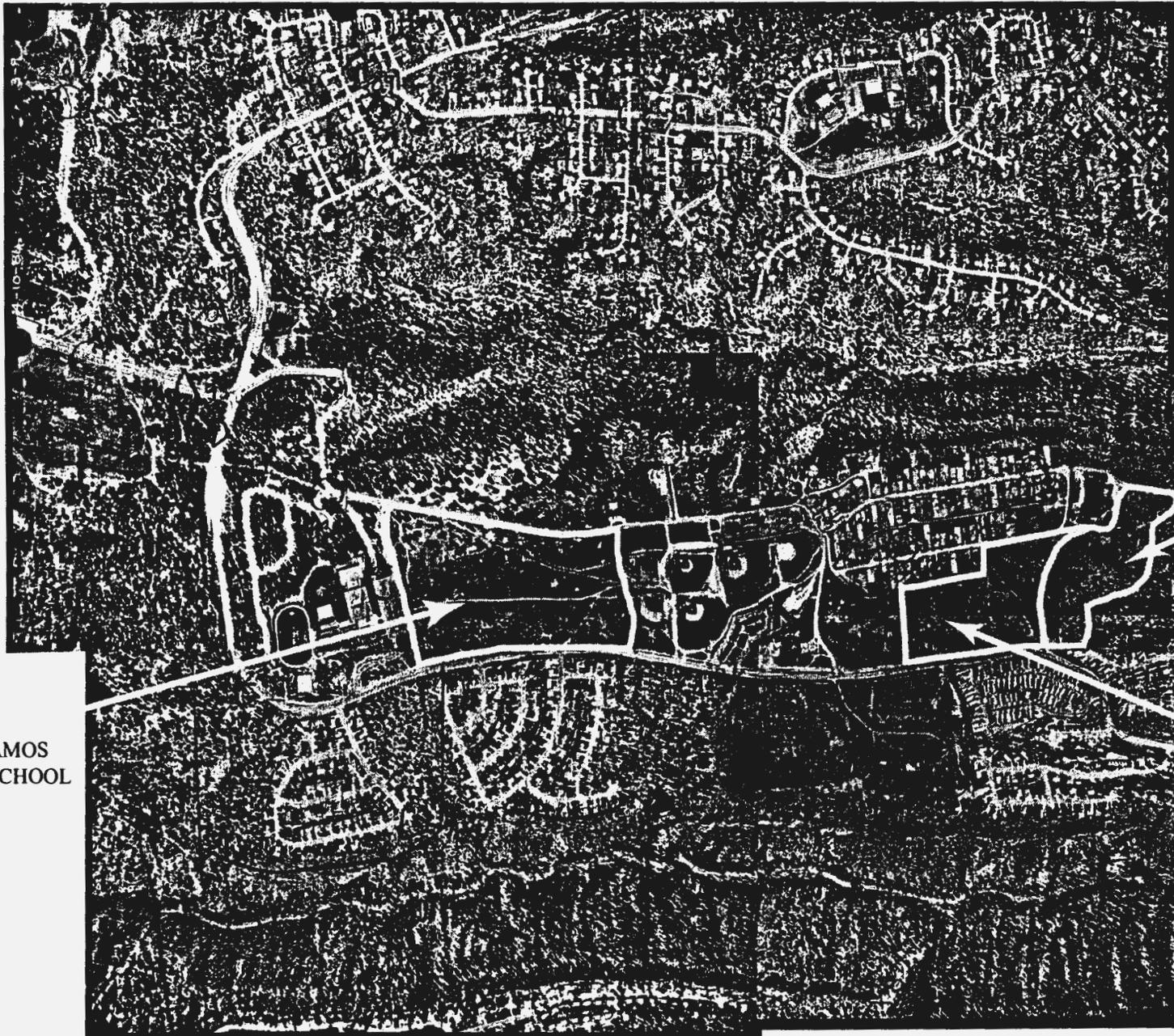


Figure 1

LOS ALAMOS NORTH SITES



FAIRGROUNDS
EAST

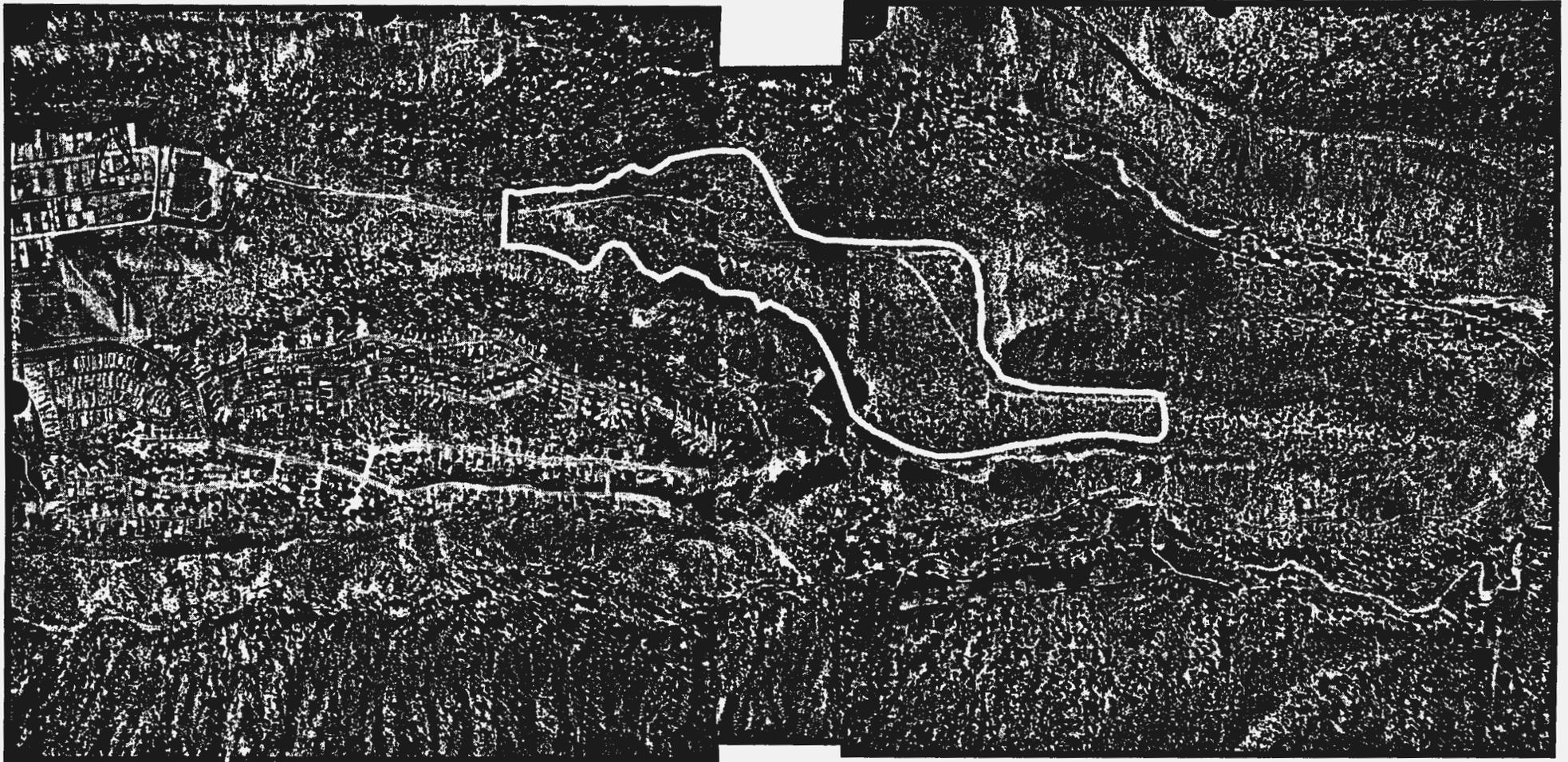
FAIRGROUNDS
WEST

LOS ALAMOS
MIDDLE SCHOOL

The orthophotography used as a background here was flown in 1986 by Bohanan and Huston Inc. (Albuquerque, NM) and *has not* been orthorectified.

