Floodplain Statement of Findings for the Pajarito Tank 4A 18-inch Transmission Water Main Repair, Two Mile Canyon, 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 Incorporated County of Los Alamos, Department of Public Utilities (LAC DPU), proposes to repair a failed 18-inch transmission water main serving Pajarito Tank 4A on U.S. Department of Energy (DOE)/National Nuclear Security Administration (NNSA) property at Los Alamos National Laboratory (LANL). The failed segment lies at the bottom of Two Mile Canyon, west of Mercury Road, within the canyon-bottom drainage corridor identified by LANL as a floodplain and would result in negligible direct and indirect impacts to the floodplain. The proposed action includes temporary access-road rehabilitation, staging and work areas, replacement of approximately 100 linear feet of existing 18-inch concrete cylinder pipe with 18-inch ductile iron pipe, associated fittings and a 6-inch drain assembly, new concrete encasement, grouting to backfill, testing, monitoring, and final restoration. No water will be released into the canyon from the transmission line or repairs.

The floodplain assessment was prepared in accordance with DOE regulations set forth in Title 10 Code of Federal Regulations (CFR), Part 1022 (10 CFR 1022), *Compliance with Floodplain and Wetland Environmental Review Requirements*, and complies with the regulations that were current at the time of publication. Restoring the 18-inch main is necessary to reestablish the water distribution system redundancy, normal conveyance capacity, and long-term operational reliability of the water system. Public meetings are not a requirement of 10 CFR 1022 which is a separate process from National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) 42 U.S.C. § 4321 *et seq.*; 10 CFR Part 1021; and the new DOE Implementing Procedures.

LOCATION WITHIN A FLOODPLAIN EXPLANATION: LAC DPU will repair a failed 18-inch transmission water main on DOE/NNSA property at LANL within in the floodplain at the bottom of Two Mile Canyon (Figure 1). The new waterline will remain within the existing 60-foot wide Waterline Easement No. 2 and portions of the easement will be graded to enable safe access/egress of equipment and staff. A temporary access road be reestablished within the easement and will remain in-place for one-year to enable inspection of the repaired waterline, maintenance of the road and drainage controls. After the year, the area will be stabilized and revegetated per LANL requirements.

The scope of the project does not include storage of highly volatile, toxic, or water reactive materials, hazardous waste, or other materials or actions that would increase hazards to human safety, health and welfare. Therefore, this project did not meet the 10 CFR 1022 definition of a “critical action”, and the 100-year floodplain was appropriate for this analysis despite historic records on frequency or intensity of precipitation.

