

Environmental Sustainability Board Update to Los Alamos County Council

Joseph Chandler, Chair
Angelica Gurule, ESB Staff Liaison

October 22, 2024



Environmental Sustainability Board Members

Left to Right (Back Row): Jesse Deringer, Joe Chandler, Jyl DeHaven

Left to Right (Front Row): Rebecca Paley-Williams, Shannon Blair, Sue Barns

The Environmental Sustainability Board

Purpose: The Environmental Sustainability Board (ESB) was established to serve as the central point of contact for environmental sustainability issues and as an advisory body to the County Council on environmental sustainability issues.

The ESB gathers and provides citizen input to staff and council on ways to improve the county's environmental sustainability.

Authorization: The County Council adopted Ordinance 02-094 in June 2008 establishing the Environmental Sustainability Board. The scope of work was realigned on March 14, 2023. County Council voted that the ESB work with the new Sustainability Manager in support of implementing the recommendations of LARES. The charter language would not need to be changed but the Board staff Liaison would be the Sustainability Manager and ESB would then fall under the County Manager's Office for support.

The ESB currently has three teams:

- Los Alamos Sustainability Alliance (formerly Zero Waste Los Alamos)
- Bee City Team/Seed Library
- Baling Twine Working Group

2024 ESB Accomplishments

- A defining accomplishment for 2024 is work done in relation to the Climate Action Plan (CAP). The board's work on this topic required several sessions focused on development of materials and engagement with the community. We sought to maximize public involvement in the process by hosting a community workshop and taking comments on materials. This culminated with a presentation to council.
- Supported the Bee City Resolution.
- Developed and implemented a community engagement plan to maximize public involvement.
- Established a working group to research feasibility of Baling twine recycling for Los Alamos County.
- Continued supporting and monitoring implementation of the Yard Trimming Roll Cart Program to 73% of households and diverted 668 tons of yard trimming material as of Sept. 2024.
- Continued implementing Los Alamos Sustainability Alliance Initiatives, which included: Maintained the Sustainability Alliance Facebook group, published articles in PEEC Nature Notes as well as published monthly Sustainability Alliance articles and tips focused on food waste prevention, backyard composting and other waste reduction methods.
- Reviewed and approved the 2024 Work Plan.



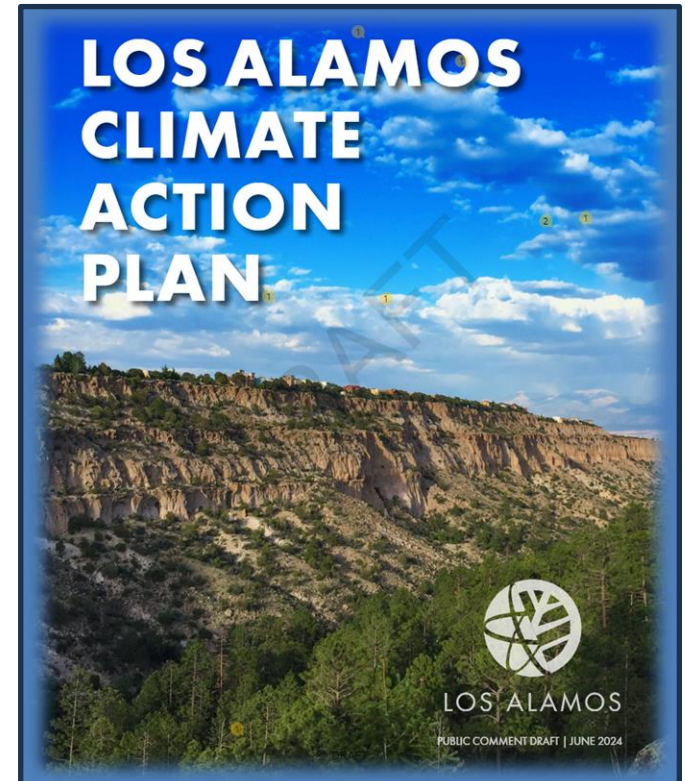
2024 ESB Events and Outreach



- PEEC Earth Day Festival
- County Earth Day Celebration
- Farmer's Market Booths
- Summer Concert Series
- DPU/PEEC Water Festival
- Bee City Facebook Page
- Los Alamos Sustainability Alliance Facebook Page
- Leadership Los Alamos Environmental Day
- Climate Action Plan community engagement meeting
- Clean Up Los Alamos Day at Canyon Rim Trail
- Recruitment efforts for new board members

