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October 21, 1991

Project No. 301215.08.03.08

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Received by ER-RPF  
JUL 02 1992  
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Ashley Pond Chronology

Dear Dr. Conrad,

IT Corporation is pleased to submit a brief history of Ashley Pond. Most of the information was obtained through Mr. Joe Washburn, who started working for Los Alamos County in 1966. Other information was obtained through the TA-1 Workplan. Enclosed are some engineering drawings which show the general design of the pond during renovation and rehabilitation activities in 1960, 1961, and 1975. These plans were also obtained from the County. The following is a brief chronology of activities from the 1940's to the present day:

- Ashley Pond was a natural pond during the days of the Ranch School. Photographs filed in the Los Alamos Historical Society Archives show the pond during the early 1940's.
- During the early days of TA-1, two drainline outfalls were discharging to the pond. The drainlines originated in P Building and the Cleaning Plant. Radioactive materials were not used in these buildings. It is unknown what types of materials were used in the Cleaning Plant, but it is possible that hazardous chemicals were used there.
- In 1960 renovations were made to the banks of the pond, as shown on the enclosed drawing (Drawing No. Z 1916, dated 4/30/60). The north, east and west banks were sloped to 4:1, and the south bank was sloped to 6:1. Two storm drains in the southeast area of the pond were extended approximately 10 feet to meet the new grade. A 2-inch water line on the north side of the pond was abandoned and capped. Boulders were then placed end to end at the water line around the entire pond.



- In approximately 1961, an asphalt sidewalk was constructed around the perimeter of the pond. The sidewalk was graded to drain runoff from the lawn into the pond.
- Several of the Zia Company engineering drawings, dated 10/12/61, show plans for an aerator system to be installed in the pond. The system was installed, but it is not known if it was ever used. Mr. Washburn remembered that no such system was in use at the pond when he started working for the County in 1966.
- Mr. Washburn stated that before his employment with Los Alamos County, there was talk that Zia Company had placed a layer of expansive clay on the bottom of the pond. Mr. Washburn knew of no documentation substantiating this.
- According to Mr. Washburn, the water in the pond occasionally became septic due to storm water runoff from the lawns and streets which carried oils and fertilizers into the pond, and because of the fish and fowl residing in the pond. To remedy this septic condition, the pond was cleaned four or five times since 1966. The cleaning involved pumping out the pond water to the storm drain system for disposal and refilling with fresh water.
- Mr. Washburn recalled that during one of the pond cleanings, probably during the 1975/1976 rehabilitation, approximately six inches of soil was removed from the pond bottom and replaced with a layer of sand. There is no further documentation regarding the disposition of the material.
- In 1975/1976, a runoff collection system was constructed around the perimeter of the pond. The system was designed to catch the runoff from the lawns, direct it into a sump, and pump it to the storm drain system. The piping system was installed, but was eventually abandoned when a system for using pond water to irrigate the lawns was installed. The concrete apron surrounding the pond was constructed at this time. The pond bottom is currently unlined.
- Several storm drain outfalls discharged to Ashley Pond as shown on the enclosed drawings. Three of these drains, located on the east side of the pond, are still active today. Two of these drain the north and south sides of the Community Building, and the other comes from two inlets on 20th Street.
- The lawn irrigation system currently in use at the pond consists of a pumping system to deliver pond water to the sprinklers, and fresh water to refill the pond.

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Based on this chronology, the most pertinent information is that (1) the pond has never been lined with concrete, and (2) the early renovation by the U.S. Atomic Energy Commission in 1960 consisted mainly of resloping the banks of the pond.

If you have any questions regarding the information above, or if we can be of further service in this matter, please call me at 662-1226. I look forward to hearing from you in the future.

Respectfully submitted,  
IT Corporation



P. Scott Den-Baars, PE  
Engineering Manager  
Enclosure - Plans (5 sheets)

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