

# **Floodplain Statement of Findings for the West Road Maintenance Project at Los Alamos National Laboratory Los Alamos County, New Mexico**

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

**ACTION:** Floodplain Statement of Findings

**DESCRIPTION OF THE PROPOSED ACTION:** The NNSA, a semi-autonomous agency within the DOE, is proposing to do maintenance on West Road at locations along its entirety from the intersection with West Jemez Road/New Mexico State Road 501 (NM 501) to the intersection with Dulce Street through Los Alamos Canyon (Figure 1). The purpose is to improve vehicular and pedestrian safety on West Road by reducing traffic hazards associated with poor road conditions and unsafe roadside parking. Proposed road maintenance and improvement activities throughout the length of West Road include asphalt milling and resurfacing of approximately 2.06 miles (mi.) of the road. West Road crosses approximately 0.35 mi. (1,900 feet (ft.)) of the Los Alamos Canyon floodplain at the bottom of Los Alamos Canyon. Project activities within the floodplain include: 1) mill and resurface the roadway, 2) replace existing guardrails, 3) block access to the informal roadside parking along either side of West Road in Los Alamos Canyon, 4) install trail signage and perform trail maintenance, and 5) restore habitat and reduce wildland fire risk through invasive species removal.

**LOCATION WITHIN A FLOODPLAIN EXPLANATION:** Given that West Road is partially within the floodplain, there are no practical alternatives that would avoid an action within the floodplain.

**ALTERNATIVES:** In addition to the Proposed Action, the alternatives available to DOE/NNSA include: (1) no action alternative and (2) an only milling and resurfacing the roadway alternative. These alternatives were not selected by DOE/NNSA because the potential for a traffic safety issue would persist if barriers were not installed and informal parking areas are not better controlled. In addition, forest health would not improve, and excess fire fuels would remain close to an urban area.

**FLOODPLAIN PROTECTION STANDARDS:** The Proposed Action will not result in a significant change, if any, to the floodplain values or functions. Short-term impacts will be avoided or minimized by adherence to permits and other requirements. Post construction, the floodplain would retain the same preconstruction floodplain values and functions. No impacts to human safety, health and welfare, or private property are anticipated as the natural and beneficial floodplain values will be preserved. The Proposed Action, with implementation of project mitigation measures, conforms to applicable floodplain protection standards.