Figure 2

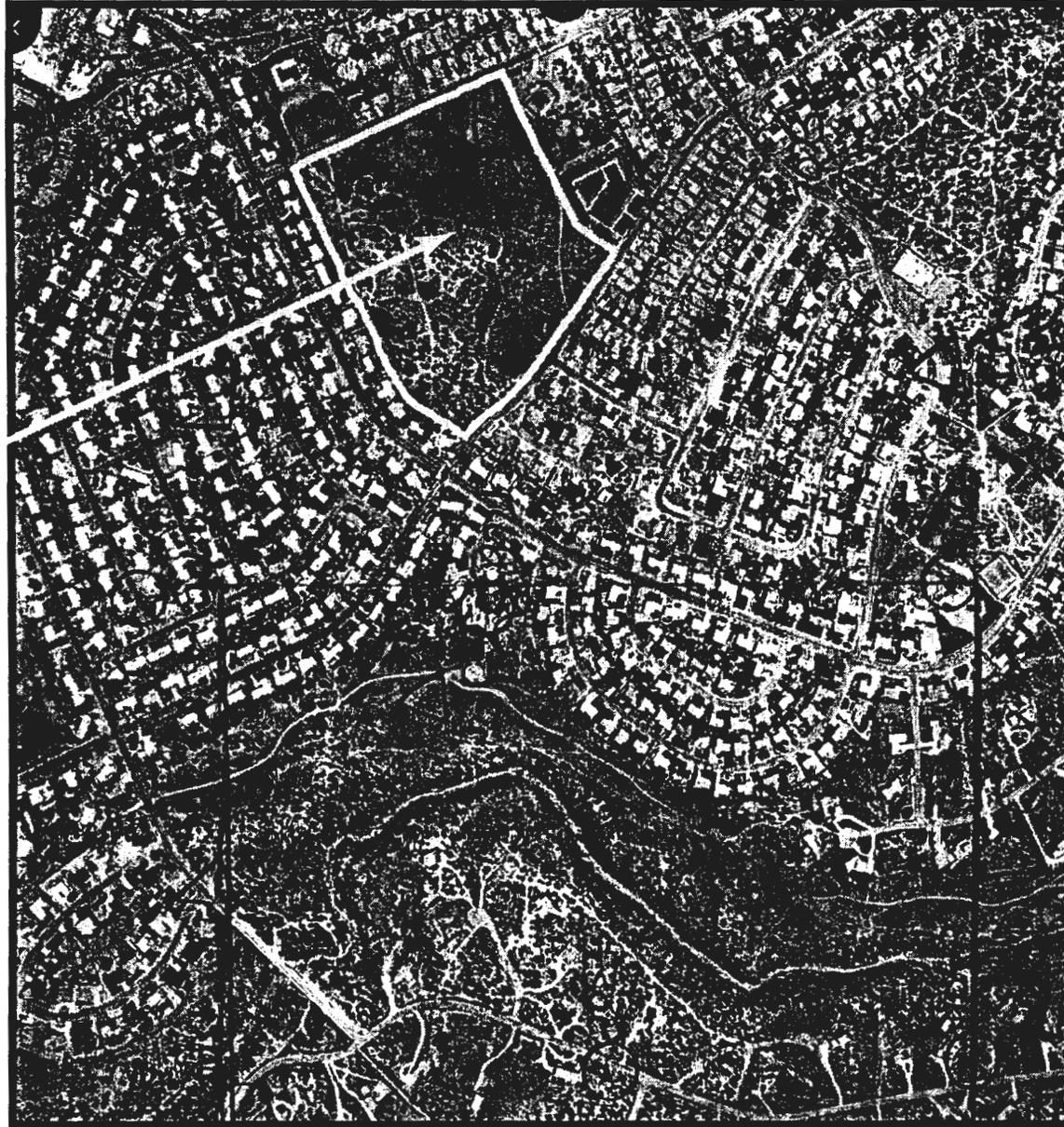
KWAGE MESA



The orthophotography used as a background here was flown in 1986 by Bohanan and Huston Inc. (Albuquerque, NM) and *has not* been orthorectified.