2024 Presentations to ESB

- **Open Meetings Act and Inspection of Public Records** by Katie Thwait
- **Heating Alternatives to Natural Gas** by Hermann Geppert-Kleinrath
- **Biosolid Composting Operation Update** by Josh Silva
- **Baling Twine Recycling** by Lisa Reader
- **Discuss the Design and Implementation of Climate Action Plan Survey** by Julie Williams-Hill and Angelica Gurule
- **How to Build Bicycle Infrastructure and Projects in Los Alamos County** - by Hermann Geppert-Kleinrath
- **Solar Rule E-5 Change Overview** by Karen Kendall and Ben Olbrich
- **Baling Twine Working Group Presentation** by Shannon Blair
- **Presentation of Draft Climate Action Plan** by Cascadia Consulting
- **Overview of the Harnessing Transformational Technologies (HTT) Symposium on "Confronting the Threats of Climate Change to Global Security"** by Angelica Gurule and Paula Paciorek
- **The Challenges of Energy, Climate and Sustainability - A Look at Macro Trends and Data** by Joseph Chandler



Los Alamos Sustainability Alliance



Activities include:

- Ongoing activity coordination and support between Alliance members and agencies (PEEC, DPU Energy and Water Conservation, LAC Environmental Services, LAPS, LA Daily Post, Bee City, Community Seed Library, Gaia's Pantry (food rescue), Sustainability Manager, ESB).
- Support Sustainability Manager in formulating and providing content for new LAC Sustainability Newsletter and website of resources for residents.
- Produced short video on "Four Actions with Impact" with PAC-8 to be shown at SALA and other venues.
- Participated in outreach on CAP, recycling and food waste prevention at Farmer's Market, concert and festival booths.
- Maintained LASA Facebook page and contributed content.
- Contributed sustainability articles to LA Daily Post.

Los Alamos Sustainability Alliance



Search



Eat More
Plant-Based
Food



Get
Solar
Power

Four Actions with Impact



Electrify
Heating
and Cooling



Improve
Energy
Efficiency

LOS ALAMOS
where discoveries are made

0:01 / 0:58



Four Actions with Impact



Los Alamos County
78 subscribers



Bee City Accomplishments and Activities

- Established monthly newsletter and website.
- Staffed tables at several events to provide seeds, plants and information.
- Organized or participated in several public talks, movies, hikes, workshops, seed collection/swaps, farm tours and conferences.
- Held volunteer days to maintain and plant native plants at Mesa Public Library and other locations.
- Obtained \$100k grant funding to hire staff and provide kits and education for “Backyard Pollinator Project”.
- Established Pollinator Demo Garden; planned Fire Safe Pollinator Demo Garden.





Future Plans/Priorities

2025 Work Plan Overview

Current Priorities

New

- Work to implement council priorities including Climate Action Plan, enhancing climate literacy, and advise on EV Fleet Conversion Plan and Community-Wide EV Plan

Ongoing

- Enhance community education and outreach on sustainability initiatives.
- Continue to research, update, revise and modify items in line with community priorities.
- Continue monitoring waste diversions, yard trimmings, and recyclables for the county.
- Strengthen relationship with the Board of Public Utilities and the Department of Public Utilities as they implement measures to electrify fleet vehicles and reduce carbon emissions.
- Contribute as appropriate to the implementation of the municipal food composting program and receive regular updates.
- Investigate and advance additional topics in sustainability like use of plastics, de-icing materials, and alternative energy sources for use in the county.

Future ESB Events & Outreach Ideas

Future:

- Collaborate with LAHS Eco Club
- Farmer's Market Booths
- Science Festival
- Conservation Conversations
- County Fair
- Environmental Awareness Film Screenings
- Los Alamos Summer Concert Series
- Clean Up LA Day 2025
- Earth Day 2025
- DPU and PEEC Water Festival (May 2025)



Challenges and Opportunities

Challenges:

- Finding ways to assist in implementing recommendations from the Climate Action Plan and ensuring alignment with community priorities.
- Increasing educational initiatives across the community to raise awareness of important environmental concepts and practices.
- Helping to bridge the gap between environmental quality goals and practical cost proposals for implementation.

Opportunities:

- Opportunities exist for more collaboration between the board and County Council to report on progress and gauge the community's pulse on sustainability topics.
- Potential to use the board to help secure additional grants or funding to implement proposals.
- Work to identify common sense initiatives and implement proposals without polarizing the community.

What would the County Council like help with?



Questions

