



April 24 and 26, 2001 Public Meeting Summary with Public Comments / Questions & Answers

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(Slides are reproduced from presentation; speaker comments follow.)

(Statements are not direct quotes, they are paraphrased.)

(Public comments and questions made during the meeting are preceded by the word "Public." Response to the questions/comments are preceded by the responder's name when available.)

Project Update, Access Restored, Document Availability

Time 5-7 p.m.

Location Tuesday, April 24, 2001

Los Alamos Inn

Los Alamos, NM

Thursday, April 26, 2001

Northern New Mexico Community College

Center for the Arts Theatre

Española, NM

Speakers Paul Renard, CDC Project Officer

[Tom Widner, Project Manager](#)

[Robert Whitcomb, CDC](#)

[Peter Malmgren](#)

Summary Leaders of the Los Alamos Historical Document and Retrieval and Assessment Project reported on progress made on the project to date. Agenda items included discussion of issues related to laboratory security and regaining access to classified records, as well as discussion of availability of documents released as a result of the study, and introduction to a related study of the history of LANL workers.

Robert Whitcomb provided details regarding the review process outlined in plans developed by LANL and CDC.

Tom Widner provided details about the project status and the contents of the draft report.

Peter Malmgren outlined his study: Los Alamos Revisited, an Oral History.

Note: Some slides previously presented at the introductory meeting were again presented during this meeting as background information. Please see the February 23, 1999 meeting summary and slides to view these slides.

The meetings included public comments and questions:

- Tuesday, April 24
- Thursday, April 26

Slides & Notes Tom Widner
Robert Whitcomb

Presentation (Robert Whitcomb)

Background

- Project begins December 1998 with unescorted access to record repositories
- Access to LANL record repositories were suspended on May 2000 due to safety and security issues surrounding the:
 - Wen Ho Lee,
 - Cerro Grande Fire (lab closed, May 2000), and
 - Missing hard drive incidents

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Project work is patterned after lessons learned during similar studies at other sites. One of the first studies was conducted at Hanford. It was a directed search that led the team to miss some relevant information. At LANL, the team is using a systematic approach where all records are searched.

Result of Heightened Security

- Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) and its contractor no longer had access to all record repositories at the Los Alamos National Laboratory (LANL)

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Corrective Measures

- February 2001 - A Special Security Plan was approved for two venues:
 - Records Center
 - Reports Library
- CDC provided comment and input

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The largest collections of documents are contained in the Records Center and Reports Library

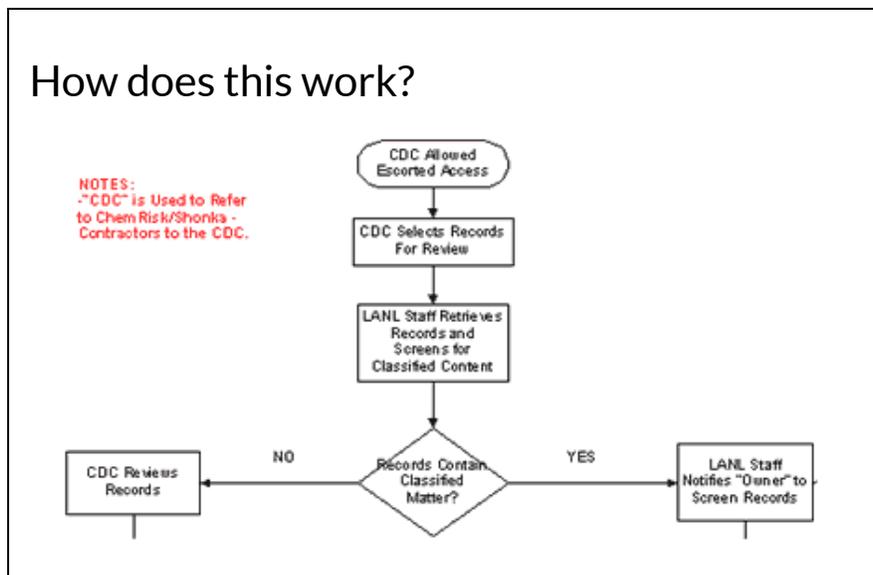
What does the plan do?

- CDC and its contractor now have escorted access to the two venues
- Access to certain categories of classified information will be limited
- CDC staff will have verification responsibility to ensure documents don't contain project related information

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The plan is a reaction caused by a heightened awareness of national security issues. The plan allows government workers to review records prior to the research team's access to determine if there is a good reason to protect the records.

