



June 29, 2010

Nevada Site Office Environmental Management

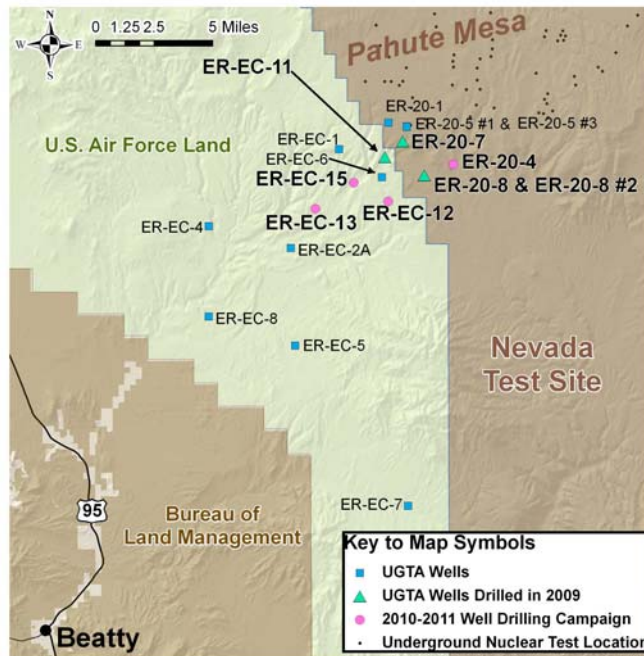
EM NEWS FLASH

Groundwater Project at the Nevada Test Site Gears Up for Summer

Workers at the Nevada Test Site may soon hear the hum of drill rigs as a campaign gets underway this summer to place four wells on and around Pahute Mesa. The wells will contribute to an existing sampling network that includes well clusters on Pahute Mesa, Frenchman Flat, Yucca Flat and other areas on and near the Nevada Test Site.

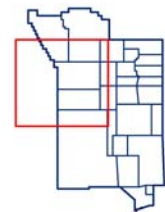
The U.S Department of Energy, National Nuclear Security Administration Nevada Site Office is conducting drilling activities as part of its [Underground Test Area \(UGTA\) Sub-Project](#), which has set out to study the complex geology and subsurface water systems of the Nevada Test Site. UGTA specialists want to better understand the movement of contamination relating to historic underground nuclear tests to ensure the safety of workers, the public, and the environment. These newest wells on Pahute Mesa are part of a larger drilling effort that will add a total of nine additional wells to the region by 2012.

UGTA's summer schedule is rigorous. In addition to adding new wells, activities include developing and testing wells, ER-EC-11 and ER-20-7, which were drilled last summer. At this time experts will evaluate how readily water flows through the aquifer(s) as well as collect and test groundwater samples.



Left: map showing wells on the Pahute Mesa region of the Nevada Test Site.

Below: Nevada Test Site map



Pahute Mesa drilling activities began in June at well site ER-EC-12 and will continue without interruption at wells ER-20-4, ER-EC-13 and ER-EC-15. Work on ER-EC-15 is expected to start in October or November of 2010.

Well Development and Testing

The purpose of well development is to clean up remnants from drilling activities (e.g. drill cuttings, soap, etc.) and return the supporting aquifer to its natural condition. UGTA collects raw data (i.e., water rates, pressure, chemistry) during the testing phase. This data will help scientists create computer-generated visuals, or models, of the Nevada Test Site subsurface.

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