



# WATCHDOG

news that bites back

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## We Break Down the Federal Budget For You: Nuke Money is Hidden Everywhere Easter Egg Hunt: Cleverly Encrypted Funding for Controversial "Complex 2030"

Spring has sprung in Washington. Songbirds twitter in the budding trees. Suddenly, a giant shadow darkens the city. The bloated and unbalanced federal budget has just been hatched on the Hill and blindly lurches from committee to committee. Knives are being sharpened. In upcoming weeks, everyone with a stake in the outcome will surgically alter this misshapen pachyderm into...the misshapen pachyderm that will be the final budget.

Rejoice. You don't have to spend mind-numbing hours cross-checking 800 pages of the budget to find all the places where nuclear weapons spending is stashed, and add it all up. That's what you have us for. And naturally we hope to have an impact on the finished product as well.

As if budgets weren't complicated enough, the last Congress was incapable of passing many appropriations bills. Our newly elected Congress enacted a "Continuing Resolution" to keep the government funded, and the funding levels for this still current fiscal year have only now become available.

As we at NukeWatch analyze the FY08 budget, here are some of our most "interesting" findings:

Research, testing and production programs for nuclear weapons under the Energy Department's semi-autonomous National Nuclear Security Administration will cost taxpayers **\$6.51 billion**. And NNSA plans to spend more than **\$29 billion on nukes from '09 to '12**--that's about 50% above Cold War averages.

Much of this squandering revolves around NNSA's (and the labs') claims that the weapons complex and stockpile must be "transformed" to meet unspecified "future military threats." This echoes the Bush doctrine of preemptive war and the 2002 "Nuclear Posture Review" which expanded the rationales for using nuclear weapons. And NNSA wants **new-design nuclear weapons, now christened the Reliable Replacement Warhead (RRW)**.

This agenda contradicts 1) our binding commitments under the 1970 NonProliferation Treaty, signed by 189 countries; and 2) independent experts' recent studies concluding that the crucial nuke components, **plutonium pits, have reliable lifetimes of a century or more.**

We've got 70 years to craft nonproliferating weapons policies. Instead, NNSA explicitly plans to pay for RRW by **decreasing maintenance/refurbishment for existing (reliable) nukes**--setting a terrible global example of new weapons proliferation.

- **"Complex 2030"** is the nukes complex NNSA wants in place by that year--but there's **no line item** for it in the FY08 request. We think **Complex 2030 money could be hidden under NNSA's "Office of Administrator"** (separate from its weapons budget) which earmarks \$330 million for "Nuclear Deterrent." Its goal is to "transform the Nation's nuclear weapons stockpile and ...infrastructure to be more responsive to the threats of the 21st Century." If we're correct, this brings the true costs of NNSA's FY 2008 nuclear weapons programs to \$6.84 billion. Moreover, the Office of Administrator wants \$1.4 billion for "Nuclear Deterrent" from 2009 to 2012.

- NNSA wants **\$24.9 million to design a "Consolidated Plutonium Center,"** to be Complex 2030's single most important facility. Its mission: make **125 pits per year** for RRW, starting in 2022. In contrast, NNSA's repeated requests for its now-defeated "Modern Pit Facility" averaged \$7.5 million.

- **For RRW, NNSA requested \$27.7 million** in FY 2007; Congress gave it almost \$36 million under the Continuing Resolution. NNSA asked for **\$88.8 million** for FY 2008, but also says it will ask later for a budget adjustment that will likely add even more. But this is just the tip of the iceberg!

Most nuclear weapons programs report they are being realigned to support RRW, without detailing specific costs. It's not possible to calculate, but **total RRW costs in FY 2008 could reach half a billion dollars.** Plus, over at the Defense Department, the Navy's asking for \$30 million for RRW in '08--and \$50 million in '09.