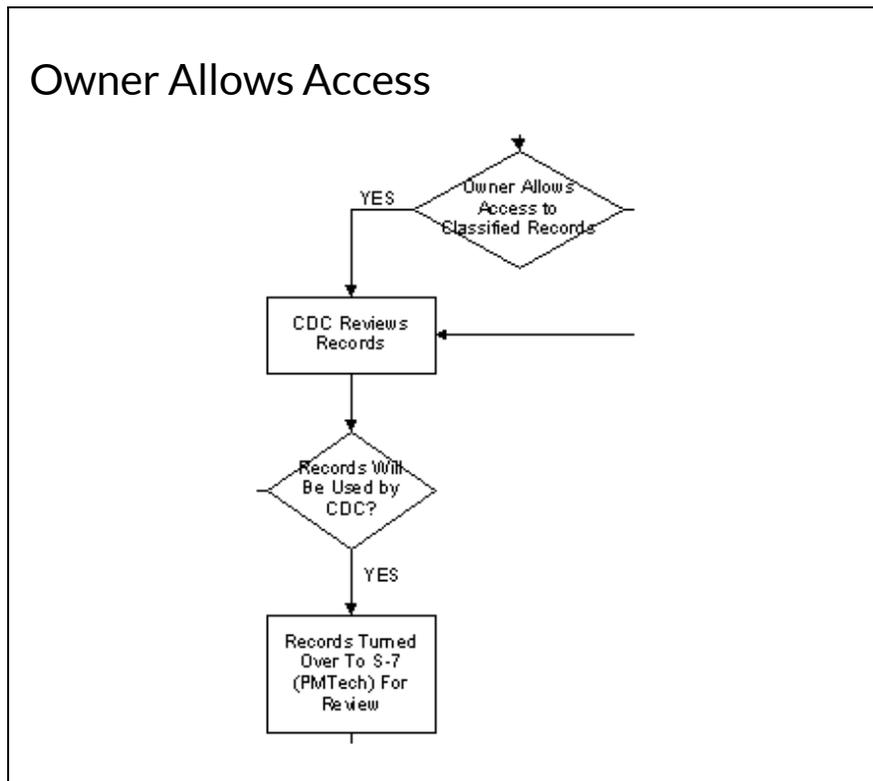
How does this work?



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This flow chart illustrates the screening process. If a record is not classified, the team reviews the document. If a document is classified, the owner of the document must first be notified and will review the document.

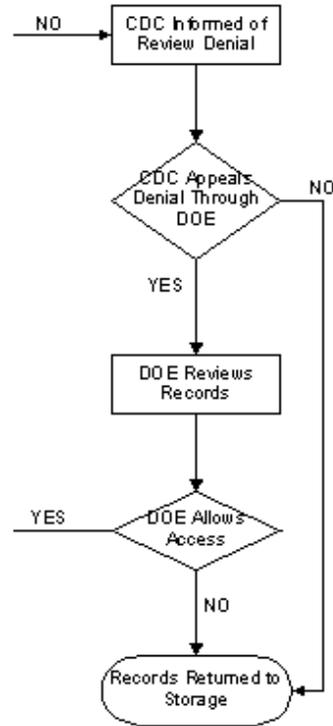
Owner Allows Access



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If the owner releases the document, the team reviews the document and determines if it is relevant to the study or not. If the record is considered necessary to the study, the document is turned over for classification review.

Appealing a Document Denial



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If the document owner refuses to release a document, then the team can appeal. The team will be allowed to review the document and see if it contains information relevant to the study. If it does, DOE will review the document and allow access to relevant information.

What are the Special Categories?

- Nuclear Weapons Design Information
- Sigma 14 and 15 Information (may be expanded at a future date to include the emerging Sigma 16 category)
- Sensitive Compartmented Information (SCI)
- Special Access Program Information
- Foreign Government Information (FGI)

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Restrictions are applied according to special categories of records.

Nuclear Weapons Design Information

- Documents relating solely to nuclear weapons design, such as weapons components blue prints, drawings, or other schematic or graphical design information

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Sigma 14 and 15 Information

- Sigma 14 - The category of sensitive information concerning the vulnerability of nuclear weapons to deliberate unauthorized nuclear detonation
- Sigma 15 - The category of sensitive information concerning the design and function of nuclear weapons use control systems, features, and their components. This includes use control information for passive and active systems.

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Sensitive Compartmented Information (SCI)

- Information that has been determined pursuant to Executive Order 12958 or any predecessor order to require protection against unauthorized disclosure and that is so designated

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Special Access Program Information

- "Not later than February 1 of each year, the Secretary of Energy shall submit to the congressional defense committees a report on special access programs of the Department of Energy carried out under the atomic energy defense activities of the Department."