Figure 3

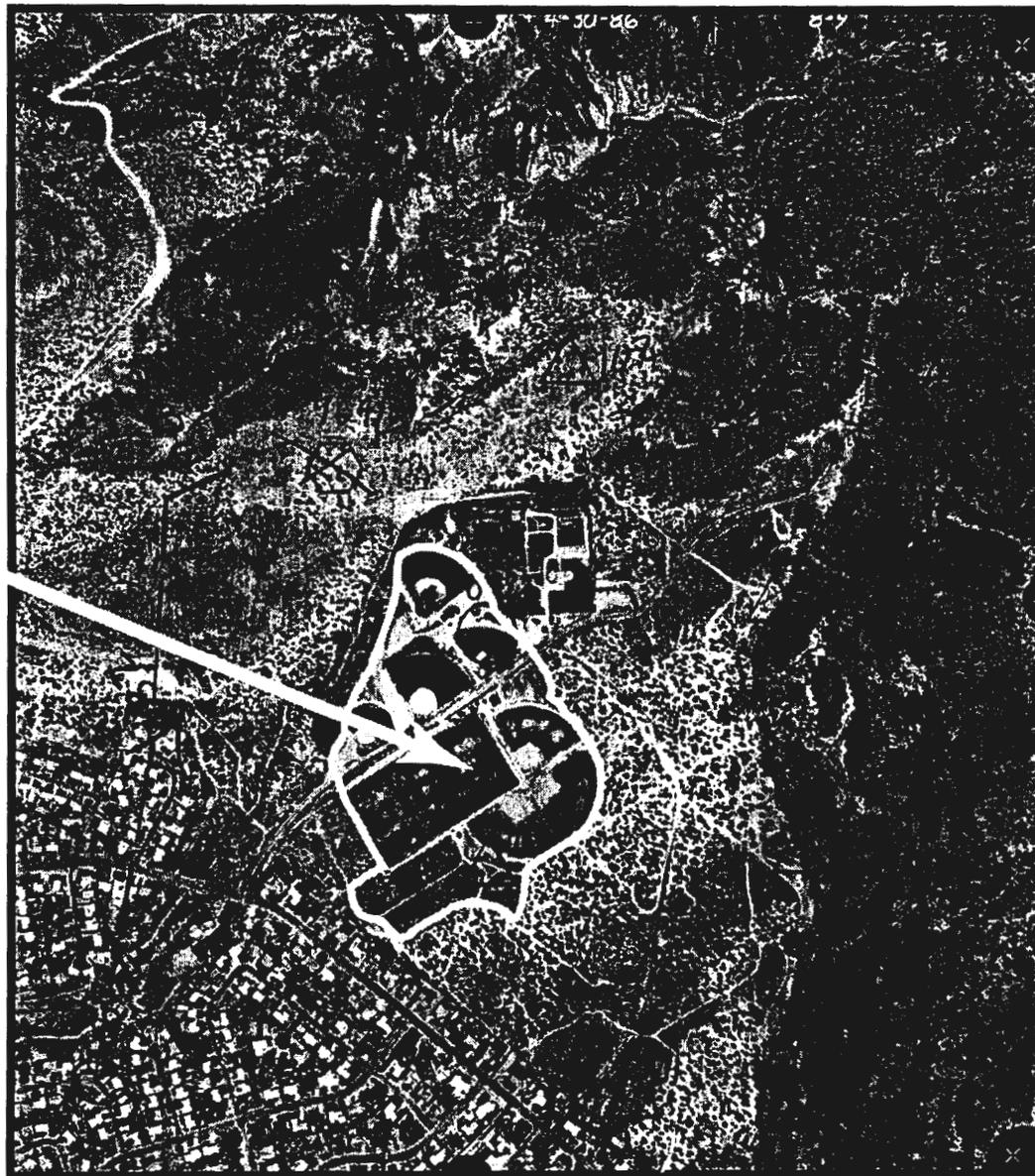
MIDDLE WHITE ROCK



The orthophotography used as a background here was flown in 1986 by Bohanan and Huston Inc. (Albuquerque, NM) and *has not* been orthorectified.

Figure 4

OVERLOOK PARK



