

## WM2015 Conference Panel Report

**PANEL SESSION 002: Hot Topics in DOE Environmental Management**

**Session Co-Chairs:** **James Gallagher**, *Gallagher Consulting*  
**Martin Schneider**, *Longenecker & Associates*

**Panel Reporter:** **Martin Schneider**, *Longenecker & Associates*

### **Panelists:**

- **Frank Marcinowski**, *DAS for Waste Management; DOE-EM*
- **Jack Surash**, *DAS for Acquisition & Project Management, DOE-EM*
- **Ken Picha**, *DAS for Tank Waste and Nuclear Material, DOE-EM*
- **Melody Bell**, *Assistant DAS for Human Capital and Corporate Services, DOE-EM*
- **James Hutton**, *Associate DAS – Safety, Security and Quality Programs, DOE-EM*
- **Mark Gilbertson**, *Deputy Assistant Secretary (DAS) for Site Restoration, DOE-EM*
- **Connie Flohr**, *Acting DAS for Program Planning & Budget, DOE-EM*

**Summary of Presentations:** (Adapted with permission from Weapons Complex Monitor 3/20)

As the Department of Energy's Office of Environmental Management prepares to stand up its new Los Alamos Site Office next week, the top EM procurement official said during Session 2 at Waste Management that he is "fairly confident" some of LANL legacy cleanup work will be set-aside for small businesses. DOE is in the midst of acquisition planning for a set of post-Fiscal Year 2016 cleanup contracts at Los Alamos, which are being developed as part of the Department's plans to transition management of legacy cleanup activities at the lab to EM from the National Nuclear Security Administration. EM Deputy Assistant Secretary for Acquisition and Project Management Jack Surash said that he is "fairly confident" that the new contracts will include "one or more" small business opportunities. Surash declined to comment, though, when asked what types of cleanup work at the lab is being considered for small businesses. "I want to stop painting before I get into a corner," he said.

In the coming months, DOE plans to launch procurements to break out legacy cleanup work from the LANL M&O contract, currently held by Los Alamos National Security, LLC. A master acquisition plan for what is expected to be several Los Alamos cleanup procurements is set to be released by June, which would be followed by draft requests for proposals by the end of the summer. "What we have right now is NNSA overseeing an NNSA contractor doing programmatic work that EM wants done," Surash said this week.

However, EM hopes to improve that with the new management at the site, which comes after waste processing issues at Los Alamos were linked to the Waste Isolation Pilot Plant radiological release. "We'll have probably multiple EM contracts in place doing the work, it will be an EM contracting officer supporting the EM Los Alamos office on the ground. I think it goes a long way toward making the relationship more efficient than it is now," Surash added.

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### **EM to Stand Up Los Alamos Field Office on March 22**

EM plans to formally stand up its new Los Alamos field office next week on March 22, acting Assistant EM Secretary Mark Whitney said here this week at the Waste Management conference. EM Associate Deputy Assistant Secretary for Waste Management Christine Gelles will be acting manager of the new office until a permanent manager is appointed, DOE announced last week. “There really won’t be much of a difference at all initially logistically, but we will have Christine in place there leading the office,” Whitney told WC Monitor on the sidelines of the conference. “All the employees, who for the most part are EM employees, will report directly to her and they will report directly to me. So that will streamline that whole reporting process, so that will be very helpful given where we are right now in trying to establish on the contractor side the direct reporting relationship with EM.”

The transition is expected to take a phased approach over the coming months, and DOE is currently recruiting four key new positions for the office, including a field office manager, deputy manager, regulatory specialist and contracting officer. It will also conduct a staffing analysis to “determine what additional resources and skills and bodies we are going to need to get to where we need to be when we take over the contract fully and have a new contractor on board,” Whitney said. “I anticipate there are going to be some additional needs, but we are going to do that staffing analysis first.”

### **New Office Allows Better Integration With Central Characterization Project (CCP) and Los Alamos**

The establishment of the new office “allows NNSA to focus on its core mission and for EM to focus on its core mission of cleanup, which was not the case before these changes being implemented,” EM Deputy Assistant Secretary for Waste Management Frank Marcinowski said at the conference. “By establishing the EM office out at Los Alamos, that I also think it will allow a more complete integration between the (CCP) and the packaging operations out at the site, which I think could have been better than they were. ... The way it was before, there was always this wall of the NNSA act that stood between EM’s oversight of the operations right now, which I don’t think is going to be an impediment anymore.”