



Northern New Mexico Citizens' Advisory Board Meeting

January 21, 2026
11:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m.
Virtual Meeting
Minutes

Meeting Attendees

Department of Energy

1. Jessica Kunkle, Manager, Environmental Management Los Alamos
2. Kelley Snyder, Designated Federal Officer, Office of Environmental Management
3. Kara Hetrick, Environmental Management Los Alamos
4. John Evans, Environmental Management Los Alamos
5. Robert Reine, Environmental Management Los Alamos
6. Jeff Silvera, Environmental Management Los Alamos
7. Angela Tarter, Environmental Management Los Alamos

NNMCAB Members

1. Beverly Martin, Chair
2. Eleanor Bravo
3. Danielle Duran
4. Christy Green
5. Sterling Grogan
6. Manuel L'Esperance
7. Stephen McLaughlin
8. Patricio Pacheco
9. Arlina Sanford

NNMCAB Staff/Support

1. Bridget Maestas, Executive Director
2. Yolanda Valdez, Executive Assistant

Guests

1. Wayne Barber, Exchange Monitor
2. Brian Clayman, N3B
3. Susan Coleman, Public
4. Peter Dillon, Tetra Tech
5. Christian Elin, Public
6. Sasha Figel, Industrial Economics, Incorporated (IEc)
7. Stephanie Gallagher, Environmental Management Los Alamos
8. John Gonsky, Tetra Tech
9. Don Hawkins, Tetra Tech
10. Joel Hebdon, N3B

11. Kristin Henderson, N3B
12. Luciana Vigil-Holterman, Los Alamos National Laboratory
13. Deborah Kerrigan, N3B
14. Scott Kovac, Nuclear Watch New Mexico
15. Nadia Martin, Industrial Economics, Incorporated (IEc)
16. Angela Martinez, Los Alamos National Laboratory
17. Caitlin Martinez, New Mexico Environment Department
18. Renee Martinez, Environmental Management Los Alamos
19. Thomas McCrory, Environmental Management Los Alamos
20. Jade Mendoza, Environmental Management Los Alamos
21. Rebecca Ortiz, Environmental Management Los Alamos
22. Donivan Porterfield, Public
23. Tahir Mehood Rana, Environmental Management Los Alamos
24. Joseph Ritchey, Environmental Management Los Alamos
25. Vince Rodriguez, N3B
26. Kelsey Shank, theEDGE
27. Clark Short, INTERA
28. Brad Smith, N3B
29. Maggie Hart Stebbins, New Mexico Office of Natural Resources Trustee
30. Jonathan Tarr, American institute of Certified Planners (AICP)
31. Sarah Voorhees, Environmental Management Los Alamos
32. Elicia Williams, Environmental Management Los Alamos

Minutes

I. Call to Order

The meeting of the Northern New Mexico Citizens' Advisory Board (NNMCAB) was held on January 21, 2026, in a virtual format. The meeting of the Northern New Mexico Citizens' Advisory Board (NNMCAB) was called to order at 11:01 a.m. Ms. Kara Hetrick called the meeting to order.

Ms. Beverly Martin presided over the meeting.

The meeting of the NNMCAB was posted in the *Federal Register* in accordance with the Federal Advisory Committee Act.

II. Establishment of a Quorum (Roll Call)

At the call to order, nine NNMCAB members were present online, and a quorum was established.

III. Welcome and Introductions

Ms. Hetrick introduced herself as the Alternate Deputy Designated Federal Officer (DDFO) and thanked all of those in attendance.

Ms. Beverly Martin welcomed everyone to the January Board Meeting. Ms. Martin requested that board members introduce themselves.

IV. Approval of Agenda

The board reviewed the agenda for the January 21, 2026 Board meeting. Ms. Martin opened the floor for a motion to approve the agenda as presented.

Mr. Manuel L'Esperance made a motion to approve the agenda; Ms. Eleanor Bravo seconded the motion. The motion to approve the agenda as presented passed.

V. Old Business

a. Update from Chair/Vice-Chair

Ms. Martin stated that in 2025, members were given a presentation on the Chromium Plume by the Independent Technical Review (ITR) Team and N3B provided an informative presentation on shipments to the Waste Isolation Pilot Plant (WIPP) in Carlsbad. The board is looking forward to future updates and presentations.

VI. New Business

a. Other Items

Ms. Martin stated that a copy of the Work Plan is provided in the meeting packet, and Ms. Jessica Kunkle will be presenting on the plan. The NNMCAB will focus on establishing priorities for future recommendations. Ms. Martin requested a review of the Consent Order and what it will entail for 2026.

VII. Fiscal Year 2025 Year in Review N3B Look Ahead

Mr. Brad Smith welcomed the board and wished them all a Happy New Year. He thanked Environmental Management Los Alamos (EM-LA) for their partnership and his workforce for all their hard work. Mr. Smith stated that in Fiscal Year (FY) 2025, N3B experienced its safest year since he became president. According to the Occupational Safety and Health Administration N3B had a 40% - 70% safer record than sites that perform similar work.

In FY25, 11 Consent Order Milestones were completed. All were completed prior to or by the required date. Since N3B's conception in 2018, 115 of the 116 Consent Order Milestones have been completed. N3B received 201 Certificates of Completion (COCs) for Solid Waste Management Units/Areas of Concern (SWMUs/AOCs) from the New Mexico Environment Department (NMED). Transuranic (TRU) waste shipments increased to 43 from the 21 that took place in FY24. This equals 193 cubic meters of TRU waste that was shipped to the Waste Isolation Pilot Plant (WIPP) and exceeds the FY25 goal of 62 cubic meters. Size reduction of the 158 retrieved corrugated metal pipes (CMPS's) was completed, and they began to be shipped to WIPP. The remaining above-ground low-level and mixed low-level waste containers in Area G have been dispositioned.

Dual screen installation has been completed in the San Ildefonso Mortandad Regional Well (SIMR-3). The project is currently at the final stage of construction, where the bentonite and concrete will be installed. A permanent sampling system was installed in monitoring well R-76 and maintenance was completed on the eight regional wells that N3B is responsible for. Thousands of water, soil, and vapor samples were taken to ensure the safety of the public and environment and to be in compliance with regulatory requirements.

Last year, N3B donated \$300,000 to 40 community and non-profit organizations, and 64.15% of their subcontracts were awarded to small businesses. N3B has also been collaborating with local universities, and three scholarships are awarded yearly to deserving students. N3B has reached out to the Albuquerque leadership for business management and the local unions to acquire the next wave of possible employees.

N3B is in the last three months of option period one. The contract began in May of 2018. Option period two will begin May 1, 2026, and will continue until 2028. N3B will remain focused on their disciplined execution and the objectives through strategic planning. In the months ahead, N3B will continue to advance in the central mission of safeguarding groundwater and remediating contaminated land. SIMR-3 is in the final stages of construction. They want to ensure that the ITR recommendations are carried forward. In 2026, N3B plans on completing the installation of a new groundwater monitoring well and to initiate drilling on a second monitoring well. The ITR group recommended that MODFLOW be utilized for sampling, and N3B is looking to expedite the model due to FEHMS not being as user friendly. Waste shipments will continue to WIPP. N3B has 40 shipments on the books for this year. Thirty-two of the 40 scheduled shipments have been completed. N3B staff will continue to characterize and take waste inventory in the different domes, and shipments will resume when WIPP is out of their outage. Low level/Mixed low-level waste continues to be shipped to the contracted commercial disposal facilities. N3B will continue to train staff to ensure they work safely and compliantly. They are also focused on reaching out to the local universities and public schools to acquire the next generation of workforce.

a. Questions

Mr. Grogan asked what is N3B's involvement with Material Disposal Area (MDA) C.

Mr. Smith stated that N3B collects and monitors the vapor soil samples at that location.

Mr. Grogan asked if the MDA C contained legacy waste.

