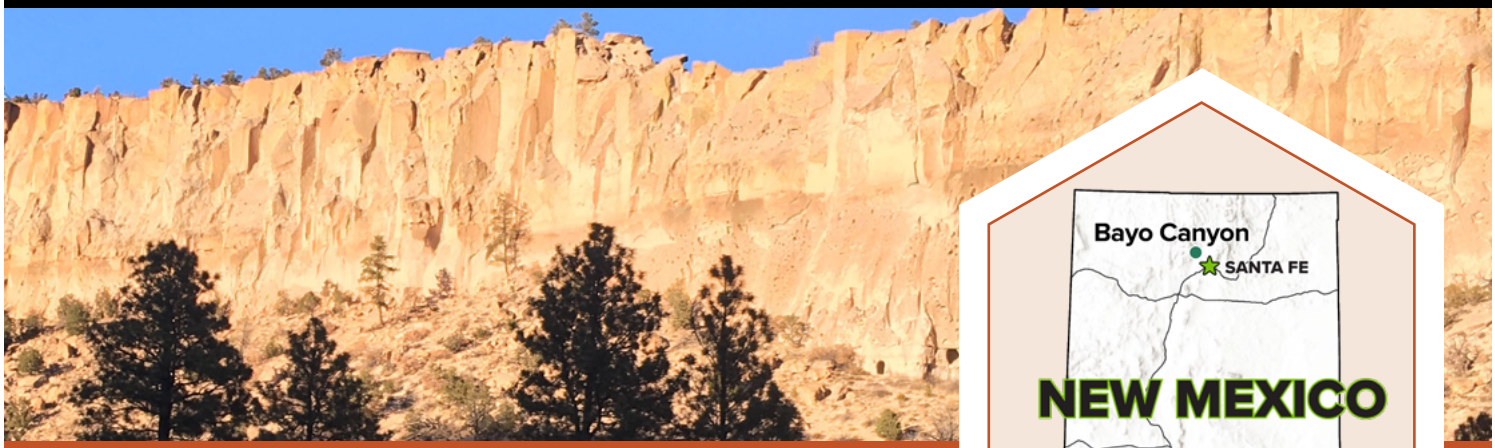
Fact Sheet

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF ENERGY | Legacy Management



Bayo Canyon Aggregate Area, New Mexico, Site

A RCRA site

This fact sheet provides information about the **Bayo Canyon Aggregate Area (BCAA) site**. Long-term stewardship responsibilities for this site are managed by the **U.S. Department of Energy Office of Legacy Management** under the **Resource Conservation and Recovery Act**.

Site Information and History

The BCAA site is located 25 miles northwest of Santa Fe and 60 miles north-northeast of Albuquerque. Located in both Los Alamos and Santa Fe counties. Bayo Canyon is one of numerous canyons that cut into the Pajarito Plateau in north-central New Mexico.

The BCAA site was known as Technical Area 10 (TA-10) of the U.S. government-owned laboratory in Los Alamos. During 1943 and 1944, the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers Manhattan Engineer District (MED) constructed facilities and conducted explosion research experiments in TA-10. The U.S. Atomic Energy Commission (AEC) continued experiments in TA-10 until 1961.

The TA-10 site contained a radiochemistry laboratory, solid waste disposal facilities, two assembly buildings, an inspection building, a personnel building, control buildings at two detonation control complexes with adjacent firing pads, and contaminated leach pits from the radiochemistry laboratory. Detonations dispersed shrapnel throughout the canyon, some of which was radioactive.

