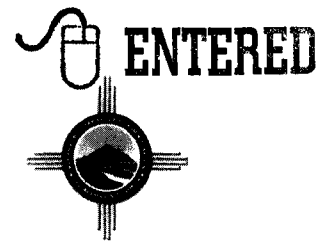
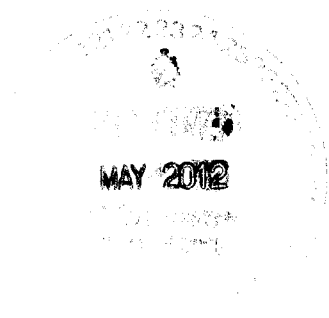




Environmental Programs
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National Nuclear Security Administration
 Los Alamos Site Office, MS A316
 Environmental Restoration Program
 Los Alamos, New Mexico 87544
 (505) 667-4255/FAX (505) 606-2132

Date: **MAY 23 2012**
Refer To: EP2012-0115

John Kieling, Bureau Chief
 Hazardous Waste Bureau
 New Mexico Environment Department
 2905 Rodeo Park Drive East, Building 1
 Santa Fe, NM 87505-6303

Subject: Request for Extension for the Construction of the Sandia Canyon Wetland Grade-Control Structure

Dear Mr. Kieling:

This letter requests a 1-year extension to complete construction of the Sandia Canyon wetland grade-control structure from July 1, 2012, to July 1, 2013. The extension request is primarily based on a longer-than-anticipated time to receive approval from the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) on a biological assessment (BA) for potential impacts of constructing an access road into Sandia Canyon. Previous BA submissions to the USFWS typically have been reviewed within 60 days. Based on this previous experience, Los Alamos National Laboratory (the Laboratory) submitted this BA on January 20, 2012, in anticipation of a late March commencement of construction activities. The Laboratory contacted the USFWS to obtain an anticipated approval date, but the USFWS was unable to provide that information. To date, the Laboratory has not received a response on the BA from the USFWS. Therefore, the Sandia Canyon wetland grade-control structure project is behind schedule.


The Laboratory has evaluated other options for constructing an access road, including those that could be performed without a BA. Unfortunately, constructing the road under the requirements of the current Habitat Management Plan is not possible because of the density of mature trees (greater than 9 in. in diameter) in the protected habitat that will require removal in order to construct the road. Other evaluated options would adversely impact the wetlands that are to be revitalized through this project or would require costly construction techniques. Although the project is now approximately 60 days behind schedule, the impact of this delay is much greater than 60 days because of the short premonsoon construction season. The delay in receiving the BA would now require construction of the grade-control structure and associated soil-disturbing activities to occur during the rainy season, which would create a much greater potential for contaminant transport in the event of a flood or significant rain event.



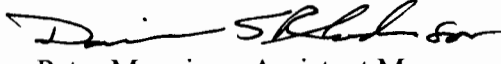
Therefore, the Laboratory proposes the above completion date in order to await approval from the USFWS for the BA and then to construct the access road and grade-control structure as currently designed during months when the potential environmental impacts of soil-disturbing construction activities will be lessened.

If you have any questions, please contact Steve Veenis at (505) 667-0013 (veenis@lanl.gov) or Ramoncita Massey at (505) 845-4675 (ramoncita.massey@nnsa.doe.gov).

Sincerely,


Michael J. Graham, Associate Director
Environmental Programs
Los Alamos National Laboratory

Sincerely,


Peter Maggiore, Assistant Manager
Environmental Projects Office
Los Alamos Site Office

MG/PM/CD/SV:vt

- Cy: Laurie King, EPA Region 6, Dallas, TX
Steve Yanicak, NMED-DOE-OB, MS M894
Tom Skibitski, NMED-OB, Santa Fe, NM (date-stamped letter emailed)
Annette Russell, DOE-LASO (date-stamped letter emailed)
Ramoncita Massey, DOE-LASO, MS A316 (date-stamped letter emailed)
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Craig Douglass, EP-CAP, MS M996 (date-stamped letter emailed)
Michael J. Graham, ADEP, MS M991 (date-stamped letter emailed)
William Alexander, EP-BPS, MS M992 (date-stamped letter emailed)
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