

PRESS RELEASE

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U.S. Army Corps of Engineers to hold public meetings regarding proposed closure of Al Black recreation area

ALBUQUERQUE, NM --- The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers will hold two public meetings to gather information from citizens regarding its proposed closure of the Al Black recreation area at the Cochiti Dam Outlet works in Sandoval County. All individuals and agencies who have an interest in this project are encouraged to attend. The first meeting will be held December 3 from 6:00 to 9:00 p.m. at the Pena Blanca Community Center located at 78 Highway 22 in Pena Blanca. The second meeting will be held December 4 from 6:00 to 9:00 p.m. at the Corps' Albuquerque District Headquarters Office located at 4101 Jefferson Pl. NE in Albuquerque.

The Corps is currently preparing an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) for this project. The EIS will address comments received during the public review of the Draft Environmental Assessment (DEA) that was circulated during August 2003 and the comments submitted at a public meeting held in Rio Rancho August 28, 2003.

“The purpose of these meetings is to explain the proposed action, identify resources that should be considered in the EIS and gather pertinent information to assist us in the decision making process,” said Ron Kneebone, the Corps' project manager.

The Corps first announced the proposed closure of the area in February 2002, when

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the Pueblo requested the area be closed to public use. The Corps and the Pueblo have been working collaboratively since 2001 on many issues of mutual interest, including modifying the easement of this portion of Pueblo de Cochiti land.

The Corps plans to complete its draft EIS for circulation by February 1, 2004. It will be sent to federal, state, local agencies, tribes and individuals for comment at that time.