(42CFR23 Subchapter VIII - Military Application of Atomic Energy Section 2122a)

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Foreign Government Information (FGI)

- Information provided to the U. S. Government by a foreign government or governments, an international organization of government, or any element thereof, with the expectation that the information, the source of the information, or both, are to be held in confidence.
- Information produced by the United States pursuant to or as a result of a joint arrangement with a foreign government or governments, or an international organization of governments, or any element thereof, requiring that the information, the arrangement, or both, be held in confidence

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Additional Access Granted

- March 2001 - authorization was granted to release without review classified information dated on or before 31 December 1962

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Additional information has been opened up since the original plan was developed. This information included old weapons design, such as information about Fat Man and Little Boy. So much of this information is already available to the public, that nothing is gained by keeping it under lock and key.

Summary

- CDC and its contractor have regained access to two classified records repositories
- Security Plans for additional venues have been requested
- Future Security Plans for additional venues will be drafted with CDC input
- CDC believes that this project can continue successfully, but will take longer to complete
- We will continue to keep the public informed of our progress

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It is good news that the team has regained access. Security plans for additional venues have been requested. CDC believes this project can be completed successfully, but it will take longer than anticipated.

Presentation (Tom Widner)

Documents Available for Review

- Documents that we have selected as relevant are becoming available for public review.
- 14 boxes of documents have been placed in the Government Information collection at UNM in Albuquerque.
- Arrangements are being made by DOE for the documents to also be available in Los Alamos and Española

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I will cover a few other areas we are working on.

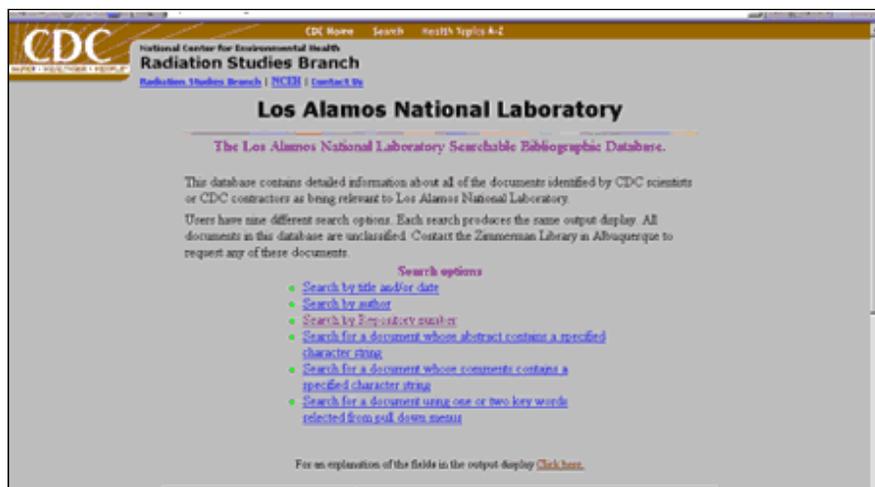
Fourteen boxes of records released from LANL for this study were delivered to the Government Collections at the University of New Mexico in Albuquerque. We are trying to make arrangements to have records made available closer to Los Alamos. The public library in Los Alamos and the Northern New Mexico Community College are both under consideration.

UNM Library in Albuquerque

- A searchable database of the available documents is on CDC's web site.
- Interested parties should visit the Government Information desk in the basement of the library building.
- Documents can be requested by Repository Number, and can be copied at some cost.

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A searchable database is available on the Internet. It is primarily a finding aid for documents available in the reading room. The newsletter includes a map to the reading room. Documents can be requested by repository number which is available through the Internet searches. You can request up to three at a time and copy them at a small cost to yourself. The document database is accessible anywhere the Internet is accessible. You don't have to go to the library to use it.



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The document database is accessible anywhere the Internet is accessible. You don't have to go to the library to use it.

Other (closer) Reading Rooms

- Mesa Public Library in Los Alamos (2400 Central Avenue)
- At or near Northern New Mexico Community College in Española
- The plan is for newly released documents to be available in Los Alamos for a certain period, then be transferred to Española.
- Details will be made available as soon as they are finalized.

Our name has changed to JA Jones but we still have the same group of people working on the project. JA Jones has been around for a long time, and the company is not interfering with the team's work.

Same People, Different Name

- McLaren/Hart was acquired by J. A. Jones Environmental Services in October 2000.
- The composition of the project team will not change.
- We will work under the name of J. A. Jones Environmental Consulting.

