

Los Alamos National Laboratory

Site Wide Environmental Impact Statement (SWEIS)

Many areas of Pueblo and Tribal cultural significance throughout New Mexico have become sites for federal nuclear development activity including, but not limited to, the Los Alamos National Laboratory (LANL), Sandia National Laboratory, Trinity Test Site, Kirtland Air Force Base, the Jackpile-Paguate Uranium Mine, the Homestake Uranium Mine and Disposal Site, and the Waste Isolation Pilot Plant (WIPP). When the region now encompassed by LANL and the city of Los Alamos was seized by the federal government for the Manhattan Project, Indigenous people were denied access to areas of traditional and cultural importance, many of which were damaged or destroyed during the decades of LANL's confidential nuclear weapons development process. Moreover, Pueblo and Tribal communities that live downriver, downstream, and downwind from the laboratory continue to assess cultural resource impacts, ecological contamination, and address the health disparities resulting from LANL's plutonium economy and nuclear weapons testing. The All Pueblo Council of Governors has reaffirmed that all Pueblos maintain significant cultural, environmental, and community health priorities in relation to and impacted by past and ongoing activities conducted by LANL.



LANL SWEIS

The LANL Site-Wide Environmental Impact Statement (SWEIS) will analyze the potential environmental and cultural impacts (under the National Environmental Policy Act and National Historic Preservation Act) of continuing operations of the Laboratory for approximately the next 15 years. The SWEIS will also analyze the environmental impacts of legacy waste remediation conducted by DOE's Office of Environmental Management (DOE-EM). The NEPA process began in August 2022 with a scoping period and a draft SWEIS is expected Summer 2024. The alternatives being considered by DOE NNSA include: 1) A No-Action Alternative: Continue current LANL operations; 2) Modernizing Current Operations Alternative; and 3) Expanded Operations Alternative.

Please contact Sovereign Energy if you would like Tribal-specific recommendations on action items and next steps for this project or if your Tribe has any questions about federal energy-related projects impacting traditional cultural landscapes or Tribal interests.

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APCG submitted the following scoping comments:

- DOE NNSA must analyze site-specific impacts of expanded plutonium pit production
- DOE NNSA should be transparent about its expanded construction plans under each of the alternatives and provide Tribal consultation regarding environmental and cultural impacts
- A "Reduced Operations" alternative should be included
- All alternatives should include an analysis of planned improvements to address seismic risk, hazard, and safety system upgrades, especially in those facilities proposed for plutonium pit production
- DOE NNSA should analyze climate change increasing wildfire risk and wildfire mitigation and protection measures
- DOE NNSA should disclose and analyze plans for tritium ventilation including exposure risks, potential health impacts to Tribes and downstream communities, and Tribal consultation
- The draft SWEIS should be clear about the roles and responsibilities for NNSA versus the DOE-EM on how remediation and the Natural Resource Damage Assessment will be factored into all alternatives
- The draft SWEIS should include the legal framework and timing for cleanup of legacy hazardous and mixed waste pollution
- The draft SWEIS should address transuranic waste disposal capacity at the WIPP, including priority between newly-produced plutonium waste and legacy waste shipments
- The draft SWEIS should analyze the contaminated runoff from LANL to the Rio Grande and its tributaries
- The draft SWEIS should include an analysis of the preservation of the Caja del Rio traditional cultural landscape
- The draft SWEIS should include mitigation of safety issues associated with increased traffic to and from LANL near Pueblos and Tribes