Mr. Smith stated that yes, the site contains legacy waste.

Mr. Grogan asked what TRIAD facility was being utilized by N3B.

Mr. Smith stated that N3B utilizes the Radioactive Assay Nondestructive Testing (RANT) Facility. This facility is also utilized by WIPP and the Central Characterization Project (CCP) to inspect container shipments.

Ms. Martin asked why WIPP is on an outage.

Mr. Smith stated that WIPP is on a maintenance outage. The ready-to-ship agreement is still in place with WIPP, so our shipments remain a priority. N3B staff were prepared for the outage and were able to make four shipments a week prior to the outage.

Ms. Martin asked if there were empty domes.

Mr. Smith stated that there are no empty domes. There are domes that contain staged waste for characterization.

VIII. LANL Legacy Cleanup & Hexavalent Chromium Plume Update

Ms. Jessica Kunkle thanked the board for the invitation to be there. She stated that she will be covering similar material to Mr. Smith but intended to expand on the information he

provided. She added that she will be giving the same presentation she has made at other stakeholder engagements and forums for consistency and transparency with the NNM CAB. FY25 was a great year regarding legacy waste shipments. Looking forward, they are looking to expand what they are doing with legacy waste in FY26. N3B and EM-LA are meeting their commitments with the 2016 Compliance Order on Consent.

EM-LA has four primary pillars regarding the mission. These include the disposition of legacy waste, protecting the land, protecting water quality and providing excess facility disposition support for the National Nuclear Safety Administration (NNSA).

Ms. Kunkle stated that TRU waste is defined as defense transuranic related waste that was retrieved, buried, and generated prior to October 1, 1999. Los Alamos National Laboratory (LANL) is the only site that currently has an at ready agreement with WIPP. This allows all TRU waste shipped from LANL to be given priority over shipments from other sites. Since the beginning of FY20, the Department of Energy (DOE) has shipped over 28,500 containers of waste from LANL's Area G to the WIPP facility. The inventory of drums routinely fluctuates due to the creation of daughter drums and the retrieval of buried waste. The number of drums will not be at zero until it is determined that all the buried drums have been retrieved.

The CMP Campaign at Area G created 792 boxes of waste after size reduction. Each pipe weighed between 10,000 to 14,000 pounds and was 20 feet long. The pipes were cut into five segments and were placed into standard waste boxes. CMP Shipments began in May 2025, and at that time, 20% have been shipped to the WIPP facility. Due to the CMP containers and other waste streams present in Area G, EM-LA is looking into establishing reprocessing & disposition capabilities in FY26. This will allow portions of the inventory to be more appropriately characterized as low-level waste for disposition at commercial disposal facilities, conserve capacity at the WIPP facility and allow legacy waste disposition during WIPP outages. N3B is also acquiring an Upender repositioning machine. The machine is used to reposition ten drum overpacks, so overpacking of current waste can take place and the waste may be shipped to the WIPP facility.

EM-LA is currently working on an excess contaminated facility for NNSA. The Ion beam facility was built in 1951 and housed two accelerators. The facility is 60,000 square feet and was decommissioned in 1999. The scope of the project consists of surveying, sampling, demolition, slab removal and soil remediation. Demolition of the administrative wing and horizontal accelerator will begin in the first half of 2026. The removal of the contaminated facility will decrease risk of contamination to workers, the environment, and the public.

EM-LA and N3B completed all 11 Consent Order Deliverables for FY25. An additional 83 other deliverables were also completed under the Consent Order. Fiscal year planning with the NMED was completed, and a joint public meeting was held in January of 2026 to discuss achievements from FY25 and to review what EM-LA has planned for FY26. NMED issued 589 Certificates of Completion for the 1,405 known or suspected contaminated sites in the Consent Order. This leaves 42% of the Consent Order sites completed.

Ms. Kunkle provided a history of the Hexavalent Chromium plume. She stated that the plume occurred from the use of potassium dichromate, which contains the active ingredient hexavalent chromium. It was used as a corrosion inhibitor at LANL's non-nuclear power plant. The detection of hexavalent chromium was found in 2004, and it was above the New Mexico groundwater standard of 50 micrograms per liter. The plume is in the regional

groundwater aquifer on LANL's Mortandad and Sandia Canyon and is approximately 1,000 ft below the surface. The plume is about a mile long and half a mile wide. There are currently no threats to any known public or private drinking water wells. Since the detection of the plume, EM-LA has been working closely with the NMED, Office of the State Engineer (NMOSE), the Pueblo of San Ildefonso, and Los Alamos County. EM-LA has installed 17 monitoring wells and installed Chromium Interim Measures (IM) that will prevent the plume from migrating beyond LANL property. The IM consists of 10 wells. Five of the wells extract contaminated water from the groundwater aquifer. The water is put through a water treatment system that utilizes ion exchange to extract the hexavalent chromium. The water is then pumped back into the aquifer. The reinjection is done so that it may create hydrological dams to prevent migration and to save the water. EM-LA also convened an Expert Technical Review team in March of 2024, and the review was completed in December of 2024. The team consisted of 15 members who were pulled from the Network of National Laboratories for Environmental Management and Stewardship. Also included were members from private industries, academia, and the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA). The team made five recommendations. The recommendations included restarting the IM, transitioning the modeling software to MODFLOW, and improving the model, drilling monitoring wells to fill data gaps, and implementing adaptive site management. The implementation of an Adaptive Site Management program will involve the creation of working groups that consists of EM-LA, NMOSE, Pueblo of San Ildefonso, Los Alamos County, and the Department of Indian Affairs. The group has identified shared goals and objectives regarding the cleanup of the chromium plume. The team has agreed on in-person quarterly meetings, and several subgroups have been established to tackle key actions. The first workshop took place in October, and the second was at the beginning of January. The last recommendation by the team was the use of dual-screened wells. When a monitoring well is installed, sampling locations can be placed at different depths. This provides data from two sampling points and minimizes the amount of sampling wells, and the disruption of the surface.

Ms. Kunkle stated that she would provide a more in-depth review of the IM operation. She stated that IM operations began in May of 2018. Operations ceased in March of 2023 following direction from NMED. IM measures partially resumed in September of 2024 in alignment with NMED authorization. IM operations ceased again in November of 2025 following direction from NMED. EM-LA, NMED, NMOSE, and the Pueblo de San Ildefonso have had several productive engagements concerning a path forward on resuming operations, and a few actions are underway. However, empirical data has shown that the IM operations are incredibly effective in reducing the hexavalent chromium concentrations in the groundwater aquifer. As of March 2023, the chromium concentrations rebounded to between 20% to 80% in some monitoring wells.

Installation for SIMR-3 is currently underway. Bentonite is being placed around some of the screens, and a filter pack is being installed. Shoring will begin, and incremental installation of cement up to the surface will then take place. NMED and NMOSE have approved two other wells and have granted permits. Well R-80 will be the next well drilled and an emphasis is being placed on ensuring that there is a pipeline of ready to drill projects to secure the well drillers. Recent media accounts stated that chromium was detected at the SIMR-3 well after zonal sampling reports. Zonal sampling is intended to inform you of the location of the well screens, and it notes the highest chromium concentration zone and permeability zones. These two factors determine the final well screen placement. Zonal

1 sampling is not intended to predict long-term trends in the regional aquifer. Five zonal
2 samples were taken at the bottom of SIMR-3 at different depths. Zonal sample four
3 indicated 18.6 micrograms per liter. That falls under the state water standard for
4 groundwater that is 50 parts per billion. The highest amount detected was 73 micrograms
5 per liter, which is above the state standard and below the United States EPA standard of 100
6 micrograms per liter. Given the unexpected results EM-LA will remain hyper focused on
7 completing installation of the SIMR-3 well and begin monthly sampling, they will continue to
8 consult with the Pueblo of San Ildefonso, evaluate and refine the conceptual site model,
9 analyze opportunities to modify the IM, continue adaptive site management with NMED,
10 NMOSE, Pueblo de San Ildefonso and Los Alamos County and continue stakeholder
11 engagement.