The orthophotography used as a background here was flown in 1986 by Bohanan and Huston Inc. (Albuquerque, NM) and *has not* been orthorectified.

Figure 5

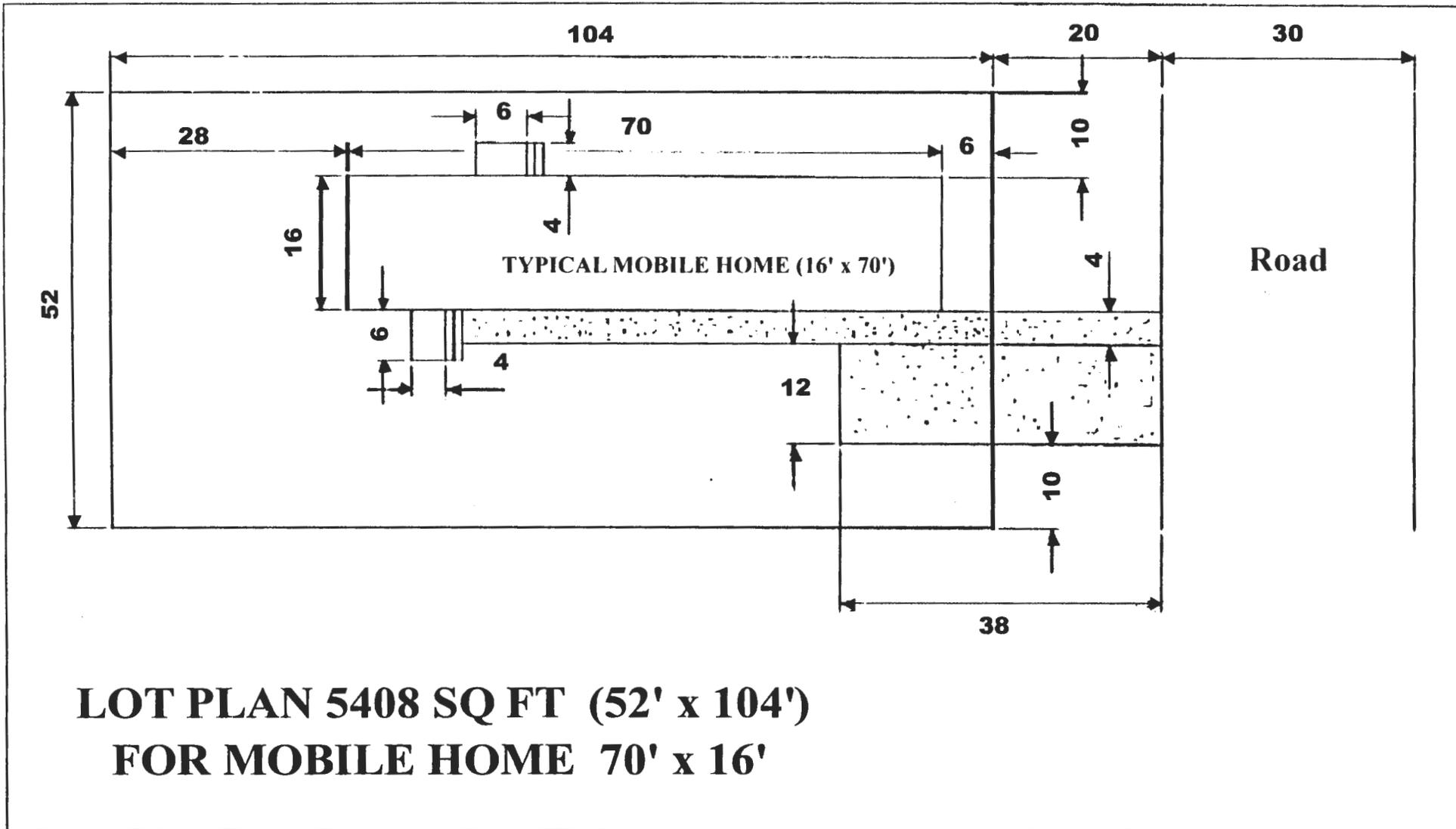


Figure 6



Photo 1 Fairgrounds East (past asphalt road) and West (just beyond lawn) looking east over end of soccer field



