

## **LandTrek—A Roadmap to Transfer, Reuse, and Environmental Knowledge**

**John Lee\***

As U.S. Department of Energy (DOE) and U.S. Department of Defense (DOD) missions change, the cleanup of contaminated properties and the transfer and reuse of Federal lands creates issues for all stakeholders. LandTrek provides answers and solutions to the many questions that arise and encourages the participation of all stakeholders.

LandTrek is a program that offers a pool of experienced individuals and a set of project management, decision-enabling, and communications tools and "roadmaps" on an interactive World Wide Web site that can assist with the closure and transfer of government-owned land and facilities to other government agencies and to the private sector. This program is designed to assist decision-makers and stakeholders through the agency, regulatory, and legal processes that begin with identification of potentially available land and facilities.

A 27-member group representing Federal, State, commercial, regulatory, financial, and stakeholder organizations initially conceived LandTrek through a cooperative effort. In 1994, DOE and DoD provided funding and direction to develop LandTrek. Following a successful peer review in 1998, DOE increased its funding for field pilot projects in California, Colorado, and Idaho. A critical needs assessment and a quality assurance evaluation were completed in June 1999, and the recommended improvements were implemented.

New project sites have been added to LandTrek each year and the website, **[www.landtrek.org](http://www.landtrek.org)**, is constantly being updated to reflect the needs and new information about each site. Currently, the LandTrek website is shared by six sites: Vandenburg Air Force Base, California; Brookhaven National Laboratory, New York; DOE Grand Junction Office, Grand Junction, Colorado; DOE Miamisburg Environmental Management Project, Ohio; and Idaho National Engineering and Environmental Laboratory, Idaho.

With the interest in LandTrek growing, more DOE sites and sites from other agencies are expected to participate. An increasing number of people from different government agencies and contracting organizations have gained first-hand experience with site closure, land transfer and reuse projects from beginning to end. These individuals, who are located across the nation, are becoming assets with their pools of expertise in these critical areas. Because their valuable experience, knowledge, and lessons learned are being documented through LandTrek, this information is available to assist others who are involved in site closure/land transfer/reuse projects at any point in the process.

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\* Deputy Director, Livermore Environmental Programs Division, U.S. DOE Oakland Operations Office, Oakland, California; Ph: 510-637-1598; E:mail: [john.lee@oak.doe.gov](mailto:john.lee@oak.doe.gov)

The LandTrek website offers tools to help project managers promote collaborative decision making, select cost-effective solutions, benefit from lessons learned, gather data, manage or mitigate project risks, establish due-diligence record keeping, and create shared ownership of cleanup decisions. Through personal interaction and/or web-based roadmaps, LandTrek can help stakeholders and decision-makers involved in the closure and transfer of Federal land navigate through the regulatory and legal processes that begin with identification of potentially available land and facilities. This increased, readily accessible information and stakeholder interaction can contribute to increased public confidence in the agencies.

The LandTrek website features improved access to information with a general guidance and reference section, a library resource, checklist templates for site closure, land transfer and reuse activities, links to lessons learned, search capabilities, and several project sites. Information about the project sites includes project schedules, building descriptions and photographs, interactive discussion forums, geographical/ground water information, and status charts that relate to land reuse or transfer activities for DOE and DoD facilities. Brownfields projects and other State and U.S. Environmental Protection Agency land reuse and transfer projects are also being considered for the LandTrek program.

In addition to providing a means for communication and record keeping, LandTrek is also a tool to organize and condense large amounts of project information and provide, in plain language, explanations of all the supporting documentation for a project. LandTrek is designed to be useful to a diverse community of interests, including Federal, state, and local regulatory and government agencies responsible for site cleanup and land reuse activities.

Those who would find LandTrek useful include

- DOE and DoD project managers.
- Community members, public advocates, and community organizations.
- Environmental consultants and contractors.
- Technology developers, scientists, and researchers.
- Potential land purchasers and their representatives.
- Financial lenders, trust departments, and portfolio managers.
- Redevelopment and economic development agencies and other Federal land management resource agencies.
- Public and private organizations that are affected by or can support the land-reuse life cycle at Federal facilities.

One of the pilot sites that will be highlighted is an Internet GIS application being developed in partnership with Brookhaven National Laboratory. The Brookhaven National Laboratory Groundwater Monitoring Pilot Phase II is the “next generation” of the BNL Environmental Information Management System (EIMS). It is critical to compliance with laws, and rapid response to potential facility-related releases. This activity will develop a suite of Web-based tools to access, view, report and interpret site environmental data from an existing database. The project provides an integrated set of user-friendly, visually-oriented, customized query/reporting tools for stakeholders including facility managers, Environmental Compliance Representatives, Public Affairs, DOE and the public. EIMS is a complex, relational Geographic Information

System (GIS) database. It is now the integrated sole repository for thousands of environmental monitoring data points.

In FY00, BNL began participating in the LandTrek project. Brookhaven focused its LandTrek pilot project on providing a limited environmental monitoring dataset to regulators, the public and BNL facility users on the Internet, in a user-friendly and timely manner. To obtain input regarding the content and format for the pilot, focus group meetings were held with staff and local stakeholders, including regulators, local civic groups, and neighbors. Based on their input, a phased approach was developed. During Phase I, the project focused on presenting results from select onsite groundwater monitoring wells associated with active operational or support facilities. The Phase I website (<http://www.landtrek.org/LandTrek/Projects/bnl/bnl.cfm>) is currently available; Phase II will be available for testing and release during the second half of 2001. Phase II extends the data presented from 13 monitoring wells to over 1000 and increases the number of analyte records from approximately 450 to over 300,000. The web application offers true GIS functionality through a browser providing public access to data previously limited to internal users with specialized software. Users will be able to view quarterly monitoring data in table and graph formats directly from the BNL site map or through a customized query tool. This pilot effort is being supported as a potential model for future long-term stewardship efforts.

If you want more information or want to participate in the LandTrek Program, visit the LandTrek home page on the World Wide Web at [www.landtrek.org](http://www.landtrek.org).