12 A total of 60 outreach activities took place in 2025. EM-LA held its quarterly cleanup forum
13 and the public was provided with the opportunity to provide their input. EM-LA hosted
14 Senator Martin Heinrich, the National Governors Association, and the Defense Nuclear
15 Facility Safety Board. EM-LA informed the parties of the critical work being done at LANL.

16 **a. Questions**

17 Mr. Grogan asked if the NNSA intends to bury waste from its current activities at LANL.

18 Ms. Kunkle stated that she cannot speak for NNSA. EM-LA's role is to focus on legacy
19 waste.

20 Mr. McLaughlin asked if the working groups under the Adaptive Site Management and
21 the quarterly meetings she discussed were open to the public.

22 Ms. Kunkle stated that the meetings are not open to the public, and manner the
23 information is made available to the public is under discussion. The meetings are still in
24 the early stages, and any meaningful information related to chromium will be made
25 available by EM-LA.

26 Ms. Bravo asked if radioactivity has been detected in the water pumped out of the 17
27 wells, and if so where is the water being treated. Ms. Bravo then asked if seismic activity
28 was a concern when the water is reinjected.

29 Ms. Kunkle stated that the 17 wells are only monitoring wells. Only five wells are
30 extraction wells, and they can handle between 240 gallons per minute.

31 Mr. Hebden stated that no radioactivity has been detected in the groundwater, but it
32 will continue to be monitored. The water is being reinjected at the same rate as it is
33 being extracted so as not to disrupt the geology below. The water is currently not being
34 injected, but the maximum capability is 300 gallons per minute (GPM).

35 Ms. Bravo asked how stormwater is monitored and treated.

36 Mr. Rodriguez stated that 232 different sites are monitored and over 400 inspections of
37 these sites are completed each year. Stormwater is not treated. If a breakthrough is
38 detected, the location is identified and an investigation is done. Then the proper
39 mitigation is performed.

40 Ms. Bravo asked if there are funding concerns for expanded monitoring well campaigns.

41 Ms. Kunkle stated that there is enough funding to install one well per year as they are
42 currently designed. The availability of well drillers is an issue, and if more money was

1 provided more wells could be installed per year. New approaches to monitoring may
2 take place in the future and could affect costs.

3 Ms. Martin asked why the IM was paused despite the Expert Technical Review
4 committee recommendation that it be restarted and if there is danger of plume
5 migrating.

6 Ms. Kunkle stated that IM operations were able to partially resume in September of
7 2024. NMED then provided direction to DOE to cease injection as part of our IM system.
8 Based on the letter received from NMED, their concern is the unintended migration that
9 could be caused by injection both laterally and vertically. EM-LA, NMED, and the Pueblo
10 de San Ildefonso are currently discussing options for resuming some type of IM
11 operations.

12 Mr. McLaughlin asked if the detection of chromium at SIMR-3 is an indication that the
13 plume is shifting direction.

14 Ms. Kunkle stated that there is not enough data to provide an answer. The completion
15 of the SIMR-3 well allows for monthly sampling to take place and will provide data on
16 the status of the plume.

17 Mr. McLaughlin asked if the detection of chromium at SIMR-3 confirms the suggestion
18 of the Expert Technical Review that the plume may move south.

19 Ms. Kunkle stated that the current data of the underground geology and hydrology is
20 that the detection would signify that it is flowing uphill.

21 Mr. Hebdon stated that there is no significant data at this point. The best technology
22 and experts will be utilized, and the data will be reported to EM-LA.

23 Mr. McLaughlin asked if EM-LA could provide guidance as to what the final IM would
24 look like.

25 Ms. Kunkle stated that NMED selects the final remedy, but she believes that many
26 people who are engaged recognize that there are limited options. Pump and treat may
27 be involved, but more time is needed to reach the remedy.

28 Ms. Caitlin Martinez from NMED stated that NMED's concern with the current
29 configuration of injection is that there may be potential contamination downgradient
30 from the injection locations. Placing more water where there is contamination and not
31 adequate monitoring points is causing the state to place the pause. NMED suggests that
32 extraction and disposition take place using other means, and an alternate injection
33 location be created.

34 Ms. Martin asked why NMOSE wants to look at each dual screen well on a case-by-case
35 basis and what their issue is with dual screen wells if it was recommended by the Expert
36 Technical Review Team.

37 Ms. Kunkle stated that their concern is the possible cross-contamination between the
38 two screens and cross-contamination if there are two separate aquifers. Data
39 representing that there is only one acquirer is necessary.

40 Mr. McLaughlin asked what the vertical height is of the aquifer by feet below grade.

41 Mr. Hebdon stated that the depth of the aquifer is unknown. N3B drilled 20 ft into the
42 geological formation and backed out due to the possibility of cross-contamination. That

depth was a little over 1000 ft. The well screen will be at the bottom of the aquifer, and the second screen will be 100 ft above that at the water table.

Ms. Martinez stated that the county drinking wells are 2,000 ft below ground surface and have 1,000 ft screens. The depth of the aquifer has not been tagged, but it is deeper than the plume and what is being considered for remediation purposes.

Mr. Hebdon stated that one goal is to identify the depth of the contamination and is a data point that they will use as they continue to develop the site model.

Mr. McLaughlin stated if deeper wells need to be drilled to confirm the depth of the contamination.

Mr. Hebdon stated that it may require a deeper well. The conceptual model utilized is driven by data needs. The purpose is to characterize the plume and not necessarily the total vertical extent of the aquifer. Currently, they are in the process of getting a 3D model to verify the depth of the plume.

Mr. Thomas McCrory from EM-LA stated that, based on historical geological studies, the regional aquifer under the Pajarito Plateau is believed to be 5,000 ft thick from top to bottom. The potable drinking water is penetrating up to a third of that, and the plume itself is limited to the upper 150 ft.

Mr. McLaughlin asked if any chromium concentration had been detected between the aquifer and the surface.

Ms. Kunkle stated that the focus has been on the plume. There is a Solid Waste Management Unit Area of Concern that relates to the location where the potassium dichromate was released. There is not a full understanding of what is above the groundwater aquifer and below the surface currently. Hexavalent chromium converts to trivalent chromium, which is nontoxic in an anaerobic environment. There is reason to believe that some of the material that was released has converted to trivalent chromium. Trivalent chromium sticks to items it meets. Hexavalent Chromium passes through and travels with water.

IX. Public Comment

Ms. Martin opened the floor for public comment at 1:00 p.m.

Mr. Scott Kovac, Nuclear Watch New Mexico stated the following:

"My name is Scott Kovac, and I'm with Nuclear Watch New Mexico. I wanted to thank you for this opportunity today to make some comments. I just wanted to thank N3B and Brad for their work on the CMPs. I think it is outstanding what they're doing there. I do have some questions on Chromium IM. Back to the cross-contamination possibility of dual screens. The cross-contamination was always a kind of a possibility with multiple screens. Some of those monitoring wells have three, four or five screens, I think. I was just wondering if there was new technology on the dual screens to keep the levels separate. It sounded to me like it was okay if the screens got cross-contaminated, if they were in the same aquifer. I have trouble with that concept, so I'm just wondering if there's a new technology. As far as the zonal sampling goes. The picture that was in the presentation, which I don't have, because I have trouble getting the presentations. I'm curious how accurate that is, because it showed five different levels, different amounts

1 of contamination, and they weren't from high to low. They were from middle to high. I
2 believe that it was stated that the zonal samples were not accurate enough to base
3 long-term measurements or long-term work on, but they're using sampling
4 measurements of contamination to locate the screens. So, in reality they are using zonal
5 measurements for future measurements by locating the screens. I guess my question is,
6 given that picture of the zonal samples where does the screen go on that picture. What
7 happens to that picture? Where does the screen get located? I went looking up several
8 other zonal samples from other wells, and they just don't list those numbers. So, I was
9 wondering if the zonal sample numbers are going to be in the final report? Anyway,
10 thank you, and I appreciate it."

