

would produce the highest potential accident impact, primarily due to the design of SHEBA. The potential annual risk of excess latent cancer fatalities among the population at the alternative sites ranges from 7.7×10^{-10} (NTS Alternative) to 2.2×10^{-7} (SNL/NM Alternative).

There would be no hazardous chemicals or explosives used or stored at existing and relocated TA-18 facilities, other than minor industrial quantities, that would impact workers or the public under accident conditions.

Environmental Justice

Based on the analysis of all resource areas and demographic information on low-income and minority populations, NNSA does not expect any environmental related issues (*i.e.*, the projected impacts are not disproportionately high and adverse for minority or low income populations) from TA-18 activities under all alternatives.

Comments on the Final EIS

NNSA distributed approximately twelve hundred copies of the Final EIS for review and to date, has received only two comments on the EIS. Both individuals were concerned that the relocation of the TA-18 missions would be a threat to national security through the loss of existing resources presently located at LANL. Both individuals indicated that these resources, especially experienced personnel, had been built up over a number of years and would not be present at another location.

Other Decision Factors

In assessing the alternatives for Security Category I/II missions, the NNSA considered other key factors such as programmatic impacts, construction risk, security concerns and overall cost.

Programmatic Risk

Due to the importance of the TA-18 missions in the Nation's overall security posture, the potential risk of programmatic impacts were assessed by reviewing the ability for each alternative to meet programmatic requirements and to determine the degree of synergy each option provided the mission set. While all alternatives met the basic program requirements, it was determined that the LANL New Facility and NTS Alternatives were more advantageous than SNL and ANL-W for minimizing programmatic risk to Security Category I/II activities. First, LANL New Facility and NTS offered improved security and operating flexibility that would allow for the accomplishment of

programmatic work for the next few decades due to facility age and location. Additionally, LANL and NTS provided programmatic synergy as both sites have existing mission requirements that complement the TA-18 mission set. SNL had increased programmatic risk because of the age of the facilities that would be modified under the alternative. ANL-W was determined to have the highest programmatic risk because it was no longer an NNSA site, had minimal programmatic synergy (namely through criticality research and training) and its remote location. The No Action and TA-18 Upgrade Alternatives were recognized to minimize programmatic risk initially, but would have increasing difficulty in meeting requirements, as the TA-18 facilities would reach the end of their useful life and operational/security requirements evolved.

Construction Risk

NNSA considered the risk from construction activities for the alternatives, taking into account the concepts proposed for each alternative. Factors that were examined included the age of the existing facility (if modifications would occur), the extent of modifications, and the complexity of designs. From this examination, it was determined that the NTS offered the least construction risk from the standpoint of facility age, design complexity, and extent of modifications. The NTS Alternative was based on a facility that was designed to modern safety standards as opposed to the TA-18 Upgrade, SNL, and ANL-W Alternatives that were based on refurbishing multiple buildings that approached 30-40 years in age. As with modifying buildings of this age, NNSA has found from past experience that there is inherently more risk from discovering unknown design aspects of the buildings. Finally, the LANL New Facility Alternative, while providing the newest location for the TA-18 missions, offered moderate construction risk due to the nature of the underground design.

Costs

In reviewing the overall costs associated with relocation of the TA-18 Security Category I/II missions, it was determined that most options fell within a similar cost range when considering construction, transportation, and project management activities as well as lifecycle costs with a few exceptions. Preliminary relocation cost estimates indicated that the NTS Alternative was the lowest from a construction standpoint, but there was a potential for slightly higher lifecycle costs from

operating activities due to the campaign structure proposed. Additionally, NTS as well as SNL and ANL-W had higher transportation costs associated with their alternative from off-site movement of materials than with the LANL options. The highest cost estimate was associated with the TA-18 Upgrade Alternative, driven by the current age of the TA-18 complex and uncertainties with future operational and security facility requirements. The remaining alternatives fell between these extremes, showing slight differences between them in terms of construction and lifecycle costs.

Mitigation Measures

Impacts were sufficiently small to negate the need for specific mitigative actions. This is not to say that the NNSA will not implement the normal storm water run-off control measures, waste minimization programs and other such normal activities so as to minimize adverse impacts to the environment, wherever possible.

Conclusion

NNSA has considered environmental impacts, stakeholders concerns, risks, costs, and national policy in its decisions regarding the relocation of TA-18 Security Category I/II missions and activities and has decided to implement the preferred alternative, transfer of missions to the Device Assembly Facility at the Nevada Test Site. At this time, the NNSA does not issue a decision regarding location of TA-18 Security Category III/IV missions and activities within LANL; however, additional studies will be performed and a separate record of decision will be issued sometime in 2003.

Issued in Washington, DC, this 5th day of December, 2002.

Linton Brooks,

Acting Administrator, National Nuclear Security Administration.

[FR Doc. 02-32995 Filed 12-30-02; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 6450-01-P

DEPARTMENT OF ENERGY

National Nuclear Security Administration, Los Alamos Site Office

Floodplain Statement of Findings for the Proposed Installation of a Multiple Permeable Reactive Barrier Within Mortandad Canyon at Los Alamos National Laboratory, Los Alamos, NM

AGENCY: National Nuclear Security Administration, Los Alamos Site Office, Department of Energy.

ACTION: Floodplain statement of findings.

