



General  
DEPARTMENT OF ENERGY  
National Nuclear Security Administration  
Los Alamos Site Office  
Los Alamos, New Mexico 87544



MAR 04 2010

Mr. James Bearzi  
New Mexico Environment Department  
2905 Rodeo Park Drive, East  
Building 1  
Santa Fe, NM 87505



Dear Mr. Bearzi:

The U. S. Department of Energy (DOE), National Nuclear Security Administration (NNSA), is considering a proposal to address new National Pollution Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) permit requirements imposed under the Clean Water Act for Los Alamos National Laboratory (LANL) operations. To meet these new regulatory requirements, NNSA is proposing to enhance and enlarge the existing Sanitary Effluent Reclamation Facility (SERF), and then increase the reuse of reclaimed waste water at several nearby LANL facility locations. This action would result in reductions to the overall amount of potable water consumed by LANL operations, which is a conservation goal of NNSA. However, reusing the waste water would reduce or could eliminate the amount of water discharged into Sandia Canyon. Because the general waste water discharge area in Sandia Canyon is under the cleanup requirements of the "Compliance Order on Consent" (the Consent Order was entered into by NNSA, the LANL management and operations contractor, and the State of New Mexico in 2005), the SERF proposal must be considered together with the cleanup activities and their mutual environmental issues. Per the terms of the Consent Order, the State of New Mexico will make the decision on the type of cleanup action to be undertaken in Sandia Canyon. This would require decisions by NNSA for implementation. Undertaking either the proposed water reuse activities, or the possible remediation actions required by the State of New Mexico, could result in temporary or permanent changes to a 3-acre Sandia Canyon wetland area. Similarly, either action could also result in changes to game animal migration patterns between the Rio Grande (located on the east side of LANL) and the Jemez Mountains (located on the west side of LANL), as well as other possible impacts to natural and cultural resources present within Sandia Canyon.

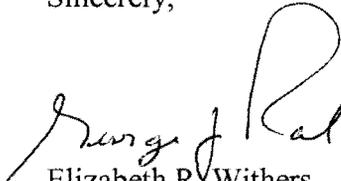
In accordance with National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) policy, I am notifying you that an Environmental Assessment (EA) will be prepared that considers both the proposed SERF actions and the environmental cleanup actions to be taken in Sandia Canyon. The EA will discuss the proposed action alternatives, including the No Action Alternative, along with possible natural and cultural resource concerns, and human health, safety, noise and transportation issues. We would appreciate your comments and participation in the NEPA process, and invite you to provide scoping comments on the proposal through April 9, 2010. **A public scoping meeting will be held to provide information and an opportunity for public comment on Wednesday, March 24, 2010 at the Holiday Inn Express, 60 Entrada Drive, Los Alamos, New Mexico from 4:00 pm until 7:00 pm.** Scoping comments may also be submitted directly to Elizabeth Withers, Document Manger, at 3747 West Jemez Road, Los Alamos, NM, 87544; via fax at (505) 667-5948; or via e-mail to: [NEPALASO@doeal.gov](mailto:NEPALASO@doeal.gov).



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You will also be given the opportunity to review and comment on a pre-decisional draft EA prior to NNSA making a final determination on this project. If you have any questions concerning this proposal or the EA process, please contact me at (505) 845-4984, or George Rael, LASO NEPA Compliance Officer at (505) 606-0397.

Sincerely,

  
for Elizabeth R. Withers  
NEPA Compliance Officer  
EA Document Manager

14.10 NSM:8EW-238415

cc:

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