



**Environmental Management (EM)
Nevada Program Activities
Monthly Report to the
Nevada Site Specific Advisory Board (NSSAB)
August 2023**



External Affairs

- NSSAB:
 - Hosted NSSAB Full Board Meeting via hybrid format in Las Vegas, NV, including social media, news release (36,145 subscribers), and newspaper advertising for promotion – July 19, 2023
NOTE: an article and video supplement that was made available to the NSSAB during this meeting on *EM Nevada Visits STEM Education Grant Winner* is available at the end of this report.
- Events/Stakeholders Meetings:
 - Hosted EM Nevada Program Intergovernmental Meeting via hybrid format in Las Vegas, NV (NSSAB leadership attended) – July 19, 2023
 - Hosted Waste Coordination Leadership Group to present a six-month update to the State of Nevada Division of Environmental Protection (NDEP) in Las Vegas, NV. Staff participated from the U.S. Department of Energy (DOE) EM Headquarters, National Nuclear Security Administration/Nevada Field Office (NNSA/NFO), DOE EM Nevada Program, and NDEP. – July 31, 2023
- Publications:
 - Featured in an article and social media, *EM Updates Cleanup 'By the Numbers'* in EM News Flash on July 6, 2023, facts and figures on each major EM site, including the Nevada National Security Sites (NNSS), can be accessed [here](#).
 - The current *EM Strategic Vision: 2023-2033* can be accessed [here](#). NNSS is featured on pages 32-33. [standing item]
- Planned activities for August 2023:
 - NSSAB member to accompany the Radioactive Waste Acceptance Program (RWAP) team to observe a facility evaluation in Idaho Falls, ID, in support of a work plan item – August 7-10, 2023
 - Host Low-Level Waste Stakeholders Forum via hybrid format in Pahrump, NV (NSSAB representative to attend) – August 9, 2023
 - NSSAB member to accompany the RWAP team to observe a facility evaluation in Kingston, TN, in support of a work plan item – August 14-17, 2023

Waste Disposal and Transportation

- Update from previous reports – Gainesville, FL generator. In February 2023, the Radioactive Waste Acceptance Program (RWAP) conducted a facility evaluation that resulted in two Findings. In June 2023, RWAP approved the generator's corrective action plan (CAP) and is awaiting objective evidence that the generator implemented its CAP. In July 2023, RWAP received and reviewed the generator's objective evidence and closed both Findings. (please see March – July 2023 Monthly Reports for more information).
- Update from previous reports – Idaho Falls, ID generator. In May 2023, RWAP conducted an onsite facility evaluation that resulted in one Finding. In June 2023, RWAP submitted its final report, and the generator

has 30 days to respond to the Finding. In July 2023, the generator requested an extension for its response. (please see June – July 2023 Monthly Reports for more information).

- Update from previous report – Albuquerque, NV generator: In June 2023, RWAP conducted an onsite facility evaluation that resulted in one Finding. In July 2023, RWAP submitted its final report, and the generator has 30 days to respond to the Finding (please see July 2023 Monthly Report for more information).
- Update from previous report – Gainesville, FL generator: In June 2023, RWAP conducted an onsite facility evaluation that resulted in one Finding. In July 2023, RWAP submitted its final report, and the generator has 30 days to respond to the Finding. (please see July 2023 Monthly Report for more information).
- In the month of July 2023, RWAP conducted four facility evaluations:
 - Idaho Falls, ID generator: A facility evaluation that resulted in no Findings.
 - Portsmouth, OH generator: A facility evaluation that resulted in one Finding. The generator will have 30 days after receiving RWAP’s report to respond to the Finding.
 - Aberdeen, MD generator: A facility evaluation that resulted in no Findings.
 - Oak Ridge, TN generator: A facility evaluation that resulted in no Findings.
- In the month of August 2023, RWAP will conduct three facility evaluations.
- In the month of August 2023, approximately 74,882 cubic feet of low-level waste (LLW), mixed (MLLW), and classified waste is forecasted for disposal at the NNSS.

