Builders place final beam in first phase of CMRR project at Los Alamos National Laboratory

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LOS ALAMOS, New Mexico, July 22, 2008— Workers hoisted the final steel beam atop the skeleton of what will be the Radiological Laboratory Utility Office Building at Los Alamos National Laboratory Tuesday morning, marking a milestone for the first of three phases in the multiyear Chemistry and Metallurgy Research Replacement Project (CMRR).

At the “topping-out” ceremony, Laboratory leaders, including Director Michael Anastasio and Deputy Director Jan Van Prooyen and representatives from local building trades, penned their signatures in ink on the capstone piece of the “Rad Lab” at Technical Area 55 before it was put in place.

Austin Commercial Contractors LP of Dallas received the “design-build” contract in November 2005, and the project broke ground on January 12, 2006.

The building will house several of the Lab’s mission-critical projects – analytical chemistry, materials characterization, and actinide research and development capabilities – set to be relocated from their current location in the five-decade-old Chemical and Metallurgy Research building at Technical Area 3.

This first phase of a three-phase project also calls for the construction of the Nuclear Laboratory Facility building to further the mission of the National Nuclear Security Administration, as well as the specialized engineering of each building’s equipment, said Rick Holmes, CMRR project manager. Designers have planned a tunnel that will connect the two structures.

“The construction of both buildings is necessary to sustain the long-term plutonium research and development at the Lab for the next 50 years,” Holmes added.

Expected to be structurally completed by September 2009, the $164 million Radiation Laboratory Utility Office Building will then go through another two years of equipment installation. Between 2009 and 2011, Lab operations will begin in the new building’s facilities, which will include a radiological laboratory, a training center, two simulation labs, and cleared and uncleared office space for some 350 Lab personnel.

Leaders of the CMRR effort expect the project to be fully completed within the next 10 years with a total projected cost of approximately $2 billion.

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