Photo 2 Fairgrounds East looking east across North Mesa Park Road

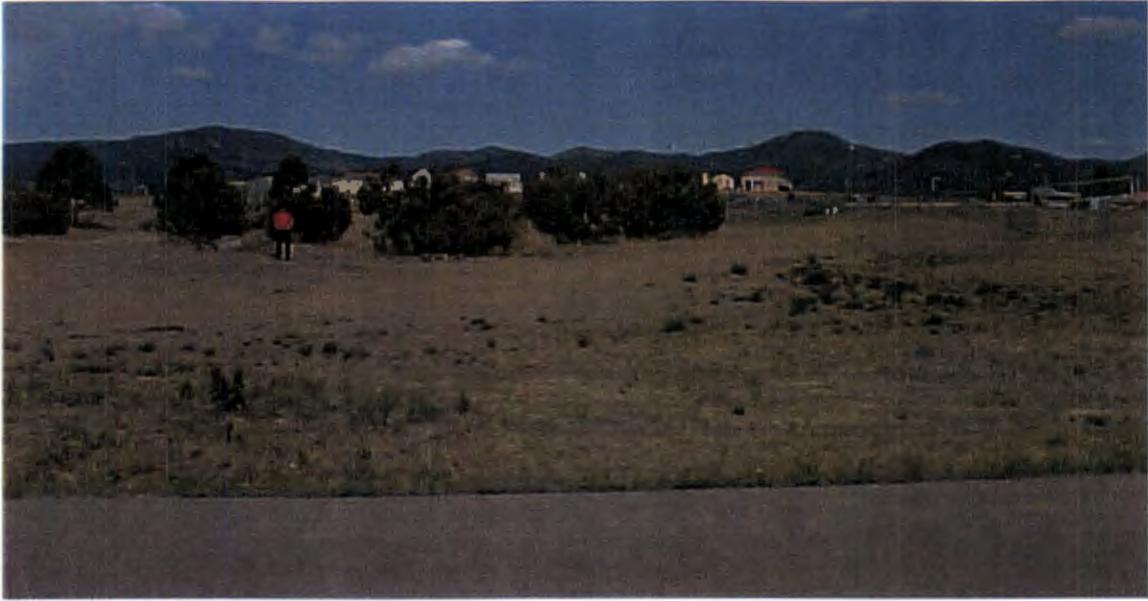


Photo 3 Fairgrounds West – looking north toward stables



Photo 4 Fairgrounds West from North Mesa Park Road



Photo 5 Los Alamos Middle School



Photo 6 Middle White Rock



Photo 7 Middle White Rock



Photo 8 Middle White Rock



Photo 9 Overlook Park

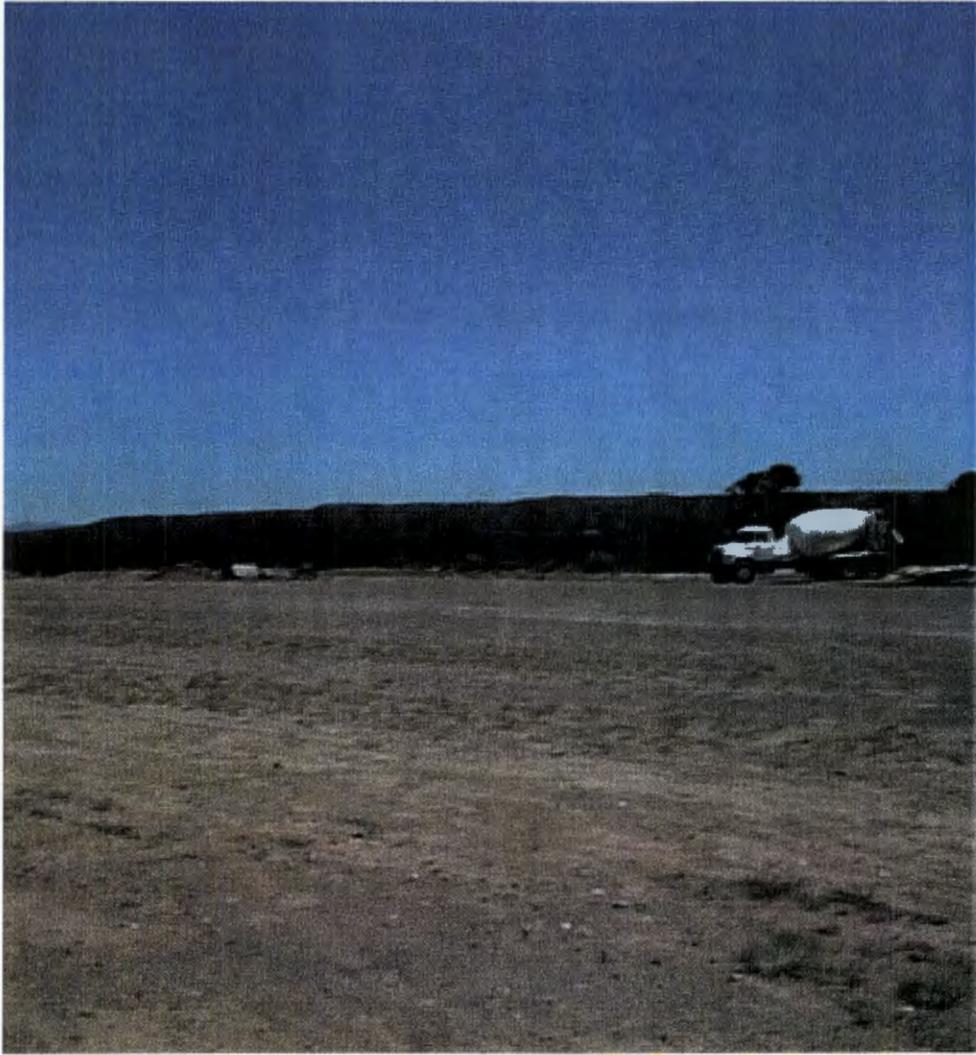


Photo 10 Overlook Park

APPENDIX A
AGENCY CORRESPONDENCE

Environmental Assessment Phone Record

Date: 23 May 2000

Time: 16:06

Person Calling: Ms. Teri Alberico, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers

505.342.3692

Person Called: Mr. Jim Najima,

New Mexico Environmental Department - Air Quality Bureau

505.827.0188

Subject: Coordination for Temporary Emergency Housing Environmental Assessment

1. I described the proposed project to Mr. Najima and faxed figures showing six site locations.
2. After reviewing the figures, Mr. Najima returned my call and said the Air Quality Board would not have any concerns.

Environmental Assessment Phone Record

Date: 23 May 2000	Time: 13:48
Person Calling: Mr. Dave Himmerich, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers	505.342.3692
Person Called: Ms. Mary Leavitt, Bureau Chief, New Mexico Environmental Department - Groundwater Bureau	505.827.2919

Subject: Coordination for Temporary Emergency Housing Environmental Assessment

1. Ms. March Leavitt was called regarding the likelihood of potential groundwater issues with respect to temporary housing.
2. She was asked to review the site location maps and offer an assessment of groundwater contamination issues for each site.
3. Ms. Leavitt indicated that review of the maps was not necessary because
 - a. All utility development on the sites would be by connection to existing municipal systems and
 - b. The temporary housing development does not involve excavation of basements for the structures.
4. It was Ms. Leavitt's determination that there would be no groundwater concerns with respect to developing these sites for temporary housing.

Environmental Assessment Phone Record

Date: 23 May 2000

Time: 11:50