- NNSA's '08 budget request reveals the complex's **increasing shift to production.** Compared to '07, the three design labs took a \$261 million hit to nukes programs (mostly advanced computing)--but the four production plants' combined requests rose \$172 million. Weapons activities at NNSA's DC headquarters rocketed to \$492.10 million for FY 2008, a 79% jump over 2007! **See inside for the Los Alamos budget scoop.** --Jay Coghlan/Sasha Pyle

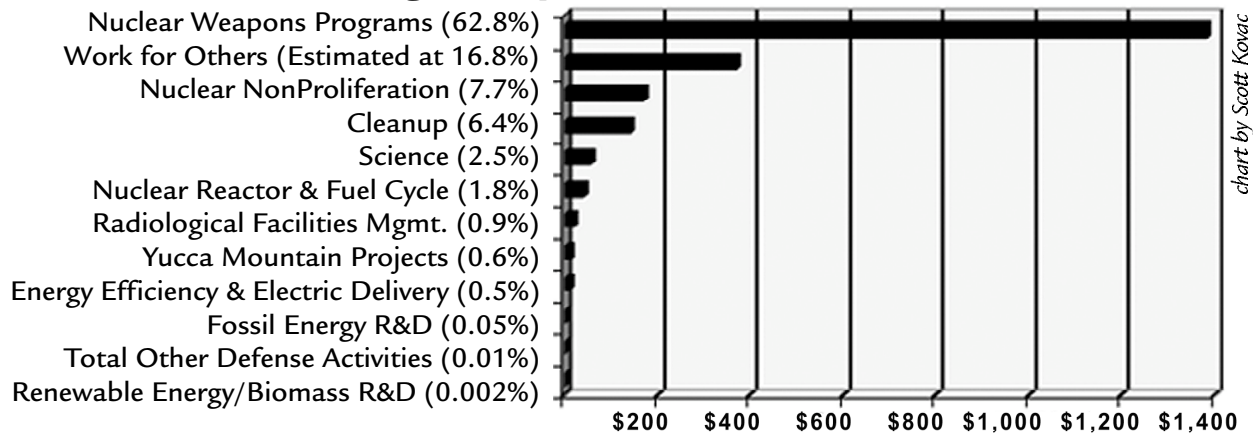


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Knock yourself out ! ...All the facts, figures and footnotes you can stomach... on-line at [www.nukewatch.org](http://www.nukewatch.org).

***In Case You Thought They Were Working on "Good Stuff" at the Lab...  
A Handy Graph to Remind Us That Money Flows Uphill to Weapons***

**Los Alamos National Laboratory  
FY 2008 Budget Request (in Millions of Dollars)**



**LANL budget snapshot: Nuclear weapons programs 62.8%... to renewable energies .002%.  
This graph says it all -- need we say more about Lab priorities, and how they should change?**

NukeWatch has long argued that Los Alamos will probably become the nation's permanent plutonium pit production center, the "Rocky Flats South" if you will. Not coincidentally, the NNSA decision to raise "interim" production from 20 pits per year to 50 is pending this summer.

A crucial factor for even higher production levels is an advanced plutonium facility now being built at LANL, ponderously called the Chemical and

Metallurgical Research Replacement Project (CMRR). Last year, the House of Representatives declared building CMRR made sense only if LANL were to become the Consolidated Plutonium Center, and slashed funding. In contrast, a Senate budget subcommittee chaired by Pete Domenici fully funded CMRR, and ordered NNSA to study expanding its previous mission, likely meaning direct pit production. The now-passed Continuing Resolution for FY 2007 "split

the baby," funding CMRR at \$53.4 million, which is a serious blow. The FY08 budget seeks \$95.6 million for CMRR, a drop of \$65 million from the original plan because even NNSA had to acknowledge that its future mission depends on Complex 2030. While its mission and funding remain very much in play, CMRR lumbers on. Our long-term bet is still on Los Alamos becoming the nation's permanent pit production site.  
--Jay Coghlan

**Good News! Public Pulls Plug on Divine Strake**

On February 22, 2007 the Defense Threat Reduction Agency (DTRA) announced its **decision to cancel the Divine Strake Test**, 700 tons of chemical explosives aimed at determining the smallest nuclear yield required to damage and defeat hardened/deeply buried targets. DTRA stated its decision was not based on any specific indications that the test would result in harm to on-site workers, the general public or the environment, but that it was "time to look at alternative methods that obviate the need for this type of large-scale test."

