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# **Environmental Stewardship— Environmental Remediation and Surveillance Program Public Involvement Plan**



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Prepared by  
Environmental Stewardship Division—  
Environmental Remediation and Surveillance Program

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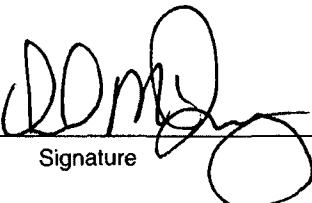
# Environmental Stewardship Division- Environmental Remediation and Surveillance Program Public Involvement Plan

May 2005

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## 1.0 INTRODUCTION

### 2.0 Public Involvement in the Remediation Program

Public Involvement in the Remediation Program was a directive in Module VIII of the Los Alamos National Laboratory's (the Laboratory's) Hazardous Waste Facility Permit (EPA, 1994, 44146), and of corrective measures implementation in the Compliance Order on Consent, signed by the Department of Energy, the Regents of the University of California, and the New Mexico Environment Department on March 1, 2005. The Remediation Program is tasked to implement a public participation program that promotes openness and two-way communication and to tailor that program to meet specific program and stakeholders needs.

The first edition of the Remediation Program's Installation Workplan (LANL 1990, 75171 7518; 7519) included the original public involvement plan for the Remediation Program. This former plan has evolved into the Public Involvement Plan presented here and addresses the requirements specified in Section Q, Task II, Section D, of Module VIII. All stakeholder involvement objectives adhere to internal administrative controls such as quality procedures and standard operating procedures.

This Public Involvement Plan is a general plan outlining the Remediation Program's goal to involve stakeholders in site investigation and corrective action activities. The Remediation Program recognizes the importance of public involvement and a proactive public involvement process, which is intended to provide complete information, timely public notice, and full access to key decisions. The process also complies with the guidance set forth in key US Department of Energy Orders.

Public involvement objectives are also identified each fiscal year to forecast upcoming Remediation Program activities and public involvement tools such as the number of public meetings, the topics to be presented, and target dates. In addition to this Public Involvement Plan and Fiscal Year Public Involvement Objectives, Project-Specific Outreach Plans are developed and used to implement specific stakeholder involvement techniques to increase stakeholder participation. These tools are selected from a variety of public participation activities listed in the Communication and Outreach Tools chart on the next page.

#### Communication and Outreach Tools

<b>In-reach</b>	<b>Outreach</b>	<b>Lab Management</b>
<b>(ER employees)</b>	<b>(public, media, nonprofit, boards, edu)</b>	<b>(division, upper Lab leadership)</b>
Web site	Web site	Web site
Colloquiums	Virtual Library/Information Repository	Information sheets
Remediation Highlights	Open houses	Accomplishment books
Brown Bags	Public meetings/informal and formal	Permit modifications
Socials	Workshops	Mid-year review
	Briefings	Year-end review
	Focus groups	Critical Few App F report
	Tours	
	Citizens' guide	
	Access agreements	
<b>These tools help staff to accomplish outreach efforts:</b>	Project-specific outreach plans	
Viewgraphs	Facility mailing list	
Posters	Interviews	
Information Sheets	Point-of-Contact	
Printed materials	Technical Assistance	

In-reach (ER employees)	Outreach (public, media, nonprofit, boards, edu)	Lab Management (division, upper Lab leadership)
Graphics	Expert Panels	
Fact Sheets	Hearings	
Photographs	Speakers Bureau	
Recording CDs	Hand-outs	
Surveys	Consensus Building	
Radio/Paper Announcements	Task Forces	
Community Festivals	Information Hotline	
Scanning	Press Releases	
Classification numbers	Education judging events	

### 3.0 Public Involvement Approach

The Remediation Program's Communications Specialists are responsible for accomplishing public involvement and outreach. The types and scope of public involvement are developed on a case-by-case basis.

The approach to public involvement reflects these goals set forth in this Public Involvement Plan:

- broadening the base of involved individuals and groups;
- providing easy access to timely, meaningful, open, and accurate information and communication;
- complying with all regulations pertaining to outreach and coordinating with all Laboratory outreach programs; and,
- providing innovative communication solutions to staff and the public.

The Remediation Program is accountable to

- anyone who resides in the communities surrounding the Laboratory or has an interest in the activities of the Remediation Program,
- organizations representing or protecting specific groups or interests in our region, and
- government agencies including local, state, federal, and tribal governments.

### 4.0 Public Involvement Process

The regulatory process requires the Remediation Program to investigate a site, analyze the data, report to the regulatory agency, recommend corrective actions, and implement regulatory decisions with respect to corrective action. These decisions include cleanup actions and proposals for no further action. Factors in cleanup decisions include the amounts and kinds of waste to be cleaned up, the types of technologies to be used, public concerns, and the desired degree of cleanup. Cleanup actions may themselves disturb the environment and produce wastes. The cost of cleanup must also be considered. The Remediation Program seeks the public's input in weighing these factors before making cleanup recommendations.

The Remediation Program provides the public with a variety of opportunities to personally observe activities and discuss issues as cleanup progresses. During these activities, Remediation Program technical staff is available to discuss the history and background of the sites, to describe the sampling and the data obtained and to describe the risk assessment process and its relationship to alternatives. The Remediation Program may also provide opportunities for public involvement in specific projects. As

required by regulation, meetings are held for the purpose of obtaining public comments and recommendations on certain proposed actions that involve modifying Module VIII of the Laboratory's Hazardous Waste Facility Permit. Comments obtained at such meetings are forwarded to the New Mexico Environment Department for consideration in deciding whether to accept the Remediation Program proposals.