11 Ms. Kunkle, EM-LA stated the following:

12 "The zonal sampling results for SIMR-3 are posted on Intellus. The reason you may not
13 see many other zonal sampling results is because we didn't do a whole lot of it in the
14 past. I think this may only be the first or second time we've really done it. Doing zonal
15 sampling became ever more important when we were tentatively planning for a single
16 screen well. Because, if you have one chance to get it right, you want to try to get it
17 right. That's why we did it on SIMR-3. It was intended to be a single screen well. It will
18 be a dual screen well now. We did adapt in response to the zonal sampling results.
19 Based on feedback from the Pueblo, we will be installing a dual screen well. I will say
20 that one of the other things you mentioned was the purpose of zonal sampling and the
21 fact that you're looking for concentration. Well, it's true that you are using
22 concentration to help inform where you put your screen placements. Those
23 concentrations aren't representative of what the normal aquifer environment is. I think
24 that the takeaway is that a single data point doesn't represent a trend, and that's what
25 we really need to see and to really understand what the actual aquifer environment is.
26 That's why we're moving with urgency to get this well installed. Remind me Scott, your
27 first question had to do with dual screens and potential cross-contamination, correct?

28 Mr. Scott Kovac, Nuclear Watch New Mexico stated the following:

29 "It sounded like you said that it's okay if they cross-contaminate as long as they're in the
30 same aquifer."

31 Ms. Kunkle, EM-LA stated the following:

32 "No, I did not say that. I said that the state engineer has concerns that dual screened
33 wells could potentially cross-contaminate. I will tell you that, based on our own
34 empirical data, as well as the very detailed analysis that the Expert Technical Review
35 Team conducted, there is no data to indicate cross contamination due to our dual
36 screen wells. Dual screen wells are commonly used. They've been generally used here,
37 and we have only ever installed dual screen wells. I don't believe we have any wells that
38 have more than two screens on them in our network, but dual screen wells are not
39 something that are uncommon. They're commonly used. As far as new technology, you
40 know, we're using existing technology that's been relied upon."

41 Mr. Hebdon, N3B stated the following:

42 "There was a question about where the screen is in the geology. We have a screen at
43 the very bottom of the well and a screen at the very top of the water table. They are 20
44 ft screens, and from the top to bottom are roughly 100 ft. To ensure that there's no

1 movement of water inside the well between those screens we put in what is essentially
2 a big border called a packer. It is inflated to make sure that the water stays in its own
3 zone. You must remember that the water flows through the well when we're not
4 sampling. We want to make sure that the natural flow of the water is not impacted by
5 the sampling or the installation of the well inside that aquifer. We are not really worried
6 about cross contamination in the aquifer that we're sampling. A well is simply a
7 sampling device, and we're very concerned about getting representative samples. For
8 me, I don't want there to be any communication between the top screen and the
9 bottom screen, because then it gets it mixed up. I don't know what the representative
10 contaminant levels are at the top, and I wouldn't know what they were representing at
11 the bottom. So, we do our very best to keep that water within its own zone in the
12 aquifer. Jessica said earlier that we'd disturbed Mother Nature greatly by installing the
13 well. That is very true. It takes quite a while for these wells to settle down and for the
14 groundwater to return to normal. We monitor by different means, specific
15 conductance's to determine when the water just returns to its normal state, so we can
16 start getting representative samples. That can take several months, sometimes five or
17 six months, before we can get a representative sample. I want to be clear that the zonal
18 samples were taken in a well that was in the process of being constructed. There are all
19 kinds of potential non representative things in that sample. For example, the driller is
20 adding water to the hole, which will give us different results. So, the zonal sampling was
21 used strictly for determining where to place the screens, and that is in no way
22 representative of what we expect the final concentrations to be. When we're able to
23 gather a representative sample. Those representative samples could be higher or lower
24 concentration, or we could be surprised again. I suspect that they will settle down and
25 be somewhat lower. Also, you talked a bit about the gradient, why it's less
26 contaminated than the top, and why there's more chromium at the bottom of the well.
27 And that's one of the questions we're going to try to answer. We expected it to be more
28 contaminated at the water table, and less contaminated with depth. That's not the
29 result we got, so stay tuned, and we'll be talking about that as we go forward. Thank
30 you."

31 With no further public comment, Ms. Martin closed public comment at 1:21 p.m.

32
33 **X. Fiscal Year 2026 NNM CAB Work Plan**

34 Ms. Kunkle stated that she was going to begin with the current meeting. Mr. Smith provided
35 an end-of-year cleanup progress report, and she added a few more topics. For the March
36 meeting, the corrective action process will be reviewed and how it relates to the aggregate
37 areas. The review will be a combination of aggregate areas, solid waste management units,
38 and other areas of concern. FY27 budget priorities will also be discussed in March. In May
39 information will be provided on the Ion Beam Facility Project. This will include information
40 on the scope of the project, its status, and the schedule of events. The N3B Sampling and
41 Data Management Process will be discussed in July. This will include information on the
42 analysis of groundwater, surface, and soil work that is taking place. A discussion on wildland
43 fire mitigation will take place in the latter part of the summer. The year will end with a
44 presentation on the Chromium Plume and Drilling Program. The suggestions of topics
45 provided by the NNM CAB members will be taken into consideration and may be merged
46 into one of the topics.

a. Questions

Ms. Martin asked if the board develops a criterion for prioritization of the cleanup.

Ms. Kunkle stated that she will provide that information at a later date.

Ms. Martin stated that recommendations are made by the committees, but they do not have the ability to meet. How should recommendations be made.

Ms. Kunkle stated that there are workforce challenges, but she will meet with her staff and discuss facilitation options.

XI. Update from the Executive Director

Ms. Maestas stated that the March meeting will be moved to Thursday, March 19th from 1:00 p.m. to 4:00 p.m. Ms. Kara Hetrick will be the Deputy Designated Federal Officer for the meeting. Ms. Maestas is currently working with N3B on setting up a LANL tour for June 17th.

a. Questions

Mr. McLaughlin asked if a WIPP tour is being planned.

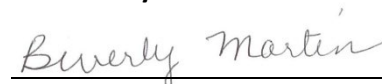
Ms. Maestas stated that a WIPP tour is not in the budget and it will be looked at again in 2027.

XII. Adjournment

Ms. Kelley Snyder thanked the attendees for their attendance and participation.

With no additional business to discuss, Ms. Snyder adjourned the meeting at 1:32 p.m.

