



Pueblo of Zuni
Zuni Environmental Protection Program
Native American Lands Environmental Mitigation Program
Gap Filler Annex Restoration Project



PUEBLO OF ZUNI
WEB NOTICE

Abandoned Department of Defense (DoD) Building on Pia Mesa to be Removed

Pueblo of Zuni and the DoD Native American Lands Environmental Mitigation Program (NALEMP) are working together to investigate and restore the Zuni Gap Filler Annex site located approximately 9 miles south of Zuni on Pia Mesa. DoD constructed the radar station in 1958 and abandoned it in 1962. Through a Cooperative Agreement (CA) with DoD, the Zuni Environmental Protection Program (ZEPP) will be conducting a project to investigate potential environmental contamination at the site, identify community concerns, and complete a restoration project which will remove the remaining structures and contaminants.



Zuni Gap Filler Annex (M-94-B) Site on Pia Mesa

Site Inspection (SI) Field Work to Begin Soon

Through the CA, DoD will provide funding for the project. ZEPP anticipates that a contract will be awarded to an environmental contractor in March 2011 to start the initial SI work. The Final SI Report should be completed by November 30, 2011. At that time we will know all of the health and environmental impacts associated with the abandoned DoD site. The initial cultural survey was finalized by Zuni Cultural Resource Enterprise (ZCRE) in November 2010 and reports that the planned project should not have a negative impact on Zuni cultural resources. Based on this information, a restoration plan will be developed and the abandoned building and other structures will be removed by June 1, 2012. If all environmental contamination cannot be removed as part of this project, the Zuni Tribe and USACE will plan the additional work.

Community Relations and Involvement

The project is being conducted under the EPA Comprehensive Environmental Response, Compensation, and Liability Act (CERCLA). A number of community members including private citizens, the grazing lease holder, Zuni Division of Natural Resources personnel, Tribal Council, Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA), and other government representatives were contacted to receive their input during the project's preparation. From United States Army Corps of Engineers (USACE), ZEPP, and community participation, a Community Relations Plan was developed by the Zuni Tribe and approved on December 13, 2010. The Community Relations Plan is being implemented for which this *Pueblo of Zuni Web Notice* is used to help keep the community informed. In addition, ZEPP is issuing a quarterly *NALEMP Newsletter* for which community members can request a copy from ZEPP to obtain up-to-date information on the project. In addition to the *NALEMP Newsletter*, there will be periodic public service announcements, public notices, scheduled meetings, and other distribution of information to keep the community informed.

Potential health and environmental concerns

A SI will identify contaminants that may have negative impact to health and the environment. Contaminants of concern include lead, asbestos, petroleum products, and polychlorinated biphenyls (PCBs). Completion of the Final SI Report in November 2011 will provide us information on the health and environmental impacts. All building debris and contaminants will be removed from the site and disposed of off-reservation in accordance with federal regulations. The SI will be thorough enough to plan for follow-on actions that can safely demolish the structure, and dispose of the debris, as well as determine if a release has occurred from an underground fuel storage tank and its associated piping. This will insure preservation of the springs located in the area.

Gap Filler Annex's Original Use and Present Site Status

Community members contacted during the development of the project's Community Relations Plan expressed concern about the lack of community knowledge of what went on at the Gap Filler Annex. ZEPP has compiled historical information available for the site and will be reported below. The Zuni Gap Filler Annex (M-94-B) Facility is located on approximately four (4) acres of land that was controlled by the DoD between July 1958 and July 1962 through a lease agreement with the Pueblo of Zuni. The site is located approximately 9.5 miles south of the town of Zuni, New Mexico and is accessed via a gravel road.

DoD Gap Filler Annex units were designed for gap filler radar stations which covered gaps between main and auxiliary radar stations because of uneven terrain and other reasons. They once provided a fence or alarm system between main and auxiliary radar stations.

As previously indicated, the DoD leased the Gap Filler site between 1958 and 1962. During the lease period, the DoD constructed and operated an unmanned Gap Filler radar facility at the site, which appears to have been used until October 1960. The facility included one primary cinder-block structure, which housed equipment for radar communications and power

generation. Communications equipment appears to have been housed in the southern portion of the structure and power generation equipment in a separate room in the northern portion of the structure, although information regarding the exact nature, layout, and placement of this equipment is inconclusive. The DoD appears to have removed the radar and power generation equipment from the facility prior to transferring the property back to Zuni control in July 1962.

Available information suggests that up to three generators were housed onsite. Fuel for the generators was stored in an underground storage tank (UST) located north of the primary structure. The UST capacity was reportedly 362 barrels (approximately 11,000 gallons). The specific type of fuel stored in the UST was not identified, but general information regarding Gap Filler radar stations implies that diesel fuel was most likely used. Available information indicates that the UST was removed from the site, but no reports regarding UST closure, site assessment sampling, or disposition of any residual fuel in the UST were identified. The pit where the UST was buried has not been filled.

Other Community Concerns

The primary structure, former UST location and concrete footings from the tower remain at the site. These facilities are located in the approximate center of a 200 to 300 foot clearing, covered with grass and low shrubs. A recently constructed communication station including tower, solar panel, propane tank and equipment are located within a fenced enclosure adjacent to and southwest of the main Zuni Gap Filler Annex (M-94-B) Facility of DoD era. The new facility is a radio repeater station that is owned and operated by the Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA). When the Zuni Gap Filler Annex structure is demolished, ZEPP will ensure that every safeguard is implemented to insure the protection of the BIA Radio Repeater Station and that there is no disruption of radio service to the community.

The Zuni Gap Filler Annex has been described by many within the community as an eyesore and view it that the site should be restored to the pre-1968 condition before the site was developed. Site restoration planning will begin after the SI is completed in November 2011.

Project Questions or Concerns?

If you have any questions regarding the project, its status, findings, or if you have a specific concern, please contact Stephen Beran, ZEPP Manager at 505-782-2484.