However, Sam Bodman (the Secretary of Energy) is reported to have told Utah Governor Jon Huntsman that the **large-scale public outcry** against Divine Strake was why it was cancelled. 10,000 comments were submitted. A spokesman with the Nevada Site Office of the National Nuclear Security Agency said that they had "never had such a big response."

In a previous incarnation, the Divine Strake test faced stiff opposition by protesters at the gates of the Nevada Test Site (NTS) and in the court room. The Finding of No Significant Impact was withdrawn and the test was postponed last June following an injunction filed in federal court on behalf of the

Western Shoshone tribe and people living downwind of the test site. When rumors emerged that the test might relocate to Indiana or New Mexico, opponents in those states quickly motivated public resistance. Later DTRA confirmed that the NTS had the geology of interest for the test and released a new, revised environmental assessment in December 2006. It was this last document that engendered such massive public scrutiny and disapproval that the agency backed down.

**But beware the return of the clones!** The Tunnel Target Defeat program, of which Divine Strake was but one part, still centers on bunker-busting and new ways to use nuclear weapons. The weapons labs seek to validate codes used in planning attacks against buried targets and to estimate direct and collateral damage resulting from such attacks. Vigilance is required, as their efforts will likely continue by other means.

Yet public and Congressional opposition proved victorious in defeating Divine Strake. This is a victory for the safety of downwind communities. It's a victory for the rights of indigenous people to have a voice in how lands are used. Perhaps it is also a victory in deterring the administration's confidence in using nuclear weapons in a preemptive strike.  
--John Witham

# What the Heck is "Gee-Nep?"

...and Why Should I Pay Attention?

## *Nuclear power resuscitation plan is short on specifics, long on PR.*

The **Global Nuclear Energy Partnership (GNEP)** is the Bush Administration and DOE's half-baked plan to jump-start nuclear power plants worldwide. The rationale for GNEP is to reduce the volume of nuclear waste from reactors by reprocessing it and then using it as fuel to generate electricity in special reactors. GNEP, like a nuclear fairy godmother, will solve the problems of a growing inventory of spent fuel, nuclear proliferation, and global warming. They make it sound so easy. All it will take is billions of taxpayers' money...if, in fact, it can be done.

**Despite spending more than \$100 billion globally, no nation has successfully commercialized the needed reprocessing and transmutation technologies.** Governments heavily subsidize all of these programs. The total cost to reprocess the estimated lifetime discharges of current U.S. reactors by this process and to build enough fast reactors to use the reprocessed fuel is estimated to be \$250 billion. And **many new unnamed waste streams will be generated.**

The proposal calls for the development of three new nuclear facilities. The 'nuclear fuel recycling center' is actually a proposed waste reprocessing plant that would separate used nuclear fuel into uranium, waste, and transuranics, such as plutonium. The 'advanced recycling reactor' is a fast neutron reactor that would be capable of converting radioactive elements while producing electricity. The third facility is an advanced fuel cycle research. Los Alamos is under consideration as the location for the advanced fuel cycle research facility. One problem that LANL would research is the fabrication of transmutation fuel from commercial plants. This research would require **100 metric tons of highly radioactive used fuel rods to be sent to LANL.**

**Who could possibly be against "recycling?"** At a recent public scoping meeting, DOE used the term 'recycling' many times, when what it was actually referring to was 'reprocessing,' --a word they didn't use once. What's the difference? We all know that recycling is good. What's not so well known is that the wastes from past reprocessing efforts have yet to be cleaned up. **It seems the only thing being recycled here is bad ideas.** --Scott Kovac

*Scoping comments will be accepted until April 4th. See "What to Do" on p.4 for address info.*



## Closure Debate Begins as the Lab Awaits a New Permit

State regulators at the New Mexico Environmental Department (NMED) announced that they would finally issue a new permit to govern freshly generated hazardous waste at Los Alamos National Laboratory. The Resource Conservation and Recovery Act (RCRA) permit will regulate solvents, chemicals, metals, explosives and mixed radioactive waste. It won't cover (pure) radioactive waste, which is self-regulated by the Department of Energy. NMED will release the draft permit in August and public meetings will be scheduled then.