Certified By:

 03/04/2026
Ms. Beverly Martin, Chair

***Minutes prepared by Yolanda Valdez, Executive Assistant, NNM CAB**

Attachments

- 1. Final NNM CAB Meeting Agenda for 01/21/2026**
- 2. Presentation by Brad Smith, N3B, "Fiscal Year 2025 in Review"**
- 3. Presentation by Jessica Kunkle, EM-LA, "Los Alamos Legacy Cleanup & Hexavalent Chromium Plume Update"**
- 4. Presentation by Jessica Kunkle, EM-LA, "NNM CAB FY2026 Work Plan"**

***All NNM CAB meetings are recorded. The written minutes are intended as a synopsis of the meeting.**

Northern New Mexico Citizens' Advisory Board
Wednesday, January 21, 2026
Virtual Meeting via WebEx
11:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m. (MDT)

(Please see WebEx Call-In Information Below)

AGENDA



<u>Time</u>	<u>Action</u>	<u>Presenter</u>
11:00 p.m.	Call to Order	Kara Hetrick/Alternate DDFO Kelly Snyder, Designated Federal Officer
	Welcome and Introductions	Beverly Martin, Chair
	Overview and Approval of Agenda	
11:10 p.m.	Old Business	Beverly
	a. Update from Chair	
	b. Other Items	
11:20 p.m.	New Business	Beverly
	a. Other Items	
11:30 p.m.	Fiscal Year 2025 Year in Review N3B Look Ahead	Brad Smith, President and General Manager
12:15 p.m.	LANL Legacy Cleanup & Hexavalent Chromium Plume Update	Jessica Kunkle, EM-LA Manager
1:00 p.m.	Break	
1:15 p.m.	Public Comment Period	
1:30 p.m.	FY 2026 NNMCAB Work Plan	Jessica Kunkle, EM-LA Manager
1:45 p.m.	Update from Executive Director	Bridget Maestas
2:00 p.m.	Adjourn	Kelly Snyder

Meeting number (access code): 2831 418 0408

Meeting password: BKRbmcrM892

<https://doe.webex.com/join?MTID=md62d4f514f4c463d6c547579e1de6558>

Join by phone

+1-415-527-5035 US Toll

+1-929-251-9612 USA Toll 2



Fiscal Year 2025 in Review

Northern New Mexico Citizens' Advisory Board

January 21, 2026

Brad Smith

President and General Manager

Cleaning Up Today for a Safer Tomorrow

A Year of Exceptional Operational Performance

Over the past few years, N3B has engaged in a concerted effort to improve our operational excellence, including:

- Our work in the field
- The critical work of our support organizations to aid legacy cleanup

Result –



- Our **strongest safety record** in years
- Fiscal Year 2025 (FY25) – an exceptional year of performance

Meeting Our Commitments



All 11 FY25 Consent Order Milestones completed on or ahead of schedule



N3B completed 115 of 116 Consent Order Milestones (FY18 to FY25)



Received 201 Certificates of Completion (COCs) for Solid Waste Management Units/Areas of Concern (SWMUs/AOCs) from New Mexico Environment Department (NMED)

Waste Program Success



Completed 43 transuranic (TRU) waste shipments in FY25, an increase of 21 shipments from FY24

Shipped more than 193.4 m³ of TRU waste to the Waste Isolation Pilot Plant (WIPP), exceeding our FY25 goal by more than three times (62 m³)



Completed size-reduction activities for 158 retrieved corrugated metal pipes (CMPs) and began shipping CMP waste to WIPP



Dispositioned remaining above-ground low-level and mixed low-level waste containers at Area G

Protecting New Mexico's Environment

Advanced groundwater monitoring and characterization, including:



- Drilled San Ildefonso Mortandad Regional 3 (SIMR-3) well to total depth
- Installed a permanent sampling system in monitoring well R-76
- Completed maintenance on eight regional wells



Collected thousands of soil, water and vapor samples, which is critical for evaluating health risks, environmental impacts, and ensuring compliance with regulatory requirements

Impacting Our Communities



\$300,000 provided to 40 community and non-profit organizations in 2025



64.15% of subcontracts awarded to small business

Cleaning Up Today for a Safer Tomorrow

Questions?







U.S. DEPARTMENT *of* ENERGY

Office of Environmental Management

Los Alamos Legacy Cleanup & Hexavalent Chromium Plume Update

Jessica Kunkle, Manager

DOE Environmental Management Los Alamos Field Office (EM-LA)

January 21, 2026



U.S. DEPARTMENT
of **ENERGY**

Office of Environmental
Management

Bottom Line Up Front

- FY 2025 legacy waste shipment metrics exceeded
- Expanding legacy waste activities in FY 2026 to accelerate disposition
- DOE is meeting commitments in the 2016 Compliance Order on Consent
- Establishing adaptive site management plan for hexavalent chromium plume
- Continuing regular engagement with pueblos, local governments, stakeholders, & the public



TRU Waste Mobile Loading

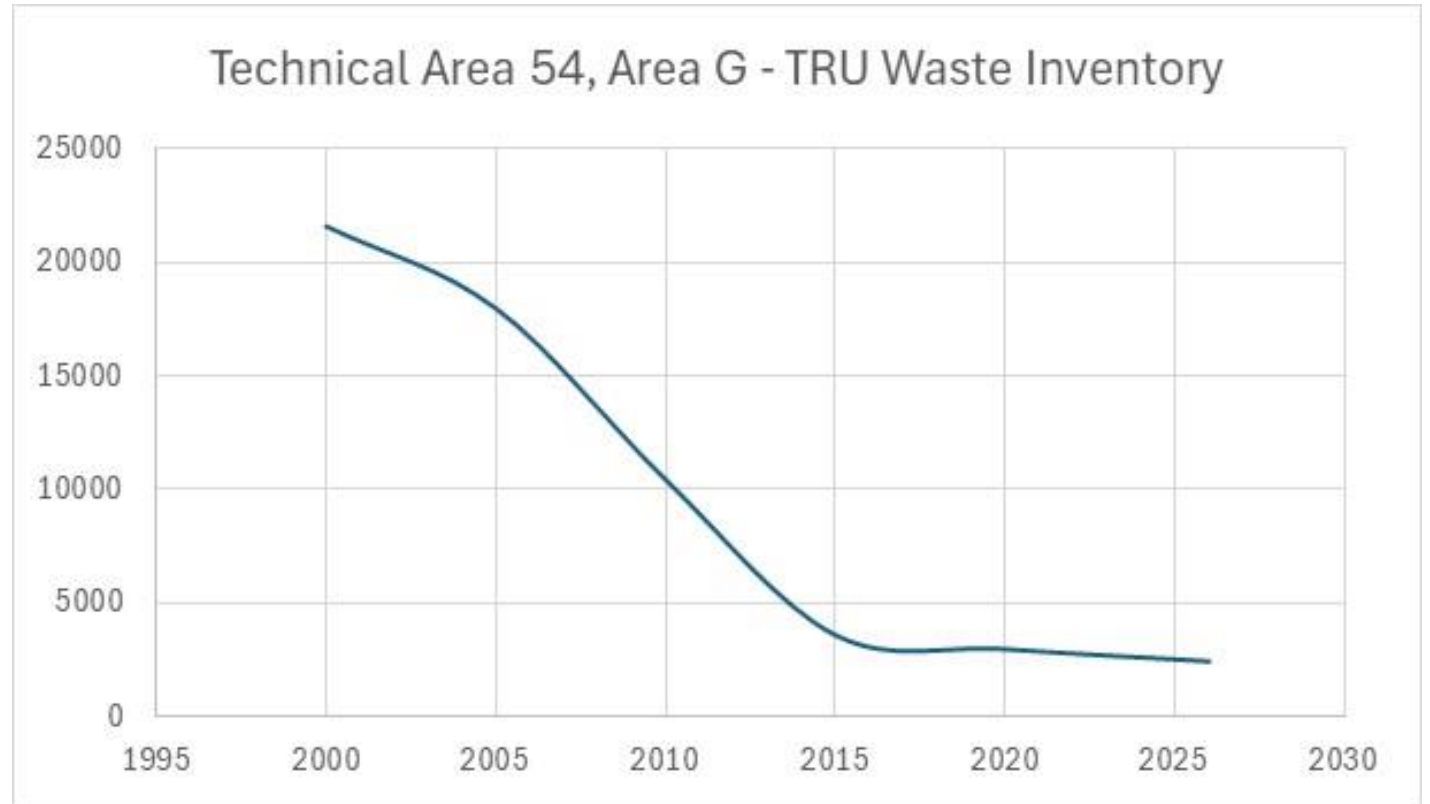
Mission



MISSION: Safely, effectively, efficiently, & transparently complete the cleanup of legacy contamination & waste (pre-1999) resulting from nuclear weapons development & government-sponsored nuclear research during the Manhattan Project & Cold War era at LANL

