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Information about the Department's funding opportunities, including copies of application notices for discretionary grant competitions, can be viewed on the Department's electronic bulletin board (ED Board), telephone (202) 260-9950; on the Internet Gopher Server (at [gopher://gcs.ed.gov/](http://gcs.ed.gov/)); or on the World Wide Web (at <http://gcs.ed.gov/>). This information can also be viewed on the Rehabilitation Services Administration's electronic bulletin board, telephone (202) 401-6147. However, the official application notice for a discretionary grant competition is the notice published in the Federal Register.

Program Authority: 29 U.S.C. 711(c) and 750.

Dated: December 13, 1996.

Judith E. Heumann,

Assistant Secretary for Special Education and Rehabilitative Services.

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BILLING CODE 4000-01-P

DEPARTMENT OF ENERGY

Storage and Disposition of Weapons-Usable Fissile Materials Final Programmatic Environmental Impact Statement

AGENCY: Department of Energy.

ACTION: Notice of availability.

SUMMARY: The Department of Energy (DOE) announces the availability of the Final Programmatic Environmental Impact Statement for the Storage and Disposition of Weapons-Usable Fissile Materials (S&D Final PEIS) (DOE/EIS-0229). In accordance with the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969 (NEPA), the Council on Environmental Quality regulations (40 CFR Parts 1500-1508), and the Department's NEPA Implementation Procedures (10 CFR Part 1021), the Department has prepared the S&D PEIS to evaluate alternatives for the storage of weapons-usable fissile materials and the disposition of surplus plutonium.

DATES: A Record of Decision on the Storage and Disposition program will be issued no earlier than January 13, 1997. The Department will consider and reflect, as appropriate, in the Record of

Decision any comments received before issuance of the Record of Decision.

ADDRESSES: To request copies of the S&D Final PEIS, copies of the Summary, technical reports or other information; or to provide comments on the S&D Final PEIS write to: United States Department of Energy, Office of Fissile Materials Disposition, P.O. Box 23786, Washington, DC 20026-3786. Written (Facsimile) and oral requests and comments can also be submitted using the toll free line at 1-800-820-5156. Facsimiles should be marked Storage and Disposition Final PEIS.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: For information on DOE's National Environmental Policy Act process, please contact: Ms. Carol Borgstrom, Director, Office of NEPA Policy and Assistance (EH-42), U.S. Department of Energy, 1000 Independence Avenue, SW, Washington, D.C. 20585, 202-586-4600 or leave a message at 1-800-472-2756.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

Availability of the S&D Final PEIS

Copies of the S&D Final PEIS (over 4,000 pages in four volumes plus a summary) have been distributed to Federal, State, Indian tribal, and local officials; interested agencies; organizations; and individuals. The S&D Final PEIS summary is available, along with numerous other Fissile Materials Disposition Program documents on the program's Electronic Bulletin Board/World Wide Web Page (<http://web.fie.com/htdoc/fed/doe/fsl/pub/menu/any/>). Copies of the S&D Final PEIS, summary and supporting technical reports are available to the public at the DOE Reading Rooms listed at the end of this notice.

Background

On March 8, 1996, the Department published a Notice of Availability (NOA) in the Federal Register (61 FR 9443) on the Storage and Disposition of Weapons-Usable Fissile Materials Draft Environmental Impact Statement for public review and comment. The NOA invited the public to comment on the draft PEIS during a 45 day comment period that was to end on May 7, 1996. Subsequently, in response to public requests, the Department announced in the Federal Register (61 FR 22038; May 13, 1996) an extension of the comment period until June 7, 1996. Public workshops on the draft PEIS were held in Denver, CO on March 26, 1996; Las Vegas, NV on March 28 and 29, 1996; Oak Ridge, TN on April 2, 1996; Richland, WA on April 11, 1996; Idaho Falls, ID on April 15, 1996; Washington,

DC on April 17 and 18, 1996; Amarillo, TX on April 22 and 23, 1996; and North Augusta, SC on April 30, 1996.

Alternatives Considered

Storage: The S&D Final PEIS assesses the environmental impacts of four alternatives, and a No Action alternative, for the storage of weapons-usable fissile materials. The action alternatives are Upgrade at Multiple Sites alternative, Consolidate Storage of Plutonium alternative, Collocation of Plutonium and Highly Enriched Uranium alternative and a combination of the other alternatives. The S&D PEIS also analyzed sub-alternatives. The candidate sites for implementation of the alternatives are Hanford, Nevada Test Site, Idaho National Engineering Laboratory, Pantex Plant, Oak Ridge Reservation, and Savannah River Site. Each of these alternatives, except for the No Action alternative, would phaseout the storage of weapons-usable fissile materials at the Rocky Flats Environmental Technology Site.