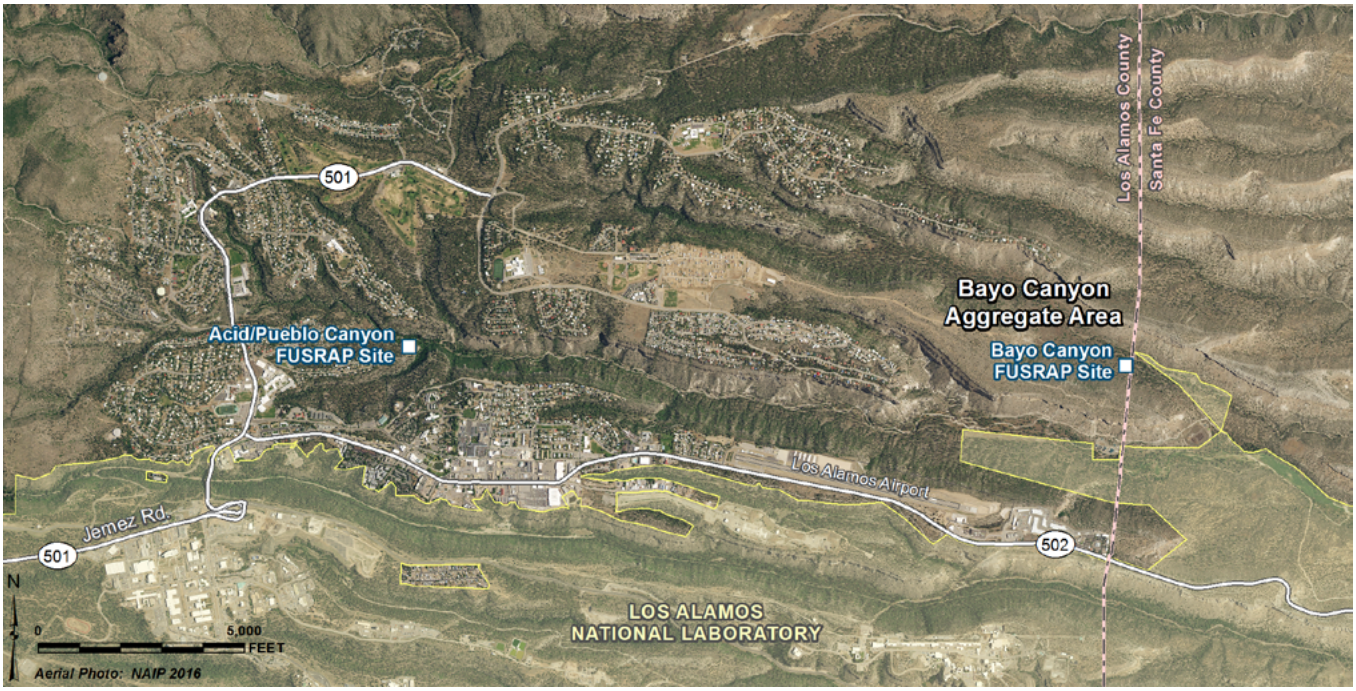
Between 1960 and 1963, AEC decontamination and decommissioning activities at the TA-10 site consisted of demolishing site structures, removing surface debris, and excavating contaminated waste disposal facilities. As a result, the TA-10 site was determined to be sufficiently free of contamination, allowing its release from the control of the federal government under the Atomic Energy Act of 1954 (AEA). On July 1, 1967, the U.S. government transferred by quitclaim deed more than 300 acres of property to its present owner, Los Alamos County.

The BCAA was resurveyed as part of a 1976 screening of former MED/AEC sites under the Formerly Utilized Sites Remedial Action Program (FUSRAP) to determine whether any further corrective measures would be needed. The survey identified 1.5 acres within the former TA-10 area associated with the radiochemistry laboratory and waste disposal area where underground soil was contaminated with strontium-90. This area was added to the FUSRAP program. The remedial action selected involved the placing of six permanent monuments marking the 1.5-acre site boundary with the inscription: “Buried radioactive material.”

The laboratory, now known as the Las Alamos National Laboratory (LANL), conducted multiple surveys and sampling activities during the ensuing years. In compliance with the Resource Conservation and Recovery Act (RCRA), investigations were initiated in 1994. These investigations uncovered pieces of low-level radioactive shrapnel that were scattered throughout the site by the explosive experiments conducted. An interim action addressing surface shrapnel was conducted in 1995.

On March 1, 2005, LANL, the U.S. Department of Energy (DOE) Office of Environmental Management (EM), and the New Mexico Environmental Department (NMED) entered into an order of consent to remediate sites in Los Alamos (25,600 acres), which included the BCAA. In 2005, LANL developed an Investigation work plan that identified additional data needs. The plan was implemented in 2007.

EM excavated two areas contaminated with strontium-90 radioactive waste materials, and conducted confirmatory sampling in the fall of 2009. In 2016, the order of consent was updated. NMED issued certificates of completion for the BCAA site on January 31, 2017.



Regulatory Setting

As a result of its operational history, the BCAA site contains both radioactive and hazardous components. Radioactive constituents were addressed under DOE's AEA authority, while the hazardous components were addressed under RCRA.

The final BCAA site remediation was performed to satisfy the specific requirements contained in the compliance order on consent. The consent order was issued under the New Mexico Hazardous Waste Act, and the New Mexico Solid Waste Act, and was updated in 2016. NMED issued a certificate of completion for BCAA hazardous components on January 31, 2017.

Current Site Conditions

The BCAA site is owned by Los Alamos County and managed as open space that is routinely used by the public for recreation.

Legacy Management Activities

In 2019, DOE transferred long-term stewardship responsibilities for the BCAA site from the DOE Office of Environmental Management to the Office of Legacy Management (LM). LM's responsibilities consist of conducting site inspections, performing minor maintenance (erosion control and signage), managing site records, and responding to stakeholder inquiries.

CONTACT INFORMATION

IN CASE OF AN EMERGENCY AT THE SITE, CONTACT 911

LM TOLL-FREE EMERGENCY HOTLINE: (877) 695-5322

Site-specific documents related to the **Bayo Canyon Aggregate Area, New Mexico, Site** are available on the LM website at **www.energy.gov/lm/bayo-canyon-new-mexico-site**

For more information about LM activities at the **Bayo Canyon Aggregate Area, New Mexico, Site**, contact:

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