Legacy Waste Characterization & Disposition

- **LEGACY WASTE:** defense-related TRU waste retrieved, buried, &/or generated prior to Oct 1, 1999
- Shipped 193.4 m³ of TRU waste in FY 2025, exceeding goal of 62 m³
- Los Alamos has an “at-ready” agreement with WIPP; LANL shipments take priority



28,526 TRU WASTE CONTAINERS SHIPPED TO WIPP SINCE 1999

Buried Waste Retrieval: Corrugated Metal Pipes (CMPs)



CMP Retrieval at Area G



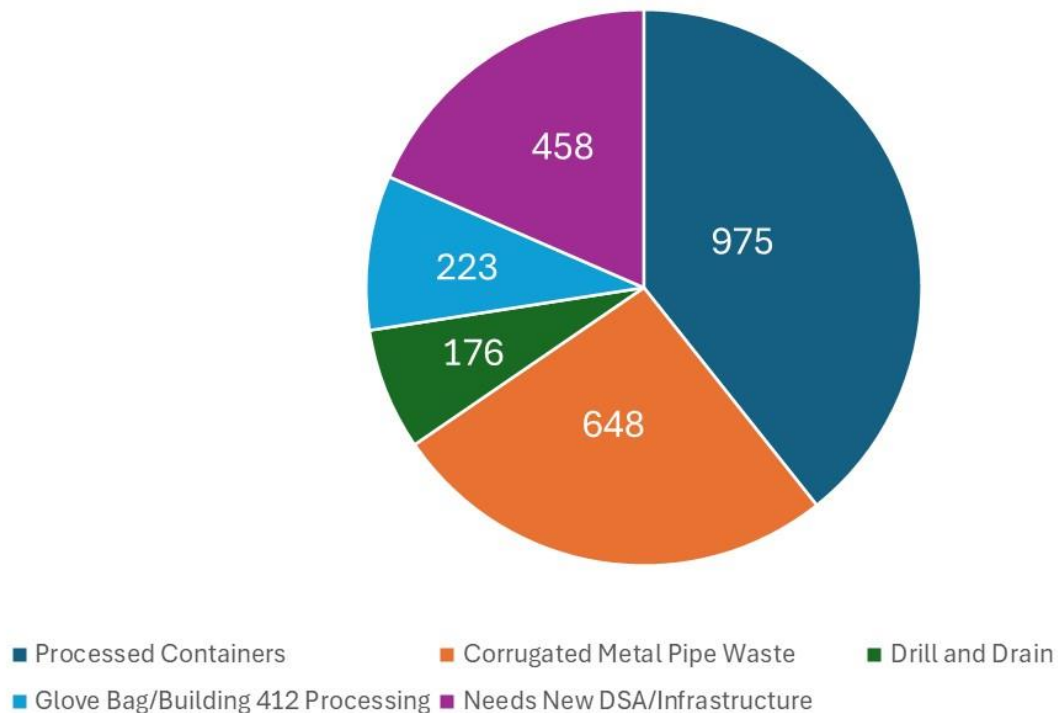
CMP segment lowered into a standard waste box

- Cemented TRU waste from Cold War era
- Completed retrieval & size-reduction
- Shipments to WIPP began late May 2025

~20% OF CMP WASTE SHIPPED OFF-SITE TO DATE

Above-Ground Waste Inventory & Future Activities

Technical Area 54, Area G: Current Above-Ground Inventory



Processed Legacy Waste Containers

- Establishing re-processing & disposition capability in FY 2026
- Allows portion of inventory to be more appropriately characterized as low-level waste for disposition at commercial disposal facilities, preserving capacity at WIPP
- Allows legacy waste disposition during WIPP outages

Disposal Overpack Containers

- Acquiring Upender repositioning machine, providing additional on-site capability
- Increased disposition efficiency & risk avoidance

Ion Beam Facility Disposition

FACILITY:

- Built in 1951, housed two accelerators
- 60,000 sq ft, decommissioned in 1999

SCOPE:

- Surveying & sampling, demolition, & slab removal
- PCB soil remediation currently underway
- Demolition of administrative wing & horizontal accelerator to begin first half of 2026



REDUCES RISK OF EXCESS CONTAMINATED FACILITY

Meeting Consent Order Commitments

- All FY 2025 Milestones completed
- FY 2026 planning completed with New Mexico Environment Department (NMED)
- Annual joint public meeting with EM-LA & NMED planned for early next year
- Certificates of Completion issued by NMED for 589 of 1,405 known or suspected contaminated sites in the Consent Order



Excavation of contaminated soil from LANL legacy operations

42% OF CONSENT ORDER SITES COMPLETED

Hexavalent Chromium Plume

Source: 1956-1972, potassium dichromate, with active ingredient hexavalent chromium, was used as a corrosion inhibitor at LANL's non-nuclear power plant

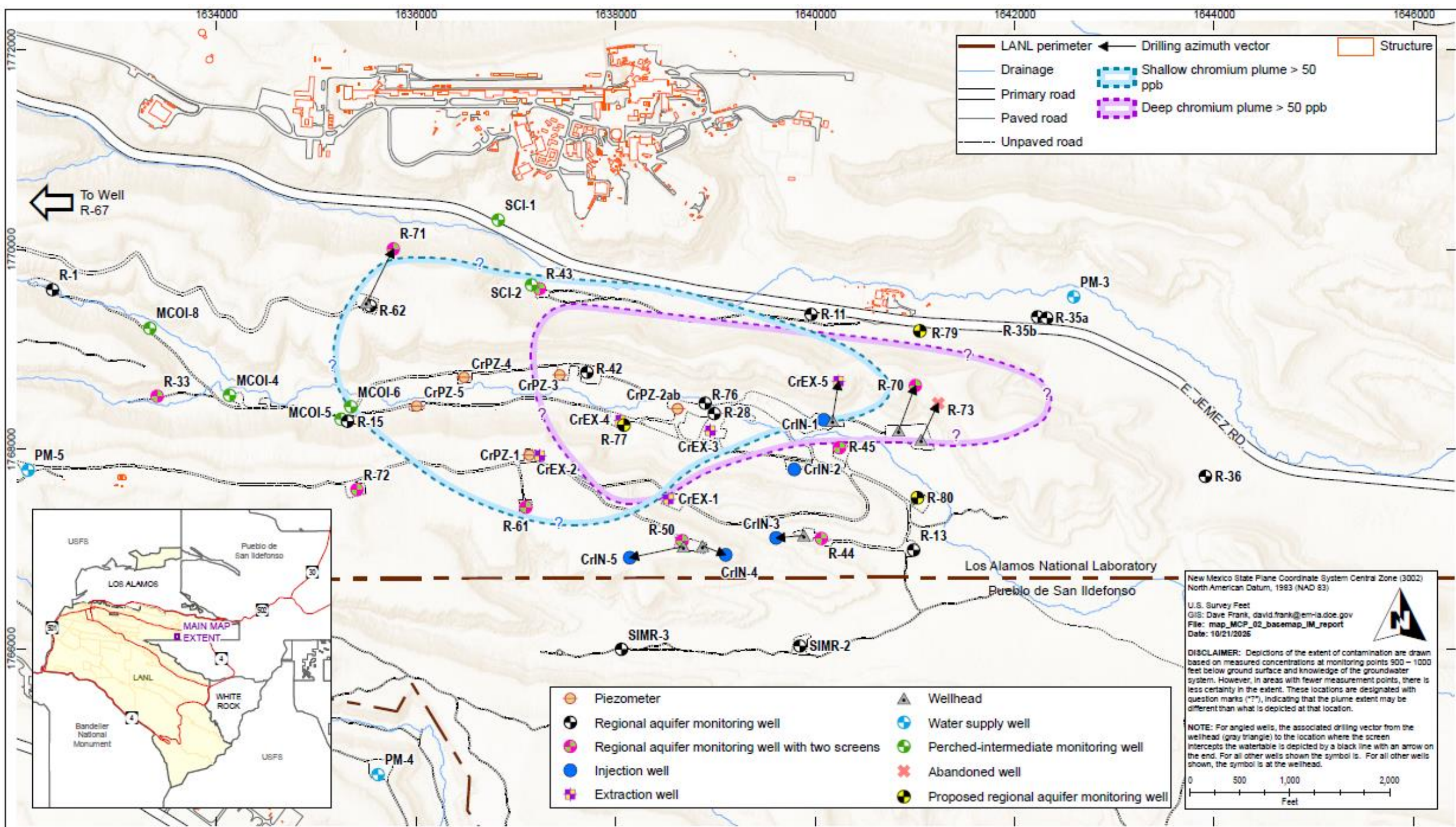
Discovery: 2004 first detection above New Mexico groundwater standard of 50 micrograms per liter ($\mu\text{g/L}$)