Disposition: The S&D Final PEIS assesses the environmental impacts of nine action alternatives in three categories and a No Action alternative for the disposition of up to 50 metric tons of plutonium that has been or in the future may be declared surplus to national security needs. The PEIS analyzed the Deep Borehole category (two alternatives—Direct Disposition and Immobilization); the Immobilization category (three alternatives—Vitrification, Ceramic Immobilization, and Electrometallurgical Treatment); and the Reactor category (four alternatives—Existing Light Water Reactors, Partially Completed Light Water Reactors, Evolutionary Light Water Reactors and CANDU Reactors) and the No Action alternative. The preferred alternative (a combination of the above alternatives) was also analyzed.

Preferred Alternative

The Department's preferred alternative is to reduce, over time, the number of locations where plutonium and highly enriched uranium (HEU) are stored, and to pursue a disposition strategy that allows for immobilization of the surplus plutonium in glass or ceramic forms and use of surplus plutonium in mixed oxide (MOX) fuel at existing domestic reactors.

Regarding storage, the Department's preferred alternative involves:

- Phasing out storage of all weapons-usable plutonium at Rocky Flats Environmental Technology Site (RFETS) beginning in 1997; moving pits to Pantex, and moving Rocky Flats'

separated and stabilized non-pit materials to Savannah River Site (SRS) when the expansion of the planned Actinide Packaging and Storage Facility (APSF) is complete.

- Upgrading storage facilities at Zone 12 South at Pantex to store those pits currently stored at Pantex, and pits from RFETS, pending disposition. Storage facilities at Zone 4 would continue to be used for these pits prior to completion of the upgrade.

- In accordance with the Preferred Alternative in the Final Programmatic Environmental Impact Statement for Stockpile Stewardship and Management (Stockpile Stewardship and Management PEIS), store Strategic Reserve pits at Pantex in the facilities discussed above. To the extent not reflected above, store Strategic Reserve materials in accordance with the Preferred Alternative in the Stockpile Stewardship and Management PEIS.

- Expanding the planned APSF at SRS to store those surplus, non-pit plutonium materials currently at SRS and surplus non-pit plutonium materials from RFETS, pending disposition.

- Continuing current storage of surplus plutonium at Hanford, Idaho National Engineering Laboratory (INEL) and Los Alamos National Laboratory pending disposition.

- Taking No Action at the Nevada Test Site (NTS).

- Upgrading of storage facilities at the Y-12 Plant at Oak Ridge Reservation to store non-surplus HEU and surplus HEU pending disposition.

Regarding surplus plutonium disposition, the Department's preferred alternative is to pursue a dual track strategy that allows for immobilization of plutonium in glass or ceramic forms and burning of the surplus plutonium as MOX fuel in existing reactors.

The Department would retain using MOX fuel in Canadian Deuterium Uranium (CANDU) reactors in Canada in the event that a multilateral agreement to use CANDU reactors is negotiated among Russia, Canada, and the United States. DOE would engage in a test and demonstration for CANDU MOX fuel as appropriate and consistent with future cooperative efforts with Russia and Canada.

The actual percentage and timing for disposition of the surplus plutonium using either or a combination of both of the technological approaches would depend on the results of international agreements, future technology development and demonstrations, site-specific environmental assessments, and

detailed cost proposals to be completed within the next 2 years. The results of these efforts, as well as nonproliferation considerations and negotiations with Russia and other nations, will ultimately determine the timing and extent to which either or both technologies are deployed for disposition of surplus plutonium.

Deployment of this strategy would involve the implementation of supporting actions which include constructing and operating a plutonium vitrification or ceramic immobilization facility at either Hanford or SRS (including use of the "can in canister" approach utilizing the already operational Defense Waste Processing Facility at SRS); constructing and operating a facility at either of these same sites for conversion of non-pit plutonium materials (metal and oxides) to oxide forms for immobilization; constructing and operating a pit disassembly/conversion facility at Hanford, INEL, Pantex or SRS; and, constructing and operating a domestic, government-owned, MOX fuel fabrication facility at Hanford, INEL, Pantex, or SRS.

