



**The LANL Trails Management Program**  
*A Better Path Forward*

The Trails Management Program was established in 2003 to address resource and operational issues through improved and more active stewardship of trails at LANL. The program was evaluated in an environmental assessment prepared earlier that year by the National Nuclear Security Administration and LANL. The Program included the establishment of a Trails Assessment Working Group that would provide specific expertise, represent different organizations, and provide policy guidance. The Working Group includes representatives from adjacent land management agencies and governments, Los Alamos County, the NNSA, and the Laboratory. It continues to meet monthly.



**Background**

Use of trails at LANL is considered to be one of the benefits available to workers and residents of the Pajarito Plateau. However, there was never an explicit policy or mechanism to balance recreational trails use with environmental, cultural, safety, security and social regulations and concerns at LANL. Over 125 public comments were made on the draft environmental assessment. Representatives from San Ildefonso and Santa Clara Pueblos also participated and explained their concerns and perspectives. The National Park

Service and Los Alamos County cooperated as well.

**Activities and Accomplishments**

Many of the trails at LANL have now been mapped and resource considerations have been documented, historical reports have prepared by local citizen experts, and studies were completed relating to potential release sites. Some trails have been closed to the public in order to protect irreplaceable resources. A means to allow the use of volunteers to maintain specific trails is also being established. Most of these publications can be read and downloaded from this web page. Annual reports have been provided to the Los Alamos Site Office for 2005 and 2006.

**Trails Management Planning Measures**

➤ Project Planning Measures

Working Group members have completed studies of LANL trails use, resource concerns, maintenance conditions and operational issues, and security. These studies are being used to prepare specific trails management plans and identify projects necessary to address trails management issues.



*Heavily eroded trail segment along the edge of Ancestral Pueblo rock features and artifact scatter*



*Erosion along trail segment next to an Ancestral Pueblo cavate and talus room complex*

- Environmental Protection Measures have been identified in studies in order to address
  - Threatened and Endangered Species Protection
  - Cultural Resources Protection, and
  - Storm Water Runoff
- Worker and Public Safety Measures have been identified in studies showing the location of potential release sites, and through closure actions where conditions warrant.
- Security considerations and measures are constantly evaluated throughout the planning and implementation process.

### Urgent Resource Protection

The most seriously endangered area assessed was the Cave Kiva Trail. Threats to this area include severe over use, looting, defacing of petroglyphs, environmental degradation, health and safety concerns, trail erosion and threats of cultural resource degradation and trespass onto Pueblo lands. After considering five alternatives including no action, the decision was made by the Working Group to recommend closure of the trail and was agreed to by LANL management.



*Pre European-contact images inside of the Cave Kiva.*



*Well-worn Ancestral Pueblo paths lead to the cavates*



*Cavates near the Cave Kiva*

For more information about the LANL Trails Assessment and Management Program, please contact Dan Pava at 667-7360 or [dpava@lanl.gov](mailto:dpava@lanl.gov).