Underground Test Area (UGTA) - Groundwater

Corrective Action Unit (CAU) 101/102, Pahute Mesa

In July 2023, planning and development of the Corrective Action Decision Document/Corrective Action Plan for the Pahute Mesa CAUs continued. NDEP provided comments on the Calendar Year 2022 UGTA Annual Sampling Letter Report.

Industrial Sites

CAU 114, Area 25 Engine Maintenance, Assembly, and Disassembly (EMAD) Facility

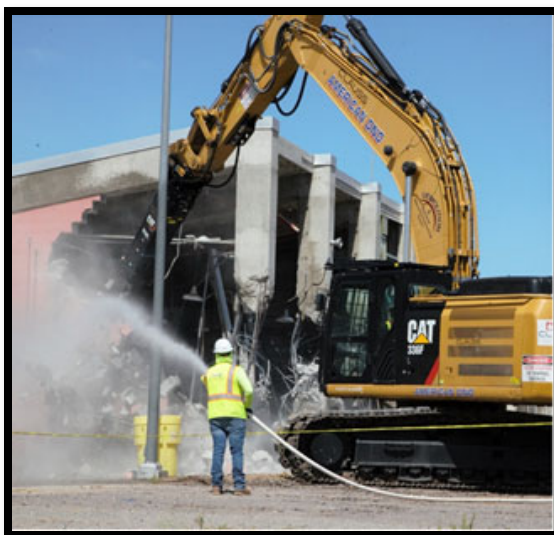
CAU 114 comprises three Corrective Action Sites (CASs) in Area 25 of the NNSS. The Streamlined Approach for Environmental Restoration (SAFER) Plan was approved by NDEP in June 2021. In July 2023, preparation of the facility for eventual demolition continued, and will continue in August 2023.

CAU 572, Test Cell C (TCC) Ancillary Building and Structures

CAU 572 comprises five CASs in Area 25 of the NNSS. The SAFER Plan was approved by NDEP in April 2021. In June 2023, structural demolition of Building 3220 was completed. Demolition of other structures in the TCC compound began in July 2023 and will continue into August 2023 (as access allows).

CAU 578, Miscellaneous Inactive Sites

CAU 578 comprises eleven CASs on the NNSS. The SAFER Plan was submitted to and approved by NDEP in June 2023. Closure work at the CASs occurred in July 2023 and will continue in August 2023.



Crew members have made significant progress toward demolishing four buildings at Test Cell C

Post-Closure Monitoring

Non-Resource Conservation and Recovery Act (RCRA) Post-Closure Monitoring Sites

The Non-RCRA Post-Closure Monitoring Sites include CASs where post-closure inspections and maintenance were performed in accordance with closure requirements. Maintenance and repairs identified during the 2022 annual inspections will continue throughout calendar year 2023. The annual post-closure inspections began in July 2023 and will continue through the calendar year.

RCRA Post-Closure Monitoring Sites

The RCRA Post-Closure Monitoring Sites include seven CAUs where post-closure inspections, monitoring, and maintenance were performed in accordance with the RCRA Permit and closure requirements. In July 2023, required repairs and maintenance identified during the June 2023 inspections were performed and will continue in August 2023.

Groundwater Post-Closure Monitoring

In July 2023, the Draft Addendum to the UGTA Closure Report for Corrective Action Unit 98, Frenchman Flat, was submitted to NDEP for review.

Federal Facility Agreement and Consent Order (FFACO)

The FFACO is a regulatory agreement that identifies sites of potential historic contamination on the NNSS and outlines a strategy and timeline for completing corrective actions. A collaborative effort with all signatories to modify the FFACO is underway to update the main body and appendices. One key change is the identification of the EM Nevada Program as a separate signatory (previously, the EM Nevada Program and NNSA/NFO were represented by NNSA/NFO signature). A new Appendix, VII, was also written to provide a Post-Closure Strategy for closed CAUs that includes processes for transitioning responsibility of FFACO sites to long-term stewards. This extensive revision process was last undertaken when the FFACO was modified in 2010. The proposed changes in progress further solidify the Department's commitment to long-term environmental protection and support the evolution of the EM Nevada Program mission.

