---

# Department of Energy
# National Nuclear Security Administration
# Finding of No Significant Impact
# for the
# Los Alamos National Laboratory
# Proposed Trails Management Program,
# Los Alamos, New Mexico

**U. S. Department of Energy**
**National Nuclear Security Administration**
**Los Alamos Site Office**
**528 35th Street**
**Los Alamos, NM  87544**

# DEPARTMENT OF ENERGY,
# NATIONAL NUCLEAR SECUIRTY ADMINISTRATION
# FINDING OF NO SIGNIFICANT IMPACT

## Proposed Los Alamos National Laboratory Trails Management Program ,

## Los Alamos, New Mexico

**FINAL ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT:** The *Environmental Assessment (EA) for Proposed Los Alamos National Laboratory Trails Management Program, Los Alamos, New Mexico* (DOE/EA-1431) and the accompanying Mitigation Action Plan (MAP) (both attached) provides sufficient evidence and analysis to determine that a Finding Of No Significant Impact is appropriate for the Proposed Action (Los Alamos National Laboratory (LANL) Trails Management Program Alternative). The EA documents the evidence and analysis in the following chapters: 1, Purpose and Need; 2, Description of Proposed Action and Associated Alternatives; 3, Affected Environment; and 4, Environmental Consequences.

Analyses performed in the subject EA allow National Nuclear Security Administration to conclude that potential adverse environmental effects of the Proposed Action, under normal conditions, would be minimal. Engineering and administrative controls or considerations that serve to lessen any potential for adverse environmental effects have been incorporated as integral features of the Proposed Action Alternative. Examples of this type of mitigating feature include the use of Best Management Practices to prevent surface soil erosion and sediment migration where soil disturbance is unavoidable, and the installation of site appropriate surface water drainage and control measures. These actions are discussed in the EA document within Chapter 2.1. The MAP documents potential adverse environmental effects that could result from implementation of the Proposed Action, identifies commitments made to mitigate those effects to render them non-significant, and establishes the responsible National Nuclear Security Administration or LANL organizations.

The EA considered the type of potential accidents that might occur from trails construction activities and use, as well as possible cumulative effects from implementing the Proposed Action together with past, present and reasonably foreseeable future actions. Trails development, construction, management, and use are not inherently risky activities. Additional trails work, maintenance and enhanced trail use could create additional opportunities for accidents to occur. Risk reduction measures are addressed in the MAP.

**PREDECISIONAL DRAFT REVIEW & COMMENT:** On July 11, 2003, the Department of Energy, National Nuclear Security Administration invited review and comment on the predecisional draft EA from the State of New Mexico; four nearby American Indian Tribes: Cochiti, Jemez, Santa Clara and San Ildefonso (sometimes referred to as the four Accord Pueblos because each tribe has entered into an accord with the Department of Energy); the Pueblo of Acoma; and the Mescalero Apache Tribe. The National Nuclear Security Administration also made the predecisional draft EA available to the general public at the

same time it was provided to the State and Tribes for review and comment. The general availability of the predecisional draft EA to the public was accomplished by placing it in the Department of Energy Public Reading Rooms located within the Los Alamos National Laboratory's Community Relations Office and Reading Room, and in the University of New Mexico's Zimmerman Library in Albuquerque. Additionally, over 30 local stakeholder groups and individuals that have identified themselves as interested parties with regards to LANL activities were notified by letter of the availability of the predecisional draft EA on July 11, 2003. Notice of the availability of the predecisional draft EA for review was also published in three local newspapers. Over the following week, notices of the availability of the predecisional draft EA for review and comment were also placed in three local newspapers and on the LANL electronic Daily NEWSBulletin, as well as the LANL-on-line Meeting Calendar. Copies of the predecisional draft EA were provided to all interested parties for their review. The review and comment period was 21 days long and ended on August 5, 2003. A public information meeting on the Proposed Action that provided an additional forum for public comment was held in Los Alamos, New Mexico on July 30, 2003.

About 125 parties provided comments to the predecisional draft EA. Neither the State of New Mexico, nor any of the American Indian Tribes offered comment on the predecisional draft EA. Comments received were addressed through changes to the Final EA, and through general comment responses provided in Chapter 1.6 of the EA; copies of the comments are provided in Appendix A of the EA. Copies of the Final EA have been sent to the respondents.

**AGENCY CONSULTATIONS:** NNSA determined that the activities associated with implementing the action alternatives would either not affect individual threatened or endangered species that may be present at LANL or their critical habitat, or might affect, but would likely adversely affect individual threatened or endangered species that may be present at LANL or their critical habitat. Trail maintenance and repair actions would be conducted in accordance with the LANL Threatened and Endangered Species Habitat Management Plan. Therefore, no consultation was required with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service under the provisions of section 7 of the Endangered Species Act of 1973 (16 USC 1531 *et seq.*). The Proposed Action has the potential to affect cultural resources astride certain trails and some of the trails that are also designated as historic properties on the State Register of Cultural Properties. The planning process involved in the Proposed Action would include the identification of cultural resources present along and near each trail, and would include appropriate consultation with the New Mexico State Historic Preservation Officer according to section 106 requirements of the National Historic Preservation Act for these resources, and with the four Accord Pueblos. Treatment plans to resolve any adverse effects would be negotiated between the State Historic Preservation Officer and the NNSA through an interagency Memorandum of Agreement as necessary.

**FINDING:** The United States Department of Energy, National Nuclear Security Administration finds that there would be no significant impact from proceeding with its proposal to implement a Los Alamos National Laboratory Trails Management Program as described in the Proposed Action description within the subject Environmental Assessment. This finding is based on the Environmental Assessment, which analyzes the consequences of the relevant issues of environmental concern, together with the Mitigation Action Plan that identifies mitigations and makes commitments to implement these mitigation features

so as to render them not significant. The Department of Energy, National Nuclear Security Administration makes this Finding of No Significant Impact pursuant to the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969 [42 U.S.C. 4321 et seq.], the Council on Environmental Quality (CEQ) Regulations for Implementing the Procedural Provisions of the National Environmental Policy Act [40 CFR 1500] and the Department of Energy National Environmental Policy Act Implementing Procedures [10 CFR 1021]. Therefore, no environmental impact statement is required for this proposal.

Signed in Los Alamos, New Mexico this 2 day of ~~August~~ September, 2003.

Ralph E. Erickson
Manager
Los Alamos Site Office

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION: For further information on this proposal, this Finding Of No Significant Impact (FONSI), or the Department of Energy, National Nuclear Security Administration's National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) review program concerning proposals at Los Alamos National Laboratory, please contact:

Elizabeth Withers, NEPA Compliance Officer

Los Alamos Site Office

U.S. Department of Energy

National Nuclear Security Administration

528 35th Street

Los Alamos NM 87544

(505) 667-8690

Copies of this FONSI (with the Environmental Assessment and Mitigation Action Plan attached) will be made available for public review at the DOE Public Reading Room within the Los Alamos National Laboratory Community Relations Office, 1619 Central Avenue, Los Alamos, New Mexico, 87544 at (505) 665-4400 or (800) 508-4400. Copies will also be made available within the DOE Public Reading Room at the Zimmerman Library, University of New Mexico, Albuquerque, New Mexico, 87131 at (505) 277-5441.