SUMMARY: This floodplain statement of findings is for the construction of a multiple permeable reactive barrier (PRB) at Los Alamos National Laboratory (LANL). The PRB will be placed across a floodplain area within Mortandad Canyon, located within the central eastern portion of LANL. In accordance with 10 CFR part 1022, the Department of Energy (DOE), National Nuclear Security Administration (NNSA) Los Alamos Site Office has prepared a floodplain/wetland assessment and will perform this proposed action in a manner so as to minimize potential harm to or within the affected floodplain.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Elizabeth Withers, U.S. Department of Energy, National Nuclear Security Administration, Los Alamos Site Office, 528 35th Street, Los Alamos, NM 87544. Telephone (505) 667-8690, facsimile (505) 667-9998; or electronic address: ewithers@doeal.gov. For further information on general DOE floodplain environmental review requirements, contact: Carol M. Borgstrom, Director, Office of NEPA Policy and Compliance, EH-42, Department of Energy, 1000 Independence Avenue, SW., Washington DC 20585-0119. Telephone (202) 586-4600 or (800) 472-2756, facsimile (202) 586-7031.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: In accordance with DOE regulations for compliance with floodplain and wetlands environmental review requirements (10 CFR part 1022), NNSA prepared a floodplain/wetland assessment for this action. The NNSA published a notice of floodplain involvement (Volume 67, Number 236). This notice announced that the floodplain/wetland assessment document was available for a 15-day review period and that copies of the document could be obtained by contacting Ms. Withers at the above address, and that copies of the document were available for review at two public DOE reading rooms in Los Alamos and Albuquerque, New Mexico. No comments were received from the **Federal Register** notice on the proposed floodplain action.

Project Description: In November 2002, NNSA considered a proposal for constructing a PRB system at a narrow constriction in Mortandad Canyon within LANL where contaminated groundwater is confined to a small cross-section of alluvial materials (see figure 1). The entire PRB structure would extend about 120 feet from side-wall to side-wall within the canyon

bottom. The PRB would consist of a "funnel and gate" system to direct contaminated groundwater into a centrally-located gate area of reactive materials. The impermeable funnel would be constructed of sheet piling driven to a depth of approximately 27 feet on either side of the canyon. The permeable gate would contain multiple buried cells of selected media designed to react with and reduce the concentration of contaminants in groundwater passing through the gate. The PRB would be left in place for about 5 years and its function would be monitored through a system of shallow monitoring wells that would be installed at the same time the PRB was constructed. Construction of the PRB and associated monitoring wells will commence in 2003 and be completed in less than 6 months.

Alternatives: Alternative locations for the PRB were considered but eliminated from future consideration. A combination of site factors was considered that lead to the identification of the proposed site as being the least disruptive to existing environmental resources in the area.

Floodplain Impacts: The proposed action would have the potential for minimal impacts to the floodplain. Should a rain event occur during this activity, there may be some sediment movement down canyon because of the loosened condition of the soil from the clearing and construction activities.

Floodplain Mitigation: Impacts to the floodplain would be minimized by following Best Management Practices at the construction area (such as the placement of silt fences, straw bales or wattles, or wooden or rock structures to slow down water runoff and run-on at cleared sites). Post-construction reseeding and re-vegetation along the sides of the stream channel will minimize soil disturbance and reduce or prevent the potential for soil erosion. No debris will be left at the work site. No vehicle maintenance or fueling would occur within 100 feet of the stream channel. Any sediment movement from the site would be short term and temporary.

Issued in Los Alamos on December 20, 2002.

Ralph E. Erickson,

Manager, U.S. Department of Energy,
National Nuclear Security Administration,
Los Alamos Site Office.

[FR Doc. 02-32996 Filed 12-30-02; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 6450-01-P

ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY

[FRL-7433-8]

EPA Science Advisory Board; Notification of Public Advisory Committee Meetings

1. Summary

(a) *Action*—Pursuant to the Federal Advisory Committee Act, Public Law 92-463, notice is hereby given that the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) Science Advisory Board (SAB) has established the Science and Technology Review Panel (S&TRP) to review EPA's Science and Technology Budget Request for 2004. This notice solicits comments from the public on the panel that has been established. Also being announced is a series of meetings in January, February, and March 2003 during which the Panel will conduct the review (dates and times are noted below and all times noted are Eastern Time). All meetings will be open to the public, however, seating is limited and available on a first come basis. *Important Notice:* Documents that are the subject of SAB reviews are normally available from the originating EPA office and are not available from the SAB Office—information concerning availability of documents from the relevant Program Office is included below.

(b) *Background*—The Office of Research and Development (ORD) is viewed as the lead science office at EPA, however, only about half of the science conducted by the Agency is performed by ORD. Each of the Program Offices and Regions conduct scientific activities which range from risk assessments to laboratory analyses. To ensure that the science conducted at EPA is well planned, organized and coordinated, EPA has, since 1999, requested that the SAB review and comment on the entire EPA Science and Technology budget. Prior to that time the SAB's Research Strategies Advisory Committee had conducted an annual review of the Office of Research and Development's R&D budget request.

The EPA SAB's mission is to provide independent advice on the scientific and technical information used to support the Agency's actions to implement its own mission of protecting human health and safeguarding the natural environment. SAB advice is given on a wide ranging set of programs and Agency science and technical products (e.g., science programs, guidelines, documents, methodologies, protocols, tests, criteria documents, standards for protection of human