



Accomplishments

This dates back to when the NukeWatch Executive Director worked for Concerned Citizens for Nuclear Safety before the founding of Nuclear Watch New Mexico in December 1999. Some of these achievements were accomplished solely by Nuclear Watch; some in coalition with others. Whichever the case, Nuclear Watch was central to and led in all of these achievements.

1989 Proposed resumed radioactive incineration at LANL defeated. This issue was the catalyst for sustained public opposition to LANL's nuclear weapons programs that has occurred ever since.

1990 Proposed new plutonium facility at LANL defeated.

1995 In pre-litigation negotiations on the DARHT case (see below) DOE agreed to prepare a nationwide Stockpile Stewardship and Management programmatic environmental impact statement.

1996 Federal judge enjoined construction of the Dual-Axis Radiographic Hydrodynamic Testing Facility at LANL until DOE prepares an environmental impact statement. *The New Mexican* described it as "the legal shot heard throughout the nuclear weapons complex."

1997 As the result of a lawsuit, a federal judge found LANL to be in repeated major violations of the Clean Air Act.

1998 Federal court settlement mandated a \$6.25 million fund for citizen and tribal studies of DOE environmental management and cleanup programs.

1999 Formal comments on a draft LANL Site-Wide Environmental Impact Statement compelled DOE to complete a detailed model of a hypothetical wildfire and to undertake wildfire mitigation measures.

2000 The very real Cerro Grande Fire broke out. LANL management consulted the LANL SWEIS' hypothetical fire and then ordered mandatory evacuation of the Lab (the Los Alamos townsite followed as well). Wildfire mitigation measures helped to keep the Cerro Grande Fire away from Area G where ~44,000 barrels of plutonium wastes were being stored aboveground. It could have been catastrophic had any of those barrels ruptured, releasing respirable plutonium across northern New Mexico.

2003 Congress declined to fund the Modern Pit Facility.

2004 As a result of a direct appeal to then Governor (and former DOE Secretary) Bill Richardson, LANL's dangerous criticality experiments and highly enriched uranium were moved to Nevada.

2004 As the result of our National Environmental Policy Act lawsuit LANL withdrew its proposed BioSafety Level -3 facility that would have handled bioweapons agents such as anthrax.

2005 The New Mexico Environment Department negotiated with DOE a stringent Consent Order governing cleanup at LANL. We were strong advocates for that Consent Order and had submitted extensive technical comment to support it.

2005 NNSA canceled new warhead design, the Robust Nuclear Earth Penetrator.

2006 Independent scientific experts known as the JASONs concluded that plutonium pits have serviceable lifetimes of a least a century. This resulted from a request by Nuclear Watch to then-

Senator Bingaman to require that pit life study. He successfully did so as a floor amendment to the FY 2004 Defense Authorization Act.

2006. We discovered through a Ten-Year Comprehensive Site Plan that the Los Alamos National Laboratory had a scheme for “alternative financing” in which the US Postal Service was going to pay for the construction of a 400,000 square foot, nuclear weapons-related “Science Center” at the Lab. Within two days of our public disclosure the USPS headquarters in Washington DC formally backed out of what it called that “arrangement.”

2007 Following protracted litigation under the Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) to obtain “Ten-Year Comprehensive Site Plans” for various NNSA sites, a federal judge ruled that NNSA’s pattern and practice of delay defies “both logic and the law.” We got the Plans.

2007 Nuclear Watch successfully undertook a “missionary” trip to Kansas City, MO to recruit activists to work on NNSA’s Kansas City National Security Complex. They have been active ever since.

2008 Congress canceled the new-design Reliable Replacement Warhead and related expanded plutonium pit production, in large part due to the 2006 pit aging study.

2010, 2017 and 2021 Santa Fe City Council passed resolutions drafted by Nuclear Watch calling for more cleanup and less plutonium pit production.

2012 NNSA terminated the Chemical and Metallurgical Research-Nuclear Facility at LANL.

2012 Nuclear Watch won a Freedom of Information Act lawsuit requiring that NNSA release annual Performance Evaluation Reports on contractor performance.

2013 Nuclear Watch’s repeated press releases over graft by Sen Pete Domenici’s handpicked successor Rep. Heather Wilson apparently played a role in her electoral defeat. Following that she left New Mexico entirely.

2019 NNSA’s pulled the plug on its proposed “Interoperable Warhead,” at least in part due to our leaking of a Navy memo that said it didn’t want it.