Location: In regional groundwater aquifer ~1,000 feet beneath Mortandad & Sandia Canyons at LANL

Size: ~1 mile long x $\frac{1}{2}$ mile wide



NO IMMEDIATE THREAT TO PUBLIC OR PRIVATE DRINKING WATER WELLS



Extensive Collaboration Since 2004

- 17 monitoring wells
- Chromium Interim Measures (IM) approved by NMED to prevent migration of plume beyond LANL boundary via pump & treat
 - 10 wells
 - Water treatment system
 - Supporting infrastructure
- Convened Expert Technical Review Team for analysis on complex technical disputes
- Significant collaboration with NMED, Office of the State Engineer, & Pueblo de San Ildefonso



Water Treatment System

Expert Technical Review

RECOMMENDATIONS

Restart Interim Measures

Transition modeling software to MODFLOW & improve the model

Drill monitoring wells to fill data gaps

Implement Adaptive Site Management

Use of dual-screened wells



Team of experts from the Network of National Laboratories for Environmental Management & Stewardship, industry, academia, & U.S. EPA Region 6

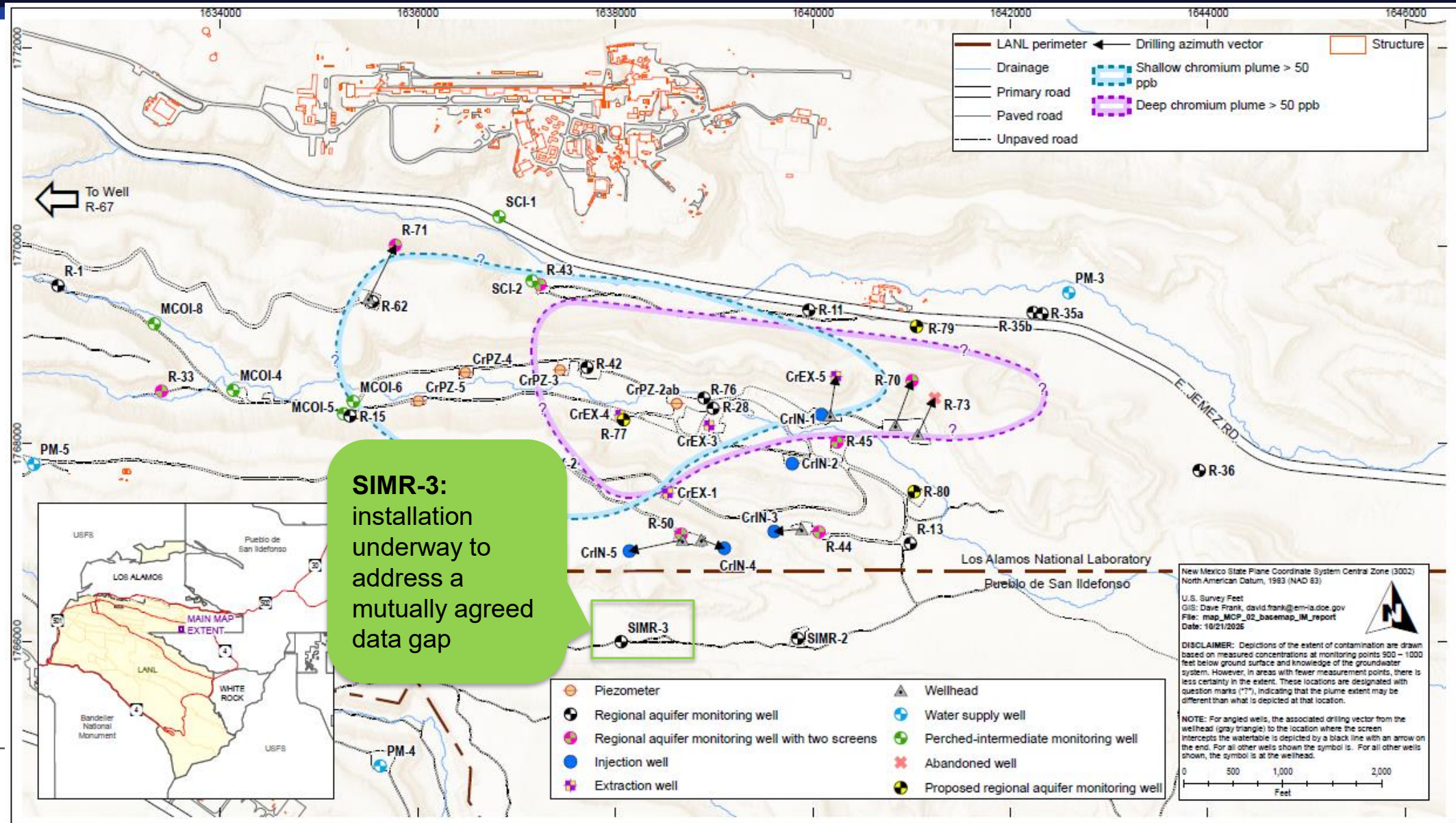
Interim Measures (IM) Operations

May 2018	IM Operations commenced
Mar 2023	IM operations ceased following direction from NMED to cease injection
Sept 2024	IM operations partially resumed in alignment with NMED authorization
Nov 2025	IM operations ceased following direction from NMED to cease injection