Person Calling: Mr. David Himmerich, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers 505.342.3692

Person Called: Mr. Jerry Schoepner

New Mexico Environment Department – Underground Storage Tank Bureau

505.867.9907

Subject: Coordination for Temporary Emergency Housing Environmental Assessment

1. Mr. Schoepner was contacted and faxed copies of site location maps showing all sites identified as potential housing sites in the environmental assessment.
2. He reviewed the site location maps and determined that there are no underground tank issues on any of the sites.

Environmental Assessment Phone Record

Date: 23 May 2000

Time: 13:55

Person Calling: Ms. Cheryl Buckel, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers

505.342.3692

Person Called: Mr. James Bearzi

New Mexico Environment Department – Hazardous Waste Bureau

505.827.1588

Subject: Coordination for Temporary Emergency Housing Environmental Assessment

1. Mr. Bearzi was sent site maps and a vicinity map showing the proposed temporary emergency housing sites in Los Alamos and White Rock.
2. At 12:00 24 May 2000 Mr. Bearzi cleared the Middle School, Fairgrounds, and White Rock.

Environmental Assessment Phone Record

Date: 23 May 2000

Time: 19:35

Person Calling: Ms. Cheryl Buckel, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers

505.342.3692

Person Called: Mr. Ray Sisneros, Los Alamos County Solid Waste

505.662.8050

Subject: Coordination for Temporary Emergency Housing Environmental Assessment

1. Ray left an email message stating that he did not believe there have been any solid waste issues on any of the proposed temporary emergency housing sites. He stated that we should call Kyle Zimmerman to be sure.
2. Mr. Kyle Zimmerman doesn't know of any issues at the school property and suggested we call Mr. Terry Rust.
3. Terry Rust from DOE/LANL said county land had no solid waste issues. He noted that the site was rumored to have been a gun mount landfill, with miscellaneous structures in 1946. However, interviews with former employees indicate that the site was not used as a landfill. There was no basis for the speculation, Mr. Rust had not been able to locate any evidence of landfill operations at the site.

