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United States Department of the Interior

FISH AND WILDLIFE SERVICE

New Mexico Ecological Services Field Office
2105 Osuna NE

Albuquerque, New Mexico 87113

Phone: (505) 761-4525 Fax: (505) 761-4542

April 21, 1997

Cons. #2-22-97-I-181

G. Thomas Todd, Area Manager
Department of Energy
Los Alamos Area Office
528 35th Street
Los Alamos, New Mexico 87544

Dear Mr. Todd:

This is a response to your letter dated March 10, 1996, notifying our office of your intent to prepare an Environmental Assessment (EA) for the leasing of Department of Energy (DOE) lands. Specifically, DOE intends to lease to the County of Los Alamos (County), 50 acres in Technical Areas-3 and 62 for the development of a research park.

The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (Service) is concerned that proposed actions on Los Alamos National Laboratories (LANL) land are being analyzed in a piecemeal fashion, rather than in the context of other ongoing and proposed actions. For example, conveyance of this land to the County may result in adverse impacts to listed species that would be additive to adverse impacts resulting from other LANL projects. The EA for the proposed transfer of the DP Road Tract did not address possible adverse impacts on the Mexican spotted owl (owl) in relation to the potential lease of Technical Areas-3 and 62. Your letter states that when the EA was being prepared, the "...proposal to lease land to the County was not ripe for decision..." Regardless, the possibility of the lease should have been discussed in the EA for a thorough and adequate review by our office and by others. It was a reasonably foreseeable action with possible adverse effects to listed species.

My staff is available to assist you. If you have any questions, please contact Craig L. Springer or Carol Torrez at (505) 761-4525.

Sincerely,

Jennifer Fowler-Propst
Field Supervisor



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TA 3
File: R/L, LANL '97
TRACK: LANL, 4/21/97, N/A, DOE, U.S. Dept of Interior
RE: LANL: EA on TA 3 and 62 Comments from USFWS

G. Thomas Todd, Area Manager

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cc:

**NEPA Compliance Officer, Department of Energy, Los Alamos Area Office, Los Alamos,
New Mexico (Attn: Elizabeth R. Withers)**

Director, New Mexico Department of Game and Fish, Santa Fe, New Mexico

**Chief, New Mexico Environment Department, Surface Water Quality Bureau, Santa Fe,
New Mexico**

Regional Administrator, U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, Dallas, Texas

**Geographic Manager, New Mexico Ecosystems, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service,
Albuquerque, New Mexico**