

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE  
JUNE 28, 1985

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF ENERGY  
ALBUQUERQUE OPERATIONS OFFICE  
OFFICE OF PUBLIC AFFAIRS  
P.O. BOX 5400  
ALBUQUERQUE, NM 87115

WM DOCKET CONTROL  
CENTER  
**DOE NEWS:**  
65 JUL 8 AM:06

WM Record File

WM Project 67

Docket No. \_\_\_\_\_

PDR ☒

LPDR \_\_\_\_\_

Distribution:

LBA DCM SOLLENBERGER  
GNUGNOLI HAISFIELD  
(Return to WM, 623-SS) L3

### DOE TO STUDY AMBROSIA LAKE URANIUM TAILINGS SITE

The U.S. Department of Energy (DOE) will conduct an extensive field program throughout the summer at the Ambrosia Lake uranium mill tailings pile, located 25 miles north of Grants, New Mexico.

The pile, formerly owned by Phillips/United Nuclear, contains approximately 2.6 million tons of tailings. DOE will clean up the tailings as part of their Uranium Mill Tailings Remedial Action (UMTRA) Project.

Geotechnical, hydrologic and radiological examination of the pile and the area immediately surrounding it is necessary for the DOE to obtain information needed to plan for site clean-up. Jacobs Engineering Group Inc. of Albuquerque, New Mexico, is the Technical Assistance Contractor to the DOE, and will be directing the field work at the Ambrosia Lake site.

Three subcontractors have been selected to perform the geotechnical characterization efforts. In Situ Technology, Inc. of Orlando, Florida has conducted piezocone testing at over 125 locations on the tailings pile. Piezocone tests are done to determine soil properties such as compressibility, permeability, and moisture content.

Ferris Mines of Gallup, New Mexico, was hired to dig test pits at various locations both on the tailings pile itself and in the nearby area. Soils samples from the test pits located away from the pile will be analyzed to establish their suitability for use as a source for borrow material to possibly cover the mill tailings. These soils will be tested for their ability to prevent escape of radon gas from the pile.

Western Technologies, Inc. of Farmington, New Mexico, has been awarded a contract to drill about 25 geotechnical boreholes at and around the site. Soil samples from the boreholes will be analyzed to characterize the content and stability of the pile and its foundation.

Jacobs Engineering Group Inc. is currently soliciting subcontractors interested and qualified to perform hydrologic characterization work at the Ambrosia Lake site. The work will consist of installation of about twenty monitor wells off the mill tailings site, and about seven wells on the pile itself. Water samples from the wells will be analyzed to determine chemical characteristics of any water found within the tailings pile, and to determine if there has been movement into the shallow ground water away from the site. Laboratory analysis of the water samples will not be available until October of this year.

B507240121 B50628  
PDR WASTE  
WM-67 PDR