NukeWatch has been pressuring NMED for years to issue a new state permit. One had expired in 1999, but was extended. The new permit will deal with current and future waste. Legacy waste will continue to be governed by NMED's existing fence-to-fence consent order.

The RCRA permit will open the discussion about how to close Area G, the lab's dump where "low-level" radioactive waste is permanently buried. Area G, which opened in 1957, is an unlined 65-acre dump with about 200 shafts and 38 pits. A total estimated volume of 800,000 cubic yards of waste and fill are entombed. The Lab claims that no impact from Area G has been detected yet in the regional aquifer, but data from the Lab's monitoring wells are unreliable due to drilling methods known to mask contaminants. To adequately protect northern New Mexico's precious groundwater, the waste in Area G must be removed from the ground. In a recent public meeting, LANL considered everything from taking no action on Area G to digging up the waste and sending it elsewhere.

LANL recently released its final plan for another old dumpsite, MDA B, which was active from 1946 to 1949. This plan calls for completely digging up the old waste and any contaminated soil and removing it from the site. MDA B is much smaller than Area G. But this shows that when forced, the Lab can do the right thing. MDA B's closure plan should set an example for Area G's as well. --Scott Kovac

## LIVERMORE DESIGN PREFERRED TO LANL'S

LANL has lost the "competition" to design the first new nuclear weapon in 20 years. DOE chose the Reliable Replacement Warhead design submitted by Lawrence Livermore National Lab instead. If the RRW program survives Congressional scrutiny, Los Alamos will get the dubious honor of manufacturing the plutonium pits for the new weapon.

We're prepared to prove to Congress that **RRW isn't needed at all!** We're headed to DC in late April to re-enter the fray. Check out our pithy rebuttal of DOE's rationale for RRW!

[http://www.nukewatch.org/facts/nwd/TruthAboutComplex2030andRRW\\_030207.pdf](http://www.nukewatch.org/facts/nwd/TruthAboutComplex2030andRRW_030207.pdf)



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**mission statement**

The mission of Nuclear Watch New Mexico is to provide timely and accurate information to the public on nuclear issues in the American Southwest, and to encourage effective citizen involvement and activism in these issues. We seek to promote greater environmental protection, safe disposition of radioactive wastes, and federal policy changes that will curb the proliferation of nuclear weapons.

***In This Issue: We Scrutinize the Federal Budget and Sniff Out the Hidden Nuke Pork; Handy LANL Budget Chart Brings Big Picture Home to NM; Divine Strake Strikes Out; LANL's Area G Controversy; What is GNEP and Why is it Such a Bad Idea?***

## What to do

**You said it!**

Thank you for telling the Department of Energy what you thought about the nuclear weapons "Bombplex" transformation!

DOE reportedly received over 30,000 comments on the Complex 2030 SEIS. Now maybe they will get the message about not restarting the nuclear arms race.

**GNEP Scoping comments are due April 4.**

Comment on the Environmental Impact Statement for the Global Nuclear Energy Partnership-- DOE's sleight-of-hand trick for making nuclear waste "disappear" (only not really). Article p. 3.

You snail-mailers can write to:

Mr. Timothy A. Frazier, GNEP PEIS Document Manager, Office of Nuclear Energy,  
U.S. Department of Energy, 1000 Independence Avenue, SW., Washington, DC 20585-0119

To comment via technology:

Telephone: 866-645-7803

Fax: 866-645-7807

e-mail to: GNEPPEIS@nuclear.energy.gov.

**Please mark all envelopes, faxes, and e-mail messages: "GNEP PEIS Comments."**

Biolab at Los Alamos: Watch this April for your opportunity to comment on NNSA's Environmental Impact Statement for the Bio-Safety Level