As recommendations for actions at corrective action sites are developed, staff of the Remediation Program invite the public to discuss the proposed cleanup approaches. The public's involvement assists the Remediation Program in prioritizing sites and recommending appropriate cleanup alternatives.

The following sections outline the minimum actions the Remediation Program uses to facilitate public involvement.

#### **4.1 Printed Materials**

Remediation Program personnel prepare a variety of materials for the northern New Mexico community regarding the Remediation Program activities. The materials may include progress reports, news releases, handouts for tours, information sheets, and citizen toolkits. These materials describe site history when appropriate and include site maps, information about potential contamination, and cleanup alternatives such as no further action and accelerated cleanups. Personnel strive to make information sheets sensitive to cultural issues and solicit comments from the public to make sure their concerns have been addressed. Some information sheets are translated into Spanish. If the pueblos indicate a desire for an oral translation, the Remediation Program will arrange for presentations in pueblo languages. The Remediation Program also maintains this information, as well as reports and other information it generates, on the World Wide Web at <http://erproject.lanl.gov>.

#### **4.2 Information Dissemination**

The major objective of all information dissemination is to familiarize the public with the Remediation Program so that the public may participate more knowledgeably in the decision-making process. The Remediation Program maintains communication with the public in several ways, including posting information on the World Wide Web site, preparing and distributing information sheets and summaries of major project actions, and organizing and conducting community meetings, tours, and workshops.

##### **4.2.1 Mailing List**

The public is notified of events through mailings from the Laboratory's facility mailing list. The Laboratory's facility mailing list consists of individuals, organizations, and government and tribal officials in northern New Mexico and is maintained by the Laboratory's Community Relations Office. The public is also notified through public service announcements on local radio stations; notices and advertisements in local newspapers, such as Albuquerque Journal North, Santa Fe New Mexican, Rio Grande Sun, Santa Fe Reporter, and Los Alamos Monitor; and information on the Remediation Program's World Wide Web site. Information is also provided to the media via press releases throughout Northern New Mexico; dialogue with members of the public is provided through meetings of the Northern New Mexico Citizens' Advisory Board (NNMCAB), meetings with local governments and tribes, public meetings, and meetings with various civic organizations.

#### **4.2.2 Information Repository**

The Laboratory's Public Reading Room is located at 1619 Central Avenue in Los Alamos (phone: 505-665-4400) and houses the document repository for the Remediation Program. The Remediation Program may also display documents at the Mesa Public Library in Los Alamos, the public libraries in Española and Santa Fe, the Office of the Governor of the San Ildefonso Pueblo, the NNM CAB Office, and the Laboratory outreach center in Española, New Mexico.

#### **4.2.3 Public Meetings and Briefings**

To improve its dialogue with the community, the Remediation Program hosts community meetings, round-table discussions, and informal monthly meetings with interested groups and citizens. The Remediation Program continues to solicit invitations from community groups to attend their meetings for the purpose of sharing information, discussing the Remediation Program, and encouraging public participation. Some groups include Laboratory employees, media associations, local and tribal governments, local schools and universities, and church groups. The primary goals of these meetings are personal engagement and informal group dialogue. The Remediation Program also participates in public meetings held by DOE's Headquarters and Albuquerque Operations Offices and by the New Mexico Environment Department.

#### **4.3.4 Tours**

Tours help acquaint the public with the Remediation Program and specific corrective action sites as these sites are addressed throughout the corrective action process, especially prior to initiation of investigation and cleanup activities. Written information supplements the discussions during the tours. These tours are open to all members of the public interested in Remediation Program activities. To guide future planning and to aid in evaluation, Remediation Program personnel record participants' concerns and suggestions and respond as appropriate.

#### **4.3.5 Education Programs**

Members of the Remediation Program staff visit schools and help teachers who request assistance in developing class projects that promote students' understanding of environmental restoration and their involvement in the Remediation Program. Remediation Program personnel work with Laboratory groups to develop programs for students and to provide support for existing efforts that focus on Remediation Program-related activities.

#### **4.3.6 Northern New Mexico Citizens Advisory Board (NNMCAB)**

The NNMCAB is a DOE-chartered site-specific advisory board whose purpose is to provide independent advice and recommendations to DOE regarding the Laboratory's Remediation Program and waste management activities and associated environmental issues. It is composed of citizens representing the communities and Pueblos of northern New Mexico. The full NNMCAB holds monthly public meetings and has chartered a number of subcommittees, including an environmental restoration subcommittee. The Remediation Program provides information, training, and tours to the NNMCAB and provides staff support to both its public and committee meetings.



## 5.0 REFERENCES

The following list includes all references cited in this chapter. The parenthetical information following the reference provides the author, publication date, and Remediation Program identification (ER ID) number. This information is also included in the citation in the text and can be used to locate the document. ER ID numbers are assigned by the Laboratory's Remediation Program to track all material associated with Los Alamos National Laboratory corrective action sites. These numbers can be used to locate copies of the documents at the Remediation Program's Records Processing Facility and, where applicable, within the Remediation Program reference library. The references cited in this report can be found in the volumes of the reference library titled "Reference Set for Regulatory Compliance Focus Area." Copies of the reference library are maintained at the New Mexico Environment Department Hazardous and Radioactive Materials Bureau, the Los Alamos Area Office of the US Department of Energy, the US Environmental Protection Agency, and the Remediation Program Office. This library is a living document that was developed to ensure that the administrative authority has all the necessary material to review the decisions and actions proposed in this report. However, documents previously submitted to the administrative authority are not included in the reference library.

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