Environmental Assessment Phone Record

Date: 23 May 2000

Time: 14:00

Subject: Coordination for Temporary Emergency Housing Environmental Assessment

1. The following agencies were faxed information regarding the proposed project and figures showing the proposed temporary emergency housing and asked to provide comments:

New Mexico Dept. of Game and Fish – Messrs. Nic Medley/Andrew Sandoval (505) 867-9907

New Mexico Environment Department, Water and Wastewater Division-Mr. Glenn Saums (505) 827-2827

New Mexico Dept. of Energy, Minerals, and Natural Resources- Mr. Bob Sivinski (505) 827-7865

United States Fish and Wildlife Service, New Mexico Field Office – Ms. Joy Nickolopoulos (505) 346-2525

On May 24, 2000 Ms. Carrol Torres of the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service called and stated that there is potential peregrine falcon nesting habitat in Pueblo Canyon. However, the development of temporary housing sites on the North Mesa would have no effect on this habitat because they are too far away.

On May 24, 2000 Mr. Nic Medley left a voicemail message stating that the development of temporary housing at the proposed sites would not cause any significant affect to fish or wildlife in the area.

Environmental Assessment Phone Record

Date: 24 May 2000

Time: 1500

Person Calling: Mr. Mark Harberg- U.S. Army Corps of Engineers

505.342.3351

Person Called: Ms. Elizabeth Winters- DOE, Los Alamos Area Office

505.667.8690

Subject: Coordination for Temporary Emergency Housing Environmental Assessment

Ms. Winters requested a copy of the draft EA when it is available but did not have any immediate concerns regarding the proposed temporary housing sites since they were off DOE property. She did indicate she would like to be coordinated with if staging areas are proposed on DOE property.



LOS ALAMOS COUNTY

P.O. Box 30 Los Alamos, New Mexico 87544 (505) 662-8080 FAX 662-8079

COUNTY COUNCIL
Council Chairman:
Larry Mason
Council Vice-Chairwoman:
Sharon Stover
Councilors:
Christina Chandler
Robert Gibson
Lewis Mullr
James Rickman
Patricia (Pax) Rogers

COUNTY ADMINISTRATOR
Jre King

May 24, 2000

Mr. Gary Munsterman, AICP
Program Coordinator
U.S. Department of the Interior
National Park Service
Planning and Partnerships Team
600 Harrison Street, Suite 600
San Francisco, California 94107-1372

RE: Request for Temporary Use of North Mesa Park Property for Emergency Housing

Dear Mr. Munsterman:

As a result of the Cerro Grande forest fire, Los Alamos County has been working with FEMA staff to identify sites for temporary housing for the 400 families displaced by the fire. As you know from your visit to Los Alamos last year, the housing market was already very tight and vacant land for housing was almost nonexistent.

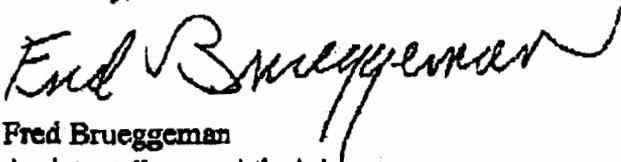
The County is requesting approval from the National Park Service to use the undeveloped portions of the North Mesa Park site for 120 mobile homes for fire displacees for up to two years while new permanent housing is being constructed. FEMA will assist the County with construction of roads and utilities on the site, with installing the mobile homes, and with restoring the property to its current condition as much as is feasible.

"A Consolidated City and County Government"

Your prompt approval is requested, as we desperately need to start work on this project next week and FEMA needs five days advance notice.

Thank you for your assistance.

Sincerely,



Fred Brueggeman
Assistant County Administrator
For Intergovernmental Relations

CC: Joe King, County Administrator
Kelly Carpenter, Community Development Director
Judith Schlosser, Housing Programs Manager
Mark Ghilarducci, FEMA Federal Coordinating Officer

APPENDIX B
PUBLIC COORDINATION, COMMENTS
AND
RESPONSE TO PUBLIC COMMENTS

**LEGAL NOTICE
TEMPORARY EMERGENCY HOUSING
FOR DISASTER VICTIMS DISPLACED BY THE CERRA GRANDE FIRES
FEMA-1329-NM-DR and FEMA-3154-NM-DR**

At the request of the State of New Mexico, the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) has been requested to develop temporary emergency housing in Los Alamos, N.M. FEMA has tasked the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) to identify and develop temporary emergency housing sites in and around the Los Alamos area for 300-400 mobile homes to house victims of the Cerro Grande Fire.

The sites being considered in Los Alamos are:

- two areas on the fairgrounds immediately south of the stables and rodeo grounds, north of Idelfonso Road, separated by an unnamed gravel road,
- between the Los Alamos Middle School and the soccer fields, north of Idelfonso Road,
- immediately east of the rodeo grounds on Kwage Mesa, bordered by Buyo Canyon.

