Fact Sheet

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF ENERGY | Legacy Management

Bayo Canyon, New Mexico, Site

A FUSRAP site

This fact sheet provides information about the **Bayo Canyon site**. Long-term stewardship responsibilities for this site are managed by the **U.S. Department of Energy Office of Legacy Management** under the **Formerly Utilized Sites Remedial Action Program**.

Site Information and History

The 1.5-acre Bayo Canyon, New Mexico, FUSRAP site is located 25 miles northwest of Santa Fe, and 60 miles north-northeast of Albuquerque. Partly in Los Alamos County and partly in Santa Fe County, Bayo Canyon is one of numerous canyons that cut into the Pajarito Plateau in north-central New Mexico.

The U.S. government owned the original 350-acre site (known as Technical Area 10 or TA-10) from 1943 to 1967 as part of Los Alamos National Laboratory (LANL) operations. The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers Manhattan Engineer District (MED) constructed facilities in Bayo Canyon in 1943 and 1944. MED and later the U.S. Atomic Energy Commission (AEC) used TA-10 between 1944 and 1961 for experiments related to optimizing implosion research for nuclear weapons. Detonations dispersed shrapnel throughout the canyon, some of which was radioactive. The disposal of radioactive byproducts from on-site radiochemistry added to the contamination.

TA-10 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.

AEC decommissioned TA-10 between 1960 and 1963 by demolishing site structures, removing surface debris, and excavating contaminated waste disposal facilities. By 1967, TA-10 was sufficiently free of contamination, under then-current standards, to allow its release from federal government control, and the property was transferred by quitclaim deed to its present owner, Los Alamos County.

As part of the Formerly Utilized Sites Remedial Action Program (FUSRAP), LANL resurveyed the canyon in 1976. The survey identified 1.5 acres that encompassed the former radiochemistry laboratory and soils and liquid waste disposal area. Subsurface soil samples collected within the 1.5-acre area identified residual strontium-90 at between 8 feet and 40 feet below ground surface. After evaluating the three remedial action alternatives and given the level of contamination, the U.S. Department of Energy (DOE) selected the “minimal action” scenario to leave the material undisturbed. DOE placed six monuments inscribed with “Buried Radioactive Material” around the area. The strontium-90 will have decayed below cleanup criteria by 2142.

Regulatory Setting

AEC, the predecessor agency to DOE, established FUSRAP in March 1974 to evaluate radioactive contamination at sites used in the development of the nation’s nuclear weapons and atomic energy programs. DOE has the legislative authority under the Atomic Energy Act (AEA) of 1954, as amended, to perform radiological surveys, monitoring, and maintenance at sites used to support the nuclear activities of DOE’s predecessor agencies. DOE also has legislative authority under the AEA to remediate FUSRAP sites identified as requiring some form of response action. In 1997, Congress transferred responsibility for FUSRAP site characterization and remediation from DOE to the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers. The DOE Office of Legacy Management (LM) retains responsibility for long-term care of remediated FUSRAP sites. For more information about the program, please see the FUSRAP fact sheet.

AEC remediated contaminated areas of TA-10 from 1960 to 1963 as part of decontamination and decommissioning (D&D) activities to criteria in *Interim Soil Limits for D&D Projects, LA-UR-79-1865-Rev* (pre-FUSRAP standards). In 1982, DOE implemented additional remedial action under FUSRAP and utilized the *Radiological Guidelines for Application to DOE's Formerly Utilized Sites Remedial Action Program* (for strontium-90 in soil). This remedial action was completed in 1983 with the installation of six survey monuments noting subsurface contamination remains in place.

The August 2003 closeout report entitled, *Final Report on Remedial Action at the Bayo Canyon Site* consolidates and provides a record of the FUSRAP activities at the site to document radiological conditions at the conclusion of the remedial action.

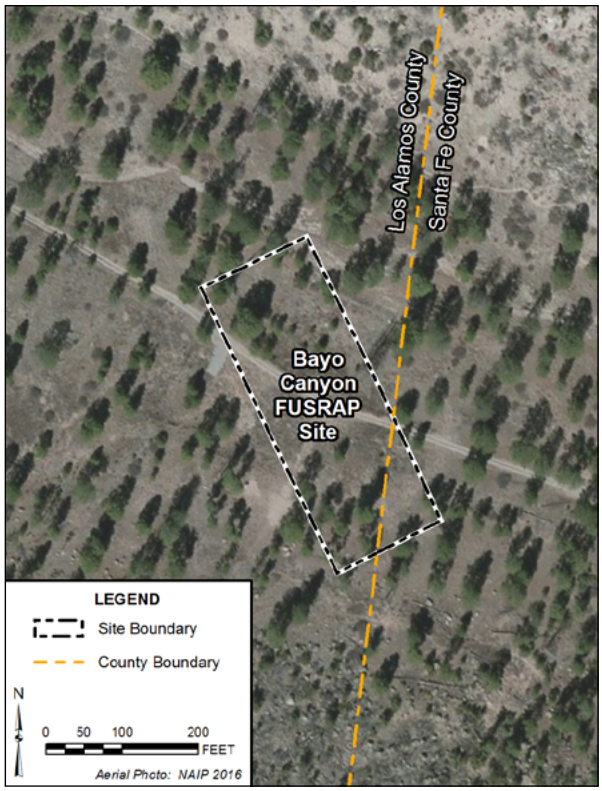
In fiscal year 2004, DOE transferred long-term stewardship responsibilities for the Bayo Canyon FUSRAP site from the DOE Office of Environmental Management to LM. In 2019, LM conducted a radiological survey and completed removal of a fence surrounding the 1.5-acre FUSRAP-remediated site, leaving only survey monuments and protective bollards in place. No additional protective measures or maintenance is warranted at the time.

Current Site Conditions

The Bayo Canyon FUSRAP site is owned by Los Alamos County and managed as part of open space that is routinely used by the public for recreational purposes.

Legacy Management Activities

LM does not conduct monitoring, maintenance, or site inspections at the Bayo Canyon FUSRAP site. LM's responsibilities consist of managing site records and responding to stakeholder inquiries.



Footprint of the Bayo Canyon, New Mexico, Site.

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, New Mexico, Site** are available on the LM website at **www.energy.gov/lm/bayo-canyon-new-mexico-site**

For more information on FUSRAP site history or current long-term stewardship activities, contact:
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