Our name has changed to JA Jones but we still have the same group of people working on the project. JA Jones has been around for a long time, and the company is not interfering with the team's work.

Project Web Site - Coming Soon

- The purposes of the web site are to:
 - Keep interested parties informed
 - Present information about the project and the project team
 - Present summaries of our meetings
 - Make our work products available, including draft reports and newsletters
 - Provide an avenue for acquiring public comments and additions to our contact list
 - Provide links to related information

This flow chart illustrates the screening process. If a record is not classified, the team reviews the document. If a document is classified, the owner of the document must first be notified and will review the document.

Guest Speaker: Peter Malmgren

Peter Malmgren is conducting the study: Los Alamos Revisited, an Oral History Project. CDC is supporting his study. The interviews are yielding oral histories of Los Alamos workers and area residents. The information gathered during the study will be publicly available, and is being shared with the project team.

Peter Malmgren described the study:

I have been at this for 16 months, spending time at 21 locations including villages, hamlets, towns, and cities. Initially I concentrated on interviewing workers from the valley. There are many blue-collar people living in the valley that have not been heard before. Now I am also talking to people in Los Alamos. Paul Renard opened the door.

I appreciate the people who have invited me into their homes. I am a big advocate of oral history, but I am not a technical wizard. Working together, I like to think we could bring these two disciplines together and add a personalized touch to the document search. I hope to be able to give CDC leads to make the search fruitful.

The study's goals are to (1) honor men and women, and (2) examine health and safety issues. As I entered in the process I used a carefully screened set of questions, which I have since trashed. I have learned that I need to go with what the people want to tell me. I am coming from a preservationist attitude: honor individuals; build an archive.

I am planing on holding a photographic exhibit. Photos have a lot of power, but I will use excerpts form interviews to give zip. The exhibit will be held in the Onate Center, north of Española. I hope this will turn into a reunion of sorts. Images often trigger more memories and more stories. I could get more information at the of time of exhibit.

Public Comments / Questions and Answers: April 24, 2001

("Response" refers to either one or more members of the project team who responded to a questions or comment.)

Public: Is your program going to cover the time before the Trinity drops?

Response: The team will look at all records for this area where weapons were developed and tested. Records concerning radiation fallout are relevant to the study.

Public: We have heard of records that have been moved or destroyed. Stories that are not supposed to be repeated-like dumping in canyons

Response (Tom Widner): Interviews are helping. However, we will never be able to gather all the information to complete the whole picture. We start with documents and use interviews to fill gaps.

Public: Will fall-out records for the two Japanese sites be part of the study or is it just limited to Los Alamos? The other sites will be a whole different approach because it is detonation not production.

Response (Paul Renard): We are collecting information regarding Trinity. We already have reviewed information about other sites, and quite a bit about Trinity. That information is not falling through the cracks. We are pulling in and logging information.

Public: I am a down-winder. I need to know that information.

Response (Tom Widner): We are definitely finding relevant information.

Public Comments / Questions and Answers: April 26, 2001

("Response" refers to either one or more members of the project team who responded to a question or comment.)

Public: Is there any other information about Los Alamos at other locations, such as at Oak Ridge?

Response (Paul Renard): Yes, Bob will address that.

Public: Will this study use contractor records, ex. medical records?

Response (Renard): Medical records will not be part of the study to protect people's privacy.

(Tom Widner): If we know about contractor records, we are going to look at them.

Public: Do you look at logs?

Response (Renard): We look at summary reports, but we try to go back to the original documents. Hand-written, original log books, provide the most reliable information.

(Widner): We've looked through 1000s of log books already.

Public: Is this a new process? Are you looking at classified records first?

Response (Bob Whitcomb): Yes.

Public: Do you feel restricted?

Response (Whitcomb): We are restricted because we have to have an escort.

Public: Does the owner review apply to a single document, a box of records, or a particular person's documents?

Response (Whitcomb): It could apply to both. The process is cumbersome because classified and non-classified records are housed in a classified area. In the reports area there are places where just non-classified records are housed.

Public: Have you done anything about documents held by others?

Response (Whitcomb): We will talk about more, trying to track down other records held in other facilities.

Public: Once they say yes, what do they screen for?

Response (Whitcomb): The owner determines if someone else can look at the document.

Public: What if they change their mind during the screening process?

Response (Whitcomb): The owner determines if someone else can look at the document.

(Renard): This process takes much longer. At Hanford, we started looking at records that we thought were pertinent. Then found additional records were needed. Here, we are looking at all records. I have asked Tom and company to start the process now to determine owners, and get the process started now, because it will take a long time. That's why we are starting this process early.

