



Navajo Nation National Laboratories Partnership

Objectives

Collaborative Development of a Problem Solving Approach

An environmental program partnership between the Navajo Nation Environmental Protection Agency, the U.S. Department of Energy (DOE) National Laboratories, and the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency can have benefits for all parties. The DOE and the Navajo Nation both must deal with soil and water contamination by uranium and processing chemicals. It is imperative to address not only the technical issues but also cultural issues. There will be useful technology transfer but the National Laboratories will profit by lessons learned that can be applied to other sites on Native American lands and possibly sites in other countries.

A major portion of the proposed partnership is to account for the Navajo approaches to problem solving and perceived risk by adapting assessment and cleanup technologies to encompass the laboratories' technical point of view while honoring the Navajo cultural point of view.

Technology Transfer and Professional Development of Navajo Nation Environmental and Natural Resource Staff

The principal input from the National Laboratories will be to provide information and education on availability and use of various environmental cleanup capabilities and facilities. This will include assisting the Navajo National environmental and natural resources programs in establishing an information technology infrastructure for the decision-making process. The assistance would include support of a review of existing risk-assessment and decision-making approaches as well as elicitation and development of decision criteria in such a way as to incorporate Navajo Nation goals and values.

Define Projects and Develop Project Plans

The Navajo Nation will clearly take the lead in the definition of projects and development of project plans, including priorities, remediation objectives, and funding. The National Laboratories will provide technical support in development of the plans to implement the environmental restoration decisions at sites selected by the Navajo Nation.



Remediate Selected Sites

The Navajo Nation will contract for and manage remediation of selected sites, including deployment of selected technologies. The National Laboratories will provide technical support for the contract process. The laboratories will also support deployment of an integrated suite of technologies to clean up the selected Navajo Nation site(s). This support will clearly include any necessary training and/or mentoring in deployment of the selected technologies.

Complete Technology Transfer

Technology transfer will take place in several directions. The National Laboratories will clearly transfer their technical expertise to the Navajo Nation via training, internships, mentoring, and other forms of information transfer. The Navajo Nation will provide feedback to the laboratories on the success of the technology transfer program. Transfer of information and culture will occur at many levels. One of the most important levels will be a personnel exchange of staff and interns.

National Laboratory Capabilities

The National Laboratories have capabilities in risk assessment, decision analysis, and remediation/restoration technologies.

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