

Cleaning Up Soil

National Aeronautics and
Space Administration



AT THE SANTA SUSANA FIELD LAB

Background:

- The Santa Susana Field Laboratory (SSFL) is located in the Simi Hills, about thirty miles northwest of downtown Los Angeles, CA.
- The SSFL opened in 1948 as a rocket engine research and testing facility and played a significant role in the development of the nation's space flight program.
- NASA administers and is responsible for cleaning up approximately 450 acres of the 2,850-acre SSFL site.
- Research and testing activities have ceased, and cleanup activities are underway to remove chemicals in the environment that remain from past operations.



Environmental Review Process:



Federal law required NASA to complete a Supplemental Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) to evaluate the environmental impacts of soil cleanup alternatives at SSFL, including the 2010 Administrative Order on Consent (AOC) cleanup agreement with the California Department of Toxic Substances Control (DTSC) using the Look-up Table values established by DTSC in 2013. In October 2020, NASA issued a Record of Decision (ROD) documenting NASA's decision to proceed with a soil cleanup at SSFL using Suburban Residential cleanup standards.



What is a Suburban Residential Cleanup?

- Is protective of public health and the environment and is consistent with risk-based standards applied by the DTSC throughout the State of California and is the cleanup approach used by the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) across the nation.
- Would remove about 90% as much contamination as an AOC cleanup, yet require 70% less soil to be excavated and transported offsite.
- Preserves the site's natural, historic, and Native American cultural resources.
- Allows for restoration of the natural habitat.
- Can be completed in 8 years compared to 25 years for an AOC cleanup.

Next Steps:

NASA is eager to begin soil cleanup as soon as DTSC completes their Programmatic Environmental Impact Report (PEIR) and approves NASA's cleanup plans.

