

Zamr, Bearzi / File



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HOWA LAND UTR/01

November 2, 2001

Theodore J. Taylor
Project Manager
Department of Energy
Albuquerque Operations Office
Los Alamos Area Office
Los Alamos, N.M. 87544

Dear Mr. Taylor:

RE: CONVEYANCE AND TRANSFER PLAN FOR CERTAIN LAND TRACTS
ADMINISTERED BY THE U.S. DEPARTMENT OF ENERGY LOCATED AT THE LOS
ALAMOS NATIONAL LABORATORY, LOS ALAMOS AND SANTA FE COUNTIES,
NEW MEXICO; REPORT TO CONGRESS UNDER PUBLIC LAW 105-119; U.S.
DEPARTMENT OF ENERGY; SEPTEMBER 2000

This transmits New Mexico Environment Department (NMED) staff comments concerning the
above- referenced Report.

HAZARDOUS WASTE

General Comments:

1. The environmental restoration information provided is vague and can not be used alone to make decisions regarding the land tracts. It is necessary to refer to the Environmental Restoration Report to Support Land Conveyance and Transfer under Public Law 105-119 (ER Report) for PRS numbers, locations, and descriptions. Since the plan identifies tracts that will potentially be partially transferred, those PRS that will be included with the transferred land should have been identified in the plan.
2. DOE anticipates transferring partial parcels to accommodate its national security mission. However, HWB will not agree to partial approval and transfer of PRSs. This plan does not identify whether or not DOE anticipates dividing PRS.



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3. Even though DOE's funding priorities have been changed to ensure land transfer, the priorities do not necessarily reflect what HWB deems as important. HWB's priorities at LANL are not based on funding and this plan fails to acknowledge this important discrepancy.
4. The Record of Decision fails to recognize the Environmental Protection Agency, Region VI office, as the Administrative Authority over non-RCRA and non-radiological sites (for example, TSCA sites).
5. DOE fails to mention what institutional controls will be implemented and how they will be enforced.

Site-Specific Comments:

Manhattan Monument

This site is not associated with any PRS but is located near SWMU 1-006(e). According to the figures provided in the RFI report for this SWMU, there aren't any former waste lines or structures located near by that would have potentially contaminated this area. At this time, HWB does not anticipate requiring any sampling or remediation at this site.

Site 22

There are many unknowns associated with Site 22, including disposal history and potential contaminants. At a minimum, nature and extent of any contamination present will need to be determined before conveyance or transfer.

White Rock

Multiple SWMUs have contributed contaminated sediments to this land tract via Cañada del Buey. The Environmental Surveillance group at LANL recently collected sediment samples that revealed radionuclides exceeding their respective baseline fallout values. This contamination will need to be monitored and/or remediated, depending on the results of future sampling. At this time, HWB has requested that LANL restrict Los Alamos County's use of the canyon bottom. Further characterization of the canyon system will be needed to assess impacts from post-Cerro Grande Fire sedimentation.

DOE LAAO

A Voluntary Corrective Action plan was recently submitted to HWB for review. The plan includes all of the 3 PRS located on the parcel. LANL collected samples and analyzed them for volatile organics, semi-volatile organics, metals, pesticides, PCBs, and select radionuclides. At this time, HWB does not anticipate any further remedial activities at the site.

White Rock Y

The head waters of Los Alamos Canyon, which crosses the White Rock Y tract, was subjected to intense burning during the Cerro Grande Fire and to major flooding following the fire. Subsequently, LANL built a flood retention structure in the canyon bottom and within the boundary of the land parcel slated for transfer. HWB needs to ensure that either LANL or Los Alamos County maintain the structure, including the sampling and removal of potentially contaminated sediments trapped behind the structure.

DP Road Tract

The DP Road tract includes a PRS that may undergo some type of vadose zone remediation. The extent of contamination has not been determined, and the remedial technology and clean-

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up levels have not been proposed by LANL. The remediation may take longer than the Environmental Restoration project has scheduled in this plan.

Rendija Canyon

This canyon was severely burned during the Cerro Grande Fire and therefore must be assessed for adverse impacts to the canyon system from this event. The plan does not consider the changes that may be made to DOE's schedule and costs nor does it address the potential risks from the fire. This tract is not a high priority to HWB.

TA-74

At this time, HWB does not believe that this plan contains any deficiencies regarding the tract. This tract is not a high priority to HWB.

TA-21

Two of the ten PRS within the 20 acres slated to be transferred will be undergoing voluntary corrective measures with early participation from HWB within the next few years. At this time, HWB does not anticipate requiring any other remediation at those two PRS and does not see any deficiencies in this plan. HWB considers this parcel a high priority.

Airport

There are several PRS in this tract that have either undergone remediation (and have approved reports), are presently undergoing remediation, or will be undergoing remediation. At least one of the PRS (Airport Landfill) will need long-term monitoring by LANL to ensure contaminants are not moving into the canyon bottom.

AIR QUALITY

As proposed, there are no requirements or conflicts with New Mexico laws and regulations pertaining to air quality. Los Alamos County is currently in attainment for all National Ambient air Quality Standards (NAAQS). Based on our experience with similar projects, we do not anticipate that there are any deficiencies or inaccuracies in the report concerning long-term to air quality. Dust control measures should be taken to minimize the release of particulates during the proposed projects.

We appreciate the opportunity to comment on this document.

Sincerely,



Gedi Cibas, Ph.D.
Environmental Impact Review Coordinator

NMED File No. 1520ER