The sites being considered in White Rock are:

- in the middle of White Rock, bordered by Bryce Avenue, Rover Boulevard, Canyon Drive, and Louise Avenue,
- Overlook Park, bordered by Meadow Lane, Overlook Road, and White Rock Canyon.

Based upon the temporary emergency housing need all, some, or none of these identified sites may be developed.

In accordance with the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969 (NEPA) and implementing regulations of FEMA, a draft Environmental Assessment (EA) has been prepared assessing the potential impacts of the proposed emergency action on the human and natural environment. A draft Finding of No Significant Impact (FONSI) has also been prepared for the proposed emergency action.

Copies of the draft EA and FONSI for this possible development are available for public review at the following locations from 10 am May 25, 2000 to 5:00 pm May 30, 2000.

Los Alamos County Public Library
White Rock Branch Library
Santa Fe City Library
University of New Mexico Zimmerman Library
Los Alamos County Joint Service Center
Los Alamos Police Station and all Fire Stations
Española Police and Fire Stations
USACE website, www.spa.usace.army.mil

If you have any questions or comments on the draft EA please contact:

Cheryl Buckel Phone: 505-342-3692, Fax: 505-342-3669 Public comments will be received through 5:00 pm, May 30, 2000.

All other questions regarding disaster assistance or the availability of temporary emergency housing should be directed to the Los Alamos County Joint Services Center at the Canyon School Facility, 1200 4th Street in Los Alamos, or by calling FEMA's Helpline at 1-800-525-0321 (TTY 1-800-462-7585 for hearing- or speech-impaired persons).

AVISO LEGAL
VIVIENDAS TEMPORALES DE EMERGENCIA PARA VICTIMAS DESPLAZADAS POR EL DESASTRE DE
LOS INCENDIOS CERRO GRANDE
FEMA-1329-NM-DR y FEMA-3154-NM-DR

El estado de Nuevo Mexico ha pedido a la Agencia Federal para Administración de Emergencias (FEMA) que desarrolle viviendas temporales de emergencia en Los Alamos, Nuevo Mexico. FEMA ha dado al Cuerpo de Ingenieros la tarea de identificar y desarrollar sitios dentro de y al derredor del area de Los Alamos para 300-400 casas moviles para albergar temporalmente a las victimas del incendio Cerro Grande.

Los sitios en Los Alamos que estan bajo consideración son los siguientes:

- Dos sitios en los terrenos de la feria inmediatamente al sur de los establos y de los campos del rodeo, al norte de San Idelfonso Road y separados por una calle de grava sin nombre.
- Un sitio entre la escuela Los Alamos Middle School y los campos de futbol soccer, al norte de San Idelfonso Road.
- Un sitio inmediatamente al este de los campos de rodeo en Kwage Mesa, lindado por Buyo Canyon.

Los sitios en White Rock que estan bajo consideración son:

- Un sitio en medio de White Rock, lindado por Bryce Avenue, Rover Boulevard, Canyon Drive y Louise Avenue.
- Un sitio en Overlook Park, lindado por Meadow Lane, Overlook Road, y White Rock Canyon.

Según las necesidades de viviendas temporales, todos, algunos o ningunos de estos sitios serán desarrollados.

De acuerdo con el Decreto del Programa Nacional de Ambiente de 1969 (National Environmental Policy Act, NEPA) y los reglamentos de FEMA se ha preparado un borrador de la Evaluación Ambiental (Environmental Assessment ó EA), para evaluar los posibles efectos de las propuestas actividades de emergencia al ambiente humano y natural. Tambien se ha preparado un borrador de la Decisión de Efectos No Significativos (Finding of No Significant Impact ó FONSI).

Copias del borrador EA y del borrador FONSI sobre este posible desarrollo estan disponibles para revisión publica en los siguientes lugares:

La Biblioteca Publica del Condado de Los Alamos
La Biblioteca de White Rock
La Biblioteca de la Ciudad de Santa Fe
Biblioteca Zimmerman en la Universidad de Nuevo Mexico
Los Alamos County Joint Service Center

Estaciones de Policia y de Bomberos en Los Alamos
Estaciones de Policia y de Bomberos en Española

En el sitio web del Cuerpo de Ingenieros, www.spa.usace.army.mil

Sí tiene preguntas ó comentarios sobre el borrador Evaluación Ambiental, favor de comunicarse con Cheryl Buckel al telefono 505-342-3692 ó por fax al 505-342-3669. Comentarios publicos se aceptarán hasta las 5:00 pm el 30 de mayo de 2000.

Todas otras preguntas sobre asistencia por motivo del desastre ó sobre la disponibilidad de albergue temporal de emergencia deberán ser dirigidas a Los Alamos County Joint Services, ubicada en la Escuela Canyon, 1200 4th Street, en Los Alamos ó con llamar a la linea de ayuda de FEMA al telefono 1-800-525-0321 (para personas con impedimentos de habla o de oído al 1-800-462-7585)