The fundamental purpose of the surplus plutonium disposition effort is to irreversibly ensure that plutonium produced for nuclear weapons and now declared excess to national security needs is never again used for nuclear weapons. Both disposition approaches can achieve this goal and preserve the long-time U.S. policy of not using civilian reactors to produce fissile materials for nuclear weapons. Burning of surplus plutonium in existing reactors would not involve subsequent reprocessing of the spent fuel. Each of these technologies would dispose of surplus weapons plutonium in a manner which would help assure it would not again be used in nuclear weapons.

DOE Public Reading Rooms

Copies of the S&D Final PEIS and summary as well as technical data reports and other supporting documents are available for public review at the following locations:

Department of Energy Headquarters

Freedom of Information Reading Room,
Room 1E-190, Forrestal Building,
1000 Independence Avenue, S.W.,
Washington, D.C. 20825, 202-586-6020

Nevada Operations Office

U.S. Department of Energy, 2753 S.
Highland Avenue, P.O. Box 98518,

Las Vegas, Nevada 89193-8518, 702-295-1274

Oak Ridge Operations Office

Public Reading Room, 55 Jefferson
Avenue, Oak Ridge, Tennessee 37830,
615-576-0887

Public Reading Room, 200
Administration Road, P.O. Box 2001,
Oak Ridge, Tennessee 37831-8501

Rocky Flats Office

Front Range Community Reading Room,
3645 West 112th Avenue,
Westminster, CO 80030, 303-469-4435

Amarillo Area Office

Reference Department, Lynn Library
and Learning Center, Amarillo
College, P.O. Box 447, Amarillo, TX
79178, 806-371-5400

U.S. Department of Energy Public
Reading Room, Carson County Public
Library, 401 Main Street, P.O. Box
339, Panhandle, Texas 79068, 806-537-3742

Richland Operations Office

Washington State University, Tri-Cities
Branch Campus, 300 Sprout Road,
Room 130 West, Richland, WA 99352,
509-376-8583

Albuquerque Operations Office

Technical Vocational Institute, 525
Buena Vista, SE, Albuquerque, NM
87106, 505-845-4370

National Atomic Museum Public
Reading Room, Kirtland Air Force
Base, Building 20358, Wyoming
Boulevard, Albuquerque, New Mexico
87115, 505-845-6670/4378

Los Alamos Area Office

Community Reading Room, Museum
Park Office Complex, 1450 Central
Avenue, Suite 101, Los Alamos, New
Mexico 87544, 505-665-2127 or 1-800-543-2342

Savannah River Operations Office

Gregg-Granite Library, University of
South Carolina-Aiken, 171 University
Parkway, Aiken, SC 29801, 803-725-1408

Sandia National Laboratory/CA

Livermore Public Library, 1000 S.
Livermore Avenue, Livermore, CA
94550, 510-373-5500

Idaho Operations Office

Idaho Public Reading Room, 1776
Science Center Drive, Idaho Falls, ID
83402, 208-526-0271

Issued in Washington, DC, December 13, 1996.

Gregory P. Rudy,

Acting Director, Office of Fissile Materials Disposition.

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Notice of Intent to Prepare an Environmental Impact Statement and Conduct Public Scoping Meetings for the Proposed Low Emission Boiler System (LEBS) Project

AGENCY: Department of Energy.

ACTION: Notice of intent.

SUMMARY: The Department of Energy (DOE) announces its intent to prepare an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) pursuant to the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) to assess the potential environmental impacts of a new coal-fired proof-of-concept Low Emission Boiler System (LEBS) for electric power generation. This EIS will support a DOE decision on whether to provide funding of up to 50 percent of the total cost for one or more approaches for LEBS technology development at the proof-of-concept scale. This Notice describes the proposed EIS and invites the public to submit comments regarding the scope of the EIS.

DATES: Comments must be received by February 3, 1997 to ensure consideration. Late comments will be considered to the extent practicable. Public scoping meetings will be held in Richmond, Indiana and Elkhart, Illinois during the 45-day scoping period. The dates and specific locations will be announced in local media at least 15 days prior to the meetings.