2021 NNSA pulled funding for the booster group the Regional Coalition of LANL Communities after a sustained campaign led by Nuclear Watch.

2020 Nuclear Watch publicized planned tritium releases by LANL which led to a groundswell of public opposition.

2021 Nuclear Watch persuaded Santa Fe Archbishop John Wester to become active in nuclear disarmament issues.

2022 Archbishop John Wester released his pastoral letter [*Living in the Light of Christ's Peace: A Conversation Toward Nuclear Disarmament*](#) which has since helped to revitalize anti-nuclear weapons activism in the American Catholic Church. Nuclear Watch drafted the middle “technical” third of his pastoral letter.

2022 With Nuclear Watch’s advice, Archbishop Wester formed the Partnership for a World without Nuclear Weapons composed of the dioceses of Santa Fe, Seattle, Hiroshima, Nagasaki, two South Korean dioceses, and Kansas City, Missouri, and growing. See <https://pwnw.org/ewp/purpose/>

2023 Nuclear Watch settled a cleanup lawsuit against LANL that required installation of a stormwater monitoring station in Los Alamos Canyon that the Santa City/County Buckman Direct Diversion Project had been trying to get for 13 years. Our settlement also required accelerated cleanup of selected projects.

2023: With others Nuclear Watch successfully negotiated a new state permit for DOE's Waste Isolation Pilot Plant permit. Requirements include prioritization of LANL's legacy wastes and an annual report by DOE detailing how it is looking for a new out-of-state radioactive waste dump (which will be politically controversial).

2023 and 2024 Nuclear Watch traveled with Santa Fe Archbishop John Wester to Hiroshima and Nagasaki for the atomic bombing anniversaries.

2024 The New Mexico Environment Department negotiated with DOE a new Consent Order governing cleanup at LANL. It is far from perfect but much better than a 2016 Consent Order that replaced the stringent 2005 Consent Order that we had advocated for. We had bitterly opposed that 2016 Consent Order, which influenced NMED.

2024 Nuclear Watch sampled ephemeral water in LANL's Acid Canyon with biochemist Dr. Michael Ketterer. The media story on detected high plutonium results literally went around the world.

2024 At our urging, the New Mexico Environment Department issued a draft order mandating comprehensive cleanup at one of LANL's old radioactive and toxic wastes dumps. LANL and NNSA bitterly oppose this, especially since the old dump is within a few hundred yards of LANL's main plutonium facility for expanded pit production. Nuclear Watch New Mexico is the only non-governmental organization with the legal standing to participate in negotiations between the government agencies and a future formal hearing with cross examination. This is an ongoing issue in which continuous public support for NMED's position is critically needed.

2024 A federal judge ruled that the National Nuclear Security Administration had violated the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) by not preparing a nationwide programmatic environmental impact statement for expanded plutonium pit production. The Judge required the preparation of a new PEIS. See our an eight-page history highlighting our efforts to fight plutonium pit production at <http://nukewatch.org/facts/nwd/Pit-Production-History.pdf>

2025 Nuclear Watch led in a campaign against LANL's long-planned releases of up to 30,000 curies of radioactive tritium. As a result, the New Mexico Environment Department ordered LANL and NNSA to conduct an independent technical review including potential alternatives and to hold a public meeting before it would consider granting authorization. This is an ongoing issue.

August 2025: For the third consecutive year Nuclear Watch traveled with Santa Fe Archbishop John Wester to Hiroshima and Nagasaki, this time for the significant 80th anniversaries. They were accompanied by Seattle Archbishop Paul Etienne, Washington, DC Cardinal Bob McElroy, Chicago Cardinal Blaze Cupich, and delegations from the Notre Dame, Loyola and Marquette Universities.

2025 The Nobel Peace Center asked for a video presentation on our PEIS lawsuit "showing how it is possible to do activism inside the court room." It was presented at the Noble Peace Center conference in Oslo, Norway, on August 6, the 80th anniversary of the Hiroshima atomic bombing. See <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=VqeYZmil8n4> beginning at 3:24:30.

Throughout: Press releases on issues as they arise. Comprehensive formal comments under the federal National Environmental Policy Act and state Environment Department processes. Eight lawsuits (one not successful). Maintenance and constant updating of website now receiving ~3 million non-robot requests. Hundreds of media articles and numerous radio interviews and video presentations. Annual analyses and graphic charting of DOE, NNSA and labs' budgets.