

Floodplain Statement of Findings Los Alamos National Laboratory Starmer's Gulch Floodplain Assessment for the Fencing Project at Technical Area-08

AGENCY: U.S. Department of Energy (DOE) National Nuclear Security Administration (NNSA), Los Alamos Field Office (NA-LA)

ACTIONS: Floodplain Statement of Findings

PROPOSED ACTIONS: NA-LA prepared and released on December 14, 2019 for public review and comment the *Los Alamos National Laboratory Starmer's Gulch Floodplain Assessment for the Fencing Project at Technical Area-08*. In accordance with the DOE floodplain regulations, NA-LA has reevaluated the proposed floodplain action, associated mitigating measures, and considered all substantive comments received.

NA-LA is proposing to take action within the Starmer's Gulch 100-year floodplain at Los Alamos National Laboratory's Technical Area (TA)-08. This action consists of the installation of approximately 4-5 T-posts by hand and strung with barbed 3-wire perimeter fence to create an operational boundary marker within TA-08. There is currently a gate on the access road that requires vehicles to check in at TA-08 Access Control. The boundary fence is required to control the unfettered cross-country entry by erecting a physical barrier that channels pedestrians to access control personnel (Figure 1).

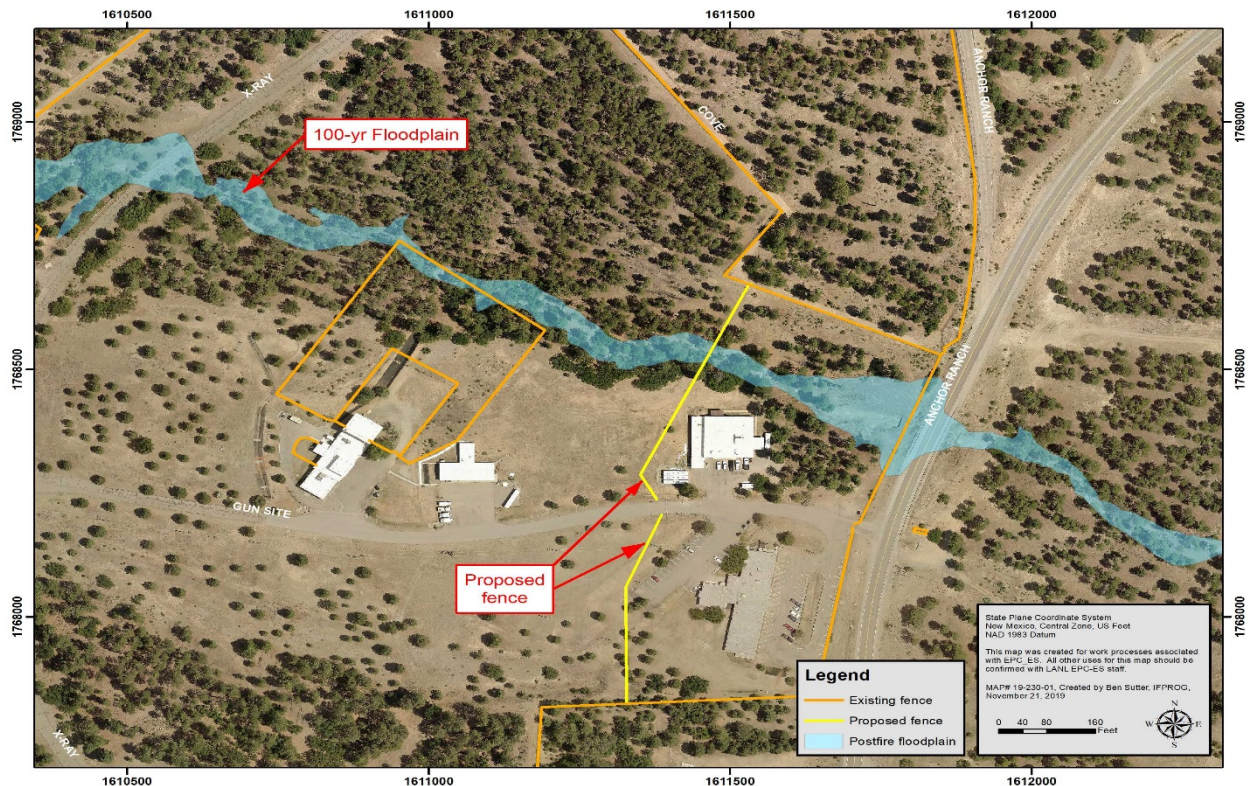


Figure 1. Map of TA-08 proposed fence line (yellow) and Starmer's Gulch 100-year floodplain.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: This Floodplain Statement of Findings was prepared in accordance with Executive Order 11988, *Floodplain Management* and DOE implementing regulations 10 Code of Federal Regulations 1022 *Compliance with Floodplain and Wetland Environmental Review Requirements*; and provides a summary of the Assessment analysis and determination.

The notification for the proposed actions within Starmer's Gulch 100-year floodplain and request for comments was sent to appropriate government agencies, tribal, and groups and persons known to be interested in or potentially affected by the proposed floodplain action via the GovDelivery system and published online on December 13, 2019 on the DOE NEPA website at <https://www.energy.gov/nnsa/other-environmental-documents>. One set of comments was received.

ALTERNATIVES: Given the purpose and need for the action to control the unfettered cross-country entry by erecting a physical barrier that channels pedestrians to access control personnel; there was no other practicable fencing alternative location or alternative that would have avoided or reduced impacts to the floodplain. A 3-strand barbed wire fence will be used instead of chain link to allow wildlife to move more freely through the area.

FLOODPLAIN IMPACTS: NA-LA has determined that during construction the fence installation may result in very minor short-term disturbance within the 100-yr floodplain but would not result in short or long-term adverse impacts to the floodplain values or functions. Short-term impacts would be avoided or minimized through the use of best management practices during the T-post and barbed wire stringing activities. Erection of the T-posts and 3-wire fencing would allow the free flow of water during a storm event with no or minimal effect on floodplain values or functions. No impacts to lives and private property are anticipated from this project.

Should fencing require the remove of shrubs or trees, fence erection would be performed in compliance with the Migratory Bird Treaty Act which restricts vegetation removal during the peak bird breeding season, May 15 through July 31, unless LANL biological resources staff have conducted a survey to ensure that there are no nesting birds present. If active nests are found, the nest tree or shrub will be left in place until the nesting is complete.

NA-LA, upon publication of this Statement of Findings, will endeavor to provide stakeholders and the public with a 15-day opportunity to review the floodplain Statement of Findings before implementing the proposed floodplain action.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: For further information on this proposed floodplain action contact Ms. Kristen Dors via email at Kristen.Dors@nnsa.doe.gov; fax (505) 667-5948; or mail to Ms. Kristen Dors, NNSA Los Alamos Site Office, 3747 West Jemez Road, Los Alamos, NM 87544