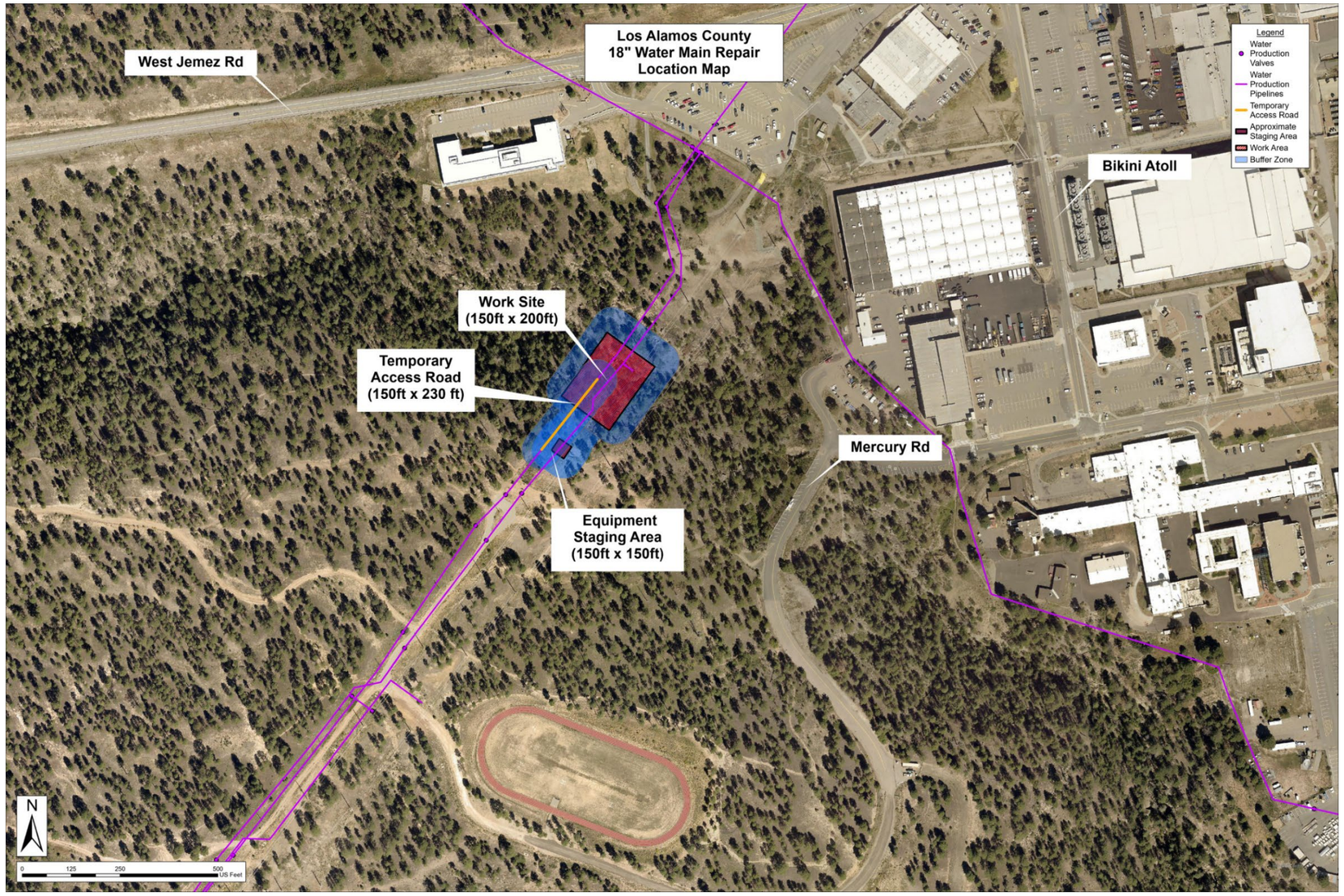

Figure 1. Proposed work site, equipment staging area, temporary access road and buffer zone, and existing water-system alignment (LAC DPU 2026c).
Figure 1 shows the 22,500-square-foot equipment staging area, 30,000-square-foot work site, and a 150-foot-wide by 230-foot-long access-road buffer. The road itself will be about 20 feet wide within the buffer, which allows minor field positioning while keeping the route inside the mapped project area and easement. The full buffer will not be cleared or graded; disturbance will be limited to the road and areas needed for construction and restoration (LAC DPU 2026c).

ALTERNATIVES: Alternatives were considered but dismissed from consideration included no action, localized spot repair, trenchless lining/slip lining, and access without a temporary road. The alternatives were dismissed because they would not result in the reliable repair of the waterline transmission water main. Alternatives would require acquisitions of new right-of-way, resulting in increased environmental impacts, higher costs, and additional permitting complexities. Limiting the project to the existing easement minimizes disturbance to previously undisturbed areas and reduces the potential for impacts to sensitive resources, including floodplains. Alternative construction methods were also evaluated but determined to be impracticable for full project implementation due to technical and economic constraints. Accordingly, no practicable alternatives were identified that would meet the project purpose and need while resulting in fewer impacts than the Proposed Action.

