



We are working to manage and evaluate our historical work sites

Upper Los Alamos Canyon Project

Los Alamos National Laboratory is planning to make environmental assessments in portions of Upper Los Alamos Canyon.

Upper Los Alamos Canyon is one of the areas included in the 2005 Consent Order agreed to by Los Alamos National Laboratory, the National Nuclear Security Administration, and the New Mexico Environment Department. As such, it must be evaluated for potential contamination.

The area is located within and south of the Los Alamos townsite in Technical Areas 00, 01, 03, 32, 41, 43, and 61 of Los Alamos National Laboratory and includes a total of 115 solid waste management units and areas of concern.

This area was home to some of the earliest operations at Los Alamos, dating from the 1940s. Of the 115 solid-waste management units and areas of concern, 54 have been addressed previously. The remaining 61 are the focus of this project. These include septic tanks and outfalls, sanitary and industrial waste lines, storm drains, soil contamination areas, landfill and surface disposal areas, transformer sites, and incinerators.

The Consent Order requires the Laboratory to evaluate historical work sites for the potential presence of residual contamination. It also requires the Laboratory to identify and implement corrective actions should contamination be found. The Laboratory began performing these types of activities in the 1990s.



Los Alamos National Laboratory is operated for the Department of Energy's National Nuclear Security Administration by Los Alamos National Security, LLC, a team of Bechtel National, the University of California, BWX Technologies, and Washington Group International

The Project

The Upper Los Alamos Canyon project entails:

- 1) collecting soil and rock samples using the most efficient and least-invasive methods practicable
- 2) defining the nature and extent of any residual contamination associated with each solid waste management unit or area of concern
- 3) gathering additional data if needed to evaluate potential remedial alternatives

A variety of methods, including studies of engineering drawings, nonintrusive geophysical surveys, and trenching, may be used to identify the final sampling locations. The field team then determines which collection method to use at each location, based on such site conditions as topography, the nature of the material to be sampled, the required sample-depth intervals, accessibility, permission from the property owner, and the potential to disrupt access by the property owner or the public. The field team typically collects samples using spades, scoops, or hand augers unless site conditions require a drill rig.

The Laboratory expects field work to begin in 2008 and extend through the remainder of the year. Work activity is described in more detail in the "Investigation Work Plan for Upper Los Alamos Canyon Aggregate Area" (LA-UR-06-2464), which is available to the public: (<http://www.lanl.gov/environment/cleanup/index.shtml#proj>).

Los Alamos National Laboratory is a multi-disciplinary research facility located in north-central New Mexico and covers 40 square miles of the Pajarito Plateau.

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