

ACTION ALERT: Comment on the Los Alamos National Laboratory Site-Wide Environmental Impact Statement

Make your opinion heard!

Written comments are due by September 5, 2006 (address and details below). Oral comments can be presented August 8, August 9, and August 10, 2006 (locations and times listed below). Public workshops on the LANL Site-Wide EIS will be held by Nuclear Watch and collegial organizations:

- Wednesday, August 2, at 6:30 pm at the Kit Carson Electric Cooperative Board Room, 118 Cruz Alta Road, Taos.
- Thursday, August 3, at 7:00 pm at the Embudo Valley Community Center, Highway 75 in Dixon.
- Saturday, August 5, at 3:00 pm at the Eldorado Community Center, 1 Hacienda Loop, Eldorado (approximately one mile down Avenida Vista Grande after HW 285 intersection).

Stay tuned to www.nukewatch.org for workshops in the Santa Fe area.

What's going on?

Federal law requires that public citizens be given the opportunity to comment on proposed major federal actions. The National Nuclear Security Administration (NNSA), the semi-autonomous nuclear weapons agency within the Department of Energy, has released a draft "Site-Wide Environmental Impact Statement for Continued Operations at the Los Alamos National Laboratory" (LANL Site-Wide EIS). In it, the NNSA proposes to:

- **Quadruple the production of plutonium pits**, the atomic "triggers" for today's thermo-nuclear weapons, from 20 to 80 per year. This public comment period coincides with the 61st anniversary of the destruction of Nagasaki, which killed some 75,000 human beings.

- Because of increased production, **radioactive bomb wastes will almost double**. Those wastes will be transported on New Mexican highways to the Waste Isolation Pilot Plant, the world's only permanent dump for bomb wastes, "coincidentally" also in New Mexico.

- Under the LANL Site-Wide EIS, **the Lab will increase its storage capacity of "special nuclear materials, mainly plutonium" to 6.6 metric tons**. A decade ago the Department of Energy declared an inventory of 2.7 metric tons of weapons-grade plutonium at LANL.

- Los Alamos already has begun building a new large plutonium lab next to its plutonium pit production facility. Congress has rejected funding for a "Modern Pit Facility", a proposed super bomb plant capable of producing up to 450 pits per year, to be built at one of five candidate sites from across the country. Senator Pete Domenici's appropriations committee recently noted the financial unlikelihood of building nuclear weapons-related plutonium facilities at sites other than Los Alamos. Accordingly, his committee ordered NNSA to study the possibility of expanding the mission of LANL's new plutonium lab. In all, **there is an increasing pattern of Los Alamos slipping into becoming the nation's permanent site for plutonium pit production**. Even before this, Los Alamos is already the second largest production site in the American nuclear weapons complex.

The NNSA is required by law to consider your comments in the preparation of its Final LANL Site-Wide EIS. Written comments must be mailed, faxed or e-mailed not later than September 5, 2006 (addresses and fax number at end).

Why comment?

Because of the importance of the issues involved and, based on our extensive experience, it truly makes a difference. Simply put, Los Alamos proposes to pursue its future through “expanded nuclear weapons activities.” First, this is on top of the expanded nuclear weapons activities that the Lab already chose in an earlier 1999 LANL Site-Wide EIS. Second, it is important that extensive public record be established as a basis for any possible follow-on citizen litigation, if merited. Third, Los Alamos is gearing up for the indefinite preservation of nuclear weapons, including the production of new designs. Is this the kind of world you want your children and grandchildren to inherit? A world in which our country preaches to others they can’t have weapons of mass destruction, but yet goes on to resume industrial-scale nuclear bomb production, including new designs?

To make this more immediately real, President Bush has declared that all options are on the table when it comes to dealing with alleged Iranian nuclear weapons facilities. Should there be a U.S. nuclear strike against Iran, the weapon of choice would probably be a nuclear earth-penetrator designed by Los Alamos to destroy underground targets, which would inevitably cause massive collateral damage and widespread fallout.

Want to speak out against the madness in person?

Our position is that all countries that possess nuclear weapons, whether declared or not, should irreversibly dismantle them under the framework of the 1970 NonProliferation Treaty. Further, the U.S., as the dominant nuclear weapons state, needs to lead in progressive, multi-lateral efforts toward that end. Instead, our country is doing the opposite, in substantial part through this LANL Site-Wide EIS.

Three hearings for oral comments by the public are scheduled in New Mexico:

- Tuesday, August 8, 6:30 - 9:30 p.m., Fuller Lodge, 2132 Central Avenue, Los Alamos.
- Wednesday, August 9 (Nagasaki Day), 6:30 - 9:30 p.m., Northern New Mexico Community College (Eagle Memorial Sportsplex), 921 Paseo de Oñate, Española.
- Thursday, August 10, 6:30 - 9:30 p.m., Santa Fe Community College (Main Building, Jemez Rooms), 6401 Richards Avenue, Santa Fe.

Oral comments can also be recorded or more information requested by calling 1-877-491-4957. For additional information, go to <http://www.doeal.gov/laso/nepa/sweis.htm>.

Copies of the Draft LANL Site-Wide EIS are available for review at:

- LANL Reading Room, Los Alamos Research Park, Jemez Rd., Los Alamos, NM.
- Northern New Mexico Citizens Advisory Board, 1660 Old Pecos Trail, Suite B, Santa Fe.
- Zimmerman Library, University of New Mexico, Albuquerque, NM.

Want your own copy of the LANL Site-Wide Environmental Impact Statement? Where should comments be submitted?

The LANL Site-Wide EIS can be read from and/or downloaded from <http://www.doeal.gov/laso/nepa/sweis.htm>. Or, get a copy by writing to: National Nuclear Security Administration, Los Alamos Site Office, Attn: Ms. Elizabeth Withers, Office of Environmental Stewardship, 528 35th Street, Los Alamos, New Mexico, 87544; or by fax: (505) 667-5948; or by e-mail to LANL_SWEIS@doeal.gov

Written comments can be submitted by mail, fax or e-mail to the same respective addresses and fax number.

Stay tuned to Nuclear Watch’s web site at www.nukewatch.org for updates and sample citizen comments. Also, we are pressuring NNSA to extend the deadline for public comment to October 5!