FLOODPLAIN PROTECTION STANDARDS: The proposed project would result in negligible direct and indirect impacts to the Two Mile Canyon 100-year floodplain. Temporary disturbances within the floodplains would cease following completion of construction activities and would not result in adverse impacts to the floodplain values or functions. Best management practices would be implemented, including a one-year post monitoring period to assess the efficacy of the repair and stability of the site. This proposed project would not significantly modify flow paths within the floodplain from pre-project conditions to post-project conditions. No effects to lives or property associated with floodplain modifications are anticipated

STEPS TO BE TAKEN TO MINIMIZE POTENTIAL HARM TO OR WITHIN THE FLOODPLAIN: Potential direct and indirect floodplain impacts from release of pollutants to the floodplain and exposure to stormwater would be avoided or minimized through implementation of the following:

- The project does not propose work in any wetlands within LANL property; no wetlands impacts are expected.
- The project would move or remove only dead and fallen vegetation that blocks safe access to the site. The project scope does not include removal of live trees and shrubs. Implementation of the LANL Biological Resource Management plan is required and may result in restrictions on noise and work-hour limits during project implementation.
- The Migratory Bird Treaty Act (MBTA) prohibits killing migratory birds, including nestlings and eggs in an active nest. Migratory birds breed across LANL property. The risk from this project arises from the potential destruction of active bird nests, defined as nests with eggs or nestlings. LAC has confirmed that no tree or shrub removal will occur as part of the proposed project; therefore, no impact will occur to birds protected by the MBTA.
- There is one known archeological site within 50-feet of the project location. The project area has been walked, assessed and marked to avoid impacts to known cultural resources, including identification of 30-foot no-work buffer area. The project construction activities must stay within the previously-disturbed areas of the easement. No impacts are expected to occur to cultural resources. The project must follow the LANL procedure for inadvertent discoveries.
- Equipment would be refueled at least 100 ft. from floodplains.
- Hazardous materials, chemicals, fuels, and oils would not be stored within floodplains.
- Concrete washout will use a leak-proof washout container in the LANL-approved staging area. Washout will be allowed to harden prior to removal and disposal by LAC.
- No soil-disturbing activities will occur in the watercourse. Heavy equipment would be excluded from drainage channels, particularly during wet conditions when use could damage soil structure and increase erosion.

- The proposed project is not expected to add contamination from normal operations. Unplanned releases/spills from abnormal operations would be addressed with best management practices for Spill Prevention, Control and Countermeasure program and the Construction General Permit. No pipeline, flushing, testing or disinfection water will be discharged into the canyon.
- Since the proposed project cannot avoid disturbance to these Areas of Concern (AOCs), LAC will contact the LANL Consent Order Site Coordinator prior to the execution of field work. Any disturbed soil from the AOC would be stabilized and managed within the AOC boundary and returned to the point of origin upon completion of the project. All excavated material would be maintained within the AOCs, and none would be sent off-site. The project is required to take precautions to avoid inadvertently transporting potentially contaminated soil from the sites.
- LAC is responsible to comply with all federal and state regulations, including air quality, water quality, and hazardous materials.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:
A Floodplain Statement of Findings was prepared in accordance with Executive Order 11988, *Floodplain Management* and DOE implementing current regulations 10 Code of Federal Regulations 1022 *Compliance with Floodplain and Wetland Environmental Review Requirements*. A summary of the analysis and determination for the *Floodplain Assessment for the Electrical Power Capacity Upgrade* (Floodplain Assessment) is provided in the Statement of Findings

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 July 16, 2026, for a 15-day public review and comment period on the DOE National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) website at:
https://www.energy.gov/sites/default/files/2026-08/fa-pajarito-tank-4a-18-inch-transmission-water-main-repair-2026-08.pdf
The public review and comment period was extended for two 15-day public review periods on August 3 and September 10, 2026. No comments were received.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION ON THIS STATEMENT OF FINDINGS CONTACT: For further information or questions regarding this Floodplain Statement of Findings contact Ms. Karen Armijo via email at karen.armijo@nnsa.doe.gov; fax (505) 667-5948 or mail to:

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