Public: Originally the study was making documents available to the public. Can the public still see them? Originally, I thought yes, now I think this is narrowing the process.

Response (Renard): CDC will still get to see all records. Declassified records will be redacted so that all information will not publicly be available.

(Whitcomb): Like the Savannah River Site, all relevant information will be preserved. The plan is just adding more steps. The process will work, just at a slower pace.

Public: Are you going after classified records first because the process will take longer?

Response (Whitcomb): Yes, but also classified records contain the bulk of the relevant information. Also, while we have access, we want to look at as many classified records as possible before something else happens to stop access.

Public: Is DOE the steward of the documents? Do they decide what is not seen? Does CDC get to look at these to decide if they are relevant?

Response (Whitcomb): There are many avenues we can take during an appeal. This plan has been in place for just two months, and we are just now starting to follow the process. We have a foreign nation document which will be a good test for the process.

Public: Will the process be tested by June?

Response (Whitcomb): We almost completed a cycle for this meeting, but have been unable to reach the documents owner.

Public: Will you make a guess on the length of the delay, and how will it impact the cost of the project?

Response (Renard): Until we know how much is there and where it is, it will be difficult to determine the length or cost of the project. The original project was planned for last three years. It may take us seven years to look at all the records. We are going to extend the project, but I can't specify its duration now.

Public: How many venues exist?

Response (Renard): We don't know where they are. We have been told that we will get a list. That list is most likely classified. I don't have a clearance. When I see something, you'll get to see it. Our cleared personnel will get to see the list and the information. We're committed to the project. The lab is behaving like they are going to work with us.

Public: Do you see the change of administration in Washington as making an affect?

Response (Renard): We still don't know. We are watching.

Public: A lot of people here used to work at the lab, and they have shared with us a lot of the problems when people try to assert there are health problems. Is there a possibility that the classified process is going to reduce access to declassified records?

Response (Whitcomb): The team will get to look at the documents that an owner denies access to determine if it is useful to the study.

(Renard): We are pushing for good science. In our agreement with LANL, the research team gets to determine if a document is relevant. We will tell you if we are denied access.

(Whitcomb): The newsletter design features a puzzle. Each document is a piece of the puzzle. We have access, and we are in the identification phase, which is most important.

Public: You said there were 5-6 million records?

Response (Renard): Just classified records.

Public: When talking about records, is the lab the owner, or the person named on that document?

Response (Whitcomb): It could be a person, a location on site, or an off-site person.

Public: What happens if the owner is no longer available?

Response (Whitcomb): There will be a chain of custody.

Public: Do you have access to the labs photo library?

Response (Widner): We are trying to help Peter gain access to more photos.

(Peter Malmgren): Mead let me look through some and the majority of photos are from there.

Public: What can people in the audience do to help with that effort?

Response (Romero): I am waiting for a call from DOE in Albuquerque.

(Renard): A second set is available for use in Española. To support local access.

Public: Let's talk about how the project can be helpful to us. During the March meeting, a person who worked on a mercury still was later diagnosed with mercury poisoning. All these years, the lab and bureaucracy are saying this didn't happen. More than 50 years later I have read documentation that says this did happen. At least they can't tell him that he is crazy. We really want to assist people with those kind of things.

Response (Renard): We are continuing to let NIOSH know about anything we find.

Public: Most of us look at LANL as being a big fat dragon with a lot of tails and no head. We have resentment against them. We were booted off of the land, and now have a class action lawsuit. A lot of land is going to be returned because it was declared surplus. But now it is contaminated and burned. Now we are suing for money, not land. Most of us, have worked at LANL. Our purpose in coming to the meeting is because we are interested in getting compensated. DOE is fighting us. They say we must be almost dying or in the grave to get money from them.

Response (Renard): I think we will succeed. We are getting in. We are not here to address compensation issues, nor to act as an advocate for the LANL. We want to do good science. What we find, the good, the bad, and the ugly, will be made available to you. You can use it how you want.

Public: What it is going to take is money. We are petitioning Congress to introduce a bill to pay us for 3500 acres that the lab says is not valuable.

Public: I was a 30-year LANL employee. What always bothered me was our dosimeters. The readings were always 0. However, each room had a dosimeter and those records showed readings. I would like you to take a close look at that.

Response (Renard): And we will. For the first round we are looking at everything. Then we will take a closer look. We will compare records from wall-mounted dosimeters to personal dosimeter readings. This will all be combined for the dose reconstruction.

Public: Come see me. I have binders showing true readings.

Response (Renard): We will talk to you and the others.

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