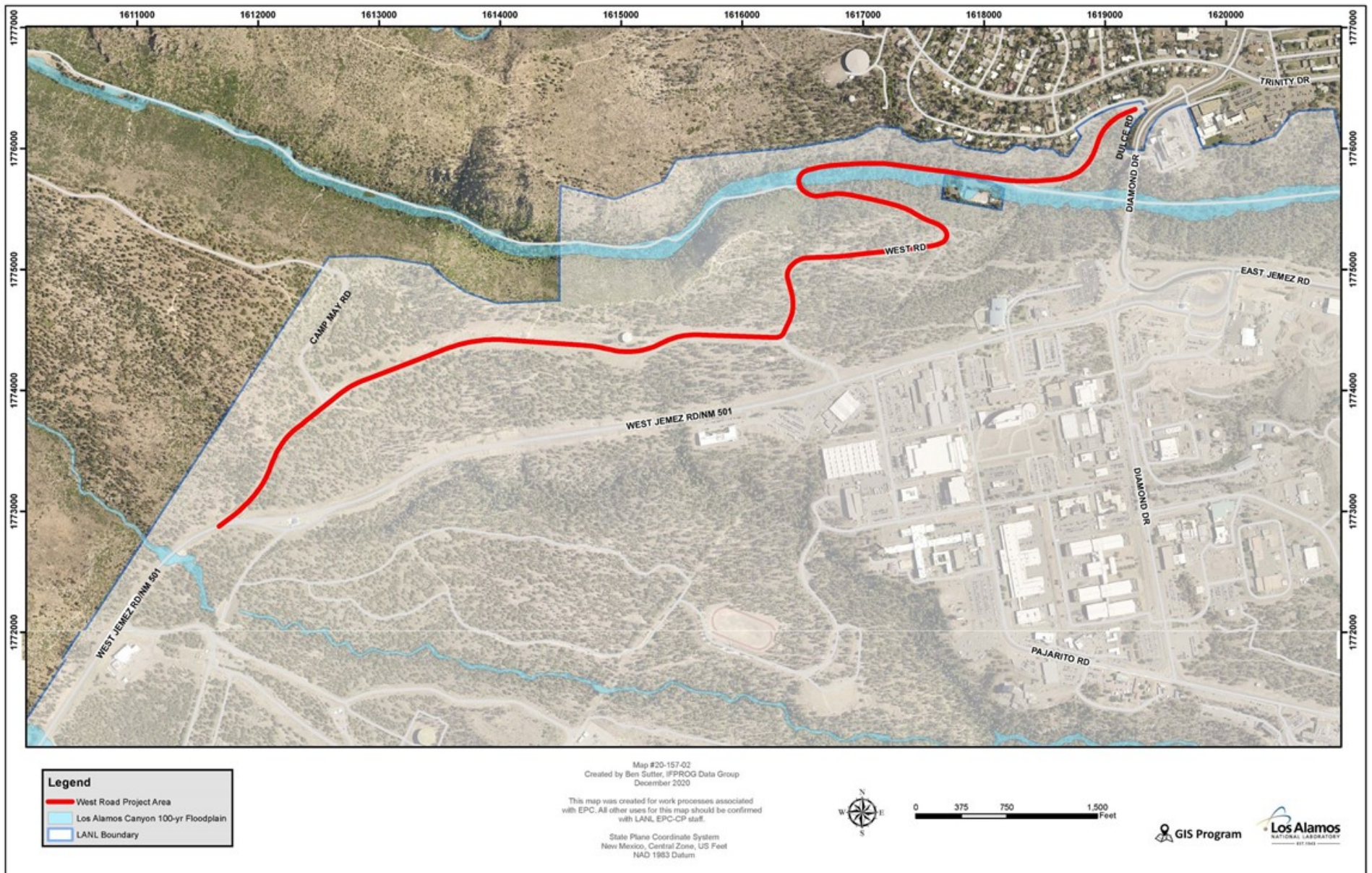


Figure 1. Location of the West Road Maintenance Project.

**STEPS TO BE TAKEN TO MINIMIZE POTENTIAL HARM TO OR WITHIN THE FLOODPLAIN:**

Engineering and administrative controls to limit soil erosion, sediment loss, and spills and leaks will be in place during and after construction. Specific mitigations include the following:

- Hazardous materials, chemicals, fuels, and oils will not be stored within the floodplain.
- Heavy equipment will not be used within the floodplain if conditions are too wet to prevent damage to the soil structure.
- Equipment will be refueled at least 100ft from the 100-yr floodplain.

**SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:** A 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 provided a summary of the *Floodplain Assessment for the West Road Maintenance Project at Los Alamos National Laboratory* (Floodplain Assessment) analysis and determination.

The notification for the availability of the Floodplain Assessment and request for comments was sent to appropriate government agencies, tribes, organizations, and persons known to be interested in or potentially affected by the proposed floodplain action via the GovDelivery system and published online on March 23, 2021, for a 15-day public review and comment period on the DOE National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) website at <https://energy.gov/nepa/articles/los-alamos-national-laboratory-floodplain-assessment-west-road-maintenance-project>. No comments were received.

**FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:** For further information or questions regarding this Floodplain Statement of Findings contact Ms. Kristen Dors via email at [Kristen.Dors@nnsa.doe.gov](mailto:Kristen.Dors@nnsa.doe.gov); fax (505) 667-5948 or mail to:

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