EMPIRICAL DATA DEMONSTRATE IM OPERATIONS EFFECTIVELY REDUCE CHROMIUM CONCENTRATIONS



Current Well Drilling



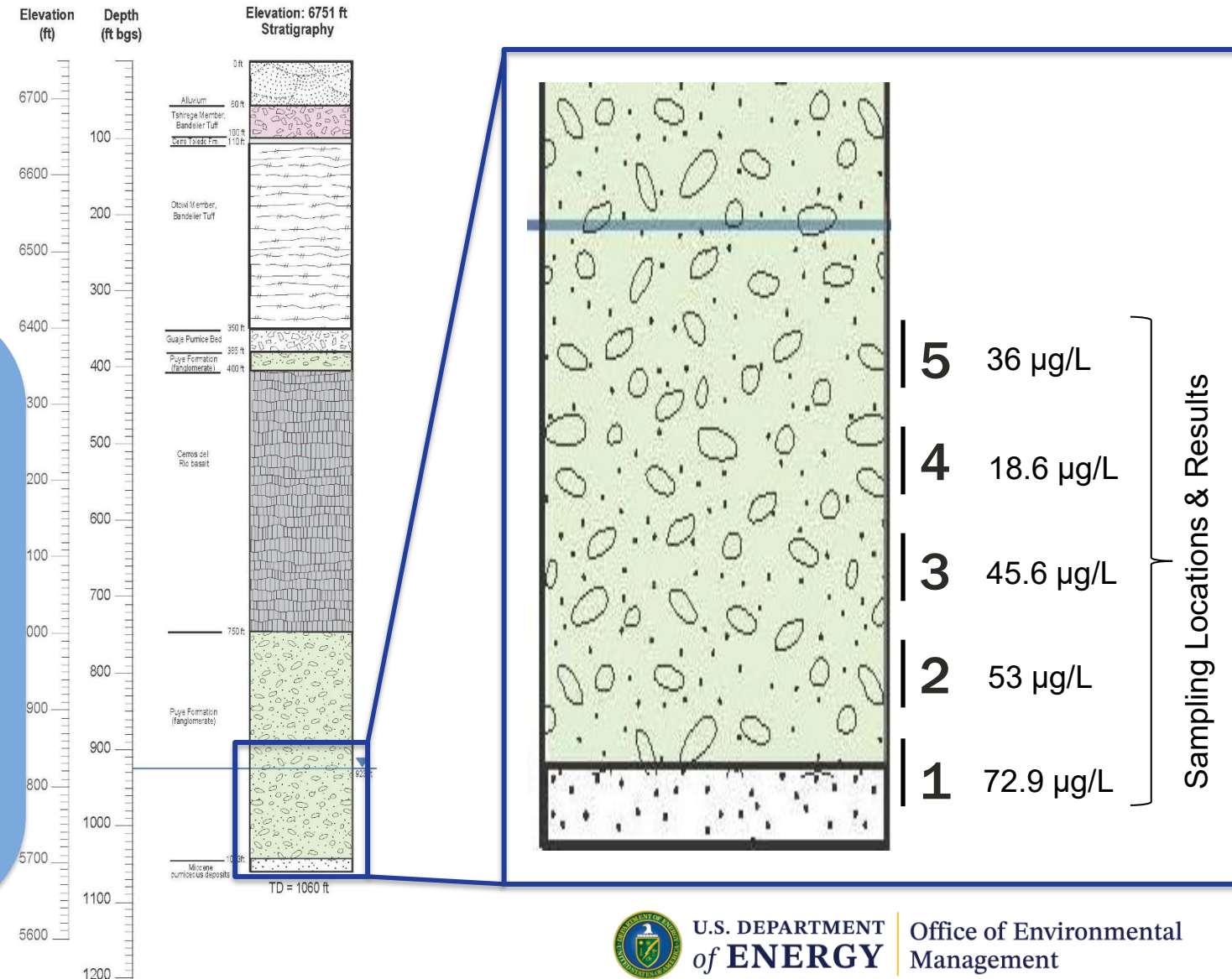
Zonal Sampling at SIMR-3

Zonal sampling is intended to inform well design, specifically screen location

- Zone of highest concentration
- Zone of highest permeability

Zonal sampling is not intended to predict long-term trends in the regional aquifer

- Disturbance due to drilling can create temporary conditions beyond the normal aquifer environment
- Normal aquifer environment should be established via a trend of monthly sampling following well installation



Next Steps for Hexavalent Chromium

- Complete installation of SIMR-3 & begin monthly sampling as quickly as possible
- Consult with Pueblo de San Ildefonso
- Evaluate & refine conceptual site model
- Analyze opportunities to modify interim measures
- Continue adaptive site management with NMED, Office of the State Engineer, Pueblo de San Ildefonso, & Los Alamos County



Stakeholder Engagement



Summary

- FY 2025 legacy waste shipment metrics exceeded
- Expanding legacy waste activities in FY 2026 to accelerate disposition
- DOE is meeting commitments in the 2016 Compliance Order on Consent
- Establishing adaptive site management plan for hexavalent chromium plume
- Continuing regular engagement with pueblos, local governments, stakeholders, & the public





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NNMCAB FY2026 Work Plan

Work Plan Item #1	Work Plan Item:	FY25 Year End Wrap Up on Cleanup Progress
	Briefing/Discussion Dates:	November 2025
	Recommendation Deadline:	January 2026
	Description:	<u>Background:</u> This presentation covers accomplishments and noteworthy events over the past year in Los Alamos Legacy Cleanup, including protecting water quality, cleaning up the land, and shipping waste off-site. <u>EM SSAB Scope:</u> Recommendation(s) relating to planning and prioritization of LANL cleanup activities

Work Plan Item #2	Work Plan Item:	Corrective Action Process for Aggregate Areas (Solid Waste Management Units & Areas of Concern)
	Briefing/Discussion Dates:	January 2026
	Recommendation Deadline:	March 2026
	Description:	<u>Background:</u> With its basis in federal and state law, the 2016 Consent Order between NMED and EM-LA, revised in 2024, calls for a step-by-step process in determining the nature and extent of contamination at a site (through sampling and characterization); the related risk to human and ecological health (risk assessment); and whether remediation is required – and to what extent – to meet acceptable risk levels. Once remediation of a particular site is successfully performed, there is a process for certifying its completion. <u>EM SSAB Scope:</u> Recommendation(s) for environmental remediation priorities in the context of established Consent Order processes

Work Plan Item #3	Work Plan Item:	Budget Priorities
	Briefing/Discussion Dates:	February 2026 [at Combined Subcommittee meeting]
	Recommendation Deadline:	March 2026
	Description:	<u>Background:</u> Stakeholder input for FY '27 Budget priorities. <u>EM SSAB Scope:</u> Per EM-1 request to each Site Manager to seek EM SSAB input on budget priorities.

Work Plan Item #4	Work Plan Item:	Ion Beam Facility DD&R
	Briefing/Discussion Dates:	March 2026
	Recommendation Deadline:	May 2026
	Description:	<u>Background:</u> Demolition and removal of contaminated excess LANL mission facilities is a part of EM-LA's responsibility. It requires complex technical and project management approaches, and coordination with multiple organizations. Ion Beam is a Cold War era facility with no remaining mission need, and its building footprint is required for new facilities meeting the Laboratory's modernization objectives. <u>EM SSAB Scope:</u> Recommendation regarding planning, prioritization and conduct of excess facility removal by EM-LA, both in general and specific to the Ion Beam project.

Work Plan Item #5	Work Plan Item:	N3B Sampling & Data Management Process
	Briefing/Discussion Dates:	May 2026
	Recommendation Deadline:	July 2026
	Description:	<u>Background:</u> Sampling and analysis of groundwater, surface water and soil are foundational to understanding the presence, extent and movement of environmental contamination at LANL. This effort serves LANL-wide reporting and compliance purposes, and also site-specific characterization for remediation planning and validation of cleanup success. The Environmental Information Management database holds millions of environmental sampling data records and continues to grow. Public access to the data is provided to all interested users. <u>EM SSAB Scope:</u> Recommendation regarding span and emphasis of continued environmental sampling, and enhancements to the tools for public access to environmental data

Work Plan Item #6	Work Plan Item:	Wildland Fire Mitigation (LANL EM Sites)
	Briefing/Discussion Dates:	July 2026
	Recommendation Deadline:	September 2026
	Description:	<u>Background:</u> Radioactive (including transuranic) wastes stored above ground awaiting removal for offsite disposal are a concern for potential impacts from wildland fire. EM-LA and N3B prioritize the removal of such waste, and also take multiple protective and mitigative measures to prevent potential negative impacts from such an event. <u>EM SSAB Scope:</u> Recommendation regarding resource prioritization for wildland fire mitigation relative to other mission responsibilities

Work Plan Item #7	Work Plan Item:	Chromium and Drilling
	Briefing/Discussion Dates:	September 2026
	Recommendation Deadline:	November 2026
	Description:	<u>Background:</u> The hexavalent chromium groundwater plume remains the #1 priority in the LANL Legacy Cleanup Program. Experience with all aspects of the Interim Measures (IM) extraction and treatment of Cr[VI]-contaminated water has enhanced our knowledge of plume characteristics and contaminant movement. Data gaps remain, and filling those gaps requires drilling more wells. Many factors must be considered in the location and sequencing of these very expensive wells. <u>EM SSAB Scope:</u> Recommendation for emphasis in furthering objectives of the IM, including drilling strategies to optimize acquisition of needed information