EM Nevada Visits STEM Education Grant Winner

By Grant Johnson, Navarro



Industrial Sites Manager Jason Sofie helps students with designing mazes and coding at Walter Bracken STEAM Academy.

The merits of a science-based education grant were on full display recently at a Las Vegas school where fifth graders are now operating robots using computer coding skills.

The children at Walter Bracken STEAM Academy learned to program the robots thanks to the \$3,000 grant aimed at promoting education in science, technology, engineering, and math in communities near the Nevada National Security Sites (NNSS). The Community Commitment Grant was awarded by Navarro Research and Engineering, an independent contractor to the U.S. Department of Energy (DOE) Environmental Management Nevada (EM) Program.

“What this is doing is introducing the students to coding,” said Jason Sofie, a Navarro Industrial Sites Manager who works in the EM Nevada Program.

Sofie, during a May 19 visit to the fifth-grade classroom of teacher Kirsten Graham, was impressed by how quickly the students picked up programming skills.

“It’s introducing them to (lots of new) possibilities so when they step out of this classroom, now in the back of their minds (they are asking themselves), ‘What can I code?’” Sofie said.

The school used the \$3,000 to purchase a set of Spheros educational robots for Mrs. Graham’s class. Students first started learning computer coding techniques in the fall, but the arrival of the Spheros in March provided the opportunity for kids to gain hands-on experience.

The morning of the visit was the second to last day of the school year and the room was a flurry of activity. Students gathered into groups and worked together to build mazes from paper and tape. They used

iPads to code movement for the Spheros with the goal of navigating the mazes. Students could also adjust speed and time on their devices.

“It’s fantastic. The kids are working collaboratively, they’re communicating, they’re problem solving,” said Mrs. Graham.

One student named John said he was contemplating the possibilities for him in the coding field given what he’d learned.

“The fact that you have artificial intelligence in your hands that you can control. It makes you think, ‘What else can you do?’” the boy said.

Another student named Lauren said she was so excited about the robots that she wanted to continue learning about coding at home.

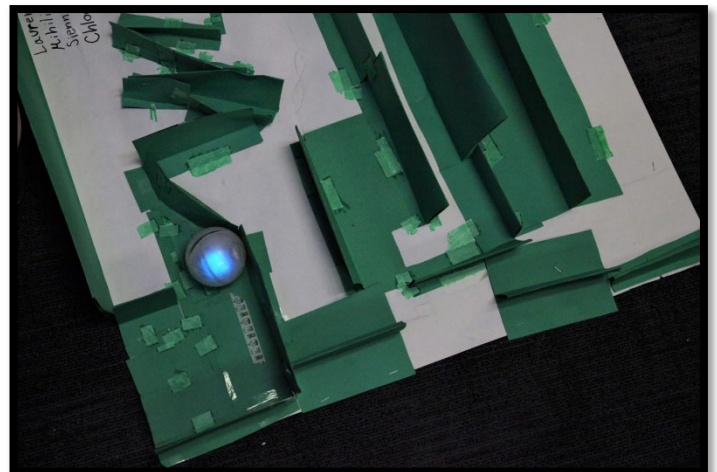
“I’m begging my parents to get me a Spheros for my birthday!” Lauren said.

Sofie was joined at the event by Nevada Site Specific Advisory Board Chair Anthony Graham and Board Administrator Barbara Ulmer. The grant program, in its second year, was created to support educational activities related to science, technology, engineering, and math in communities near the NNSS. Three 2022 grant recipients were selected from a pool of applications through a blind-scoring process that evaluated total benefit to student learning. Upon close examination of the top three finalists, all three were funded for a combined total of \$8,000.

The Navarro Community Commitment Grant is open to public, private, and charter schools in the counties of Clark, Elko, Esmeralda, Lincoln, Nye, and White Pine in Nevada. The grant application window for 2024 will reopen in the fall.



Mrs. Graham’s 5th grade class works on their mazes.



A look at a Spheros robot navigating a maze.

Video Supplement

Click here for a short video of the Walter Bracken visit that was created as a complement to the article:

https://youtu.be/uLt8x_YlnH8