ADDRESSES: *Comments should be addressed to:* Mr. Lloyd Lorenzi, NEPA Compliance Officer, Pittsburgh Energy Technology Center, U.S. Department of Energy, P.O. Box 10940, Pittsburgh, PA 15236; telephone 412-892-6159; fax 412-892-6127; or E-mail LORENZI@PETC.DOE.GOV. Individuals who would like to participate in this process may also call the following toll-free telephone number: 1-800-276-9851.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:

Those who would like to receive a copy of the draft EIS for review when it is issued should notify Mr. Lloyd Lorenzi at the address provided above. For general information on the DOE NEPA process, please contact Ms. Carol M. Borgstrom, Director, Office of NEPA Policy and Assistance (EH-42), U.S. Department of Energy, 1000 Independence Avenue, S.W.,

Washington, D.C. 20585-0119; telephone 202-586-4600; or leave a message at 1-800-472-2756.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: DOE announces its intent to prepare an EIS in accordance with NEPA, the Council on Environmental Quality (CEQ) NEPA regulations (40 CFR Parts 1500-1508), and the DOE NEPA regulations (10 CFR Part 1021). The purpose of this Notice of Intent (NOI) is to inform the public about the proposed action; announce the plans for public scoping meetings; invite public participation in (and explain) the scoping process that DOE will follow to comply with the requirements of NEPA; and solicit public comments for consideration in establishing the proposed scope and content of the EIS.

The EIS will evaluate the impacts of DOE's proposal to cost-share LEBS technology development at the proof-of-concept scale to demonstrate the technical, environmental, and economic viability of LEBS technology. Research to develop LEBS technology has been performed for DOE by three separate organizations awarded cost-shared contracts after a competitive solicitation in 1992. The LEBS technology must meet the following minimum performance objectives:

- (1) Nitrogen oxide (NO_x) emissions less than 0.2 (with a target of 0.1) pounds (lbs) per million British thermal units (Btu) of energy input;
- (2) Sulfur oxide (SO_x) emissions less than 0.2 (with a target of 0.1) lbs per million Btu of energy input; and
- (3) Particulate emissions less than 0.015 (with a target of 0.01) lbs per million Btu of energy input.

These performance objectives must be achievable at: electricity costs comparable to, and preferably less than, the costs for a new conventional electric power generating station firing coal in compliance with current Federal emission standards (New Source Performance Standards) for large fossil-fuel-fired steam generating plants; and energy recovery efficiencies at least as high as the most efficient, modern, conventional coal-fired plant meeting New Source Performance Standards, preferably approaching 42% recovery of the energy content of coal as electrical energy. The research performed since 1992 has resulted in three distinct technology approaches for developing LEBS, and each approach holds promise for meeting DOE's objectives. The three approaches, each proposed to be tested at proof-of-concept scale at a different site, have been offered to DOE for cost-shared development. A preferred alternative does not exist at this stage in the technology development program.

The EIS will consider the environmental effects of each proposed technology, of installation and operation at the site where proof-of-concept testing is being considered, and of the specific approaches being considered to meet the objectives of the LEBS proof-of-concept project, as well as reasonable alternative technologies, sites, sizes, and the no-action alternative.

Background

Currently, over one-half of the electricity needs of the United States are met by steam-electric generating stations fired with pulverized coal. Over the next several decades, increases in demand for electric power and replacement of a significant amount of aging electric generating capacity that is approaching the end of its design service life are expected to require the construction of new electric generating stations. As the most abundant domestic energy source, coal continues to represent an attractive energy source for these forthcoming generating stations, particularly through advanced technologies that offer to improve dramatically environmental performance and efficiency.

The LEBS is one of two components that comprise the Combustion 2000 program that DOE has undertaken pursuant to section 1301 of the Energy Policy Act of 1992 (42 U.S.C. 13331). Cost-shared and federally funded, Combustion 2000 is a long-term fossil energy research and development program that will help advance coal-fired power generation technology into the next century. LEBS-related research is to be performed by private industry and involves the application of conventional (near-term) technologies to reduce emissions of coal-fired power plants.

As an early step in the LEBS process, DOE's Pittsburgh Energy Technology Center (PETC) reviewed evolving technologies in 1989-1990 to evaluate the prospective opportunities for advanced technologies to achieve the desired improvements in the environmental performance of coal-fired power plants. The review encompassed advanced technologies and techniques for coal combustion and for control of air emissions. Emphasis was focused on near-term approaches with potential for significant reductions in emissions of nitrogen oxides, sulfur oxides, and particulate matter.

For nitrogen oxide reduction, advanced combustion techniques that provide for staged addition of coal and combustion air and control of combustion temperature and residence time were identified as providing