STATE OF NEW MEXICO
Environment Department

MICHELLE LUJAN GRISHAM, GOVERNOR
James C. Kenney, Cabinet Secretary

NEWS RELEASE
For Immediate Release

The Environment Department's mission is to protect and restore the environment and to foster a healthy and prosperous New Mexico for present and future generations.

November 19, 2026

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NMED awards $500k to Pueblo de San Ildefonso to address plume
Partnership advances oversight amid federal cleanup delays

LOS ALAMOS, N.M. — The New Mexico Environment Department (NMED) awarded $500,000 to the Pueblo de San Ildefonso to expand efforts to investigate and address a decades-old plume of toxic hexavalent chromium contamination released by the U.S. Department of Energy (DOE) at Los Alamos National Laboratory (LANL).

From 1956 to 1972, LANL discharged chromium-contaminated water into Sandia and Mortandad Canyons, where the contamination eventually reached the regional aquifer. Over the following decades, the plume spread both horizontally and vertically. Groundwater sampling has since confirmed hexavalent chromium contamination beneath Pueblo lands. NMED has been pursuing a binding federal cleanup agreement with DOE while working directly with the Pueblo to protect New Mexico's groundwater.

Under a new agreement, NMED provided $500,000 from the state's Hazardous Waste Emergency Fund to support the Pueblo's environmental investigation and oversight of the hexavalent chromium plume.

NMED and the Pueblo will collaborate on a sampling plan to further characterize the extent of the contamination and guide future cleanup efforts. The Pueblo will lead the work using state funding to support environmental sampling, technical analysis and consultation with subject matter experts.

"While the U.S. Department of Energy continues to delay executing a settlement agreement that would put the chromium plume cleanup on an enforceable timeline, New Mexico and the Pueblo de San Ildefonso are moving forward," said **Environment Secretary James Kenney**. "This funding and collaboration represent meaningful progress towards advancing characterization of the plume."

"The Pueblo de San Ildefonso appreciates NMED's financial support of this complex effort," said **Pueblo de San Ildefonso Governor Christopher A. Moquino**. "These funds represent an important contribution to the broader effort needed to address the chromium plume and find a path forward with NMED and DOE that restores and protects the Pueblo's lands and waters."

The agreement strengthens the ongoing government-to-government partnership between NMED and the Pueblo while recognizing the Pueblo's sovereignty and providing additional resources for its independent environmental oversight. Both governments will share analytical data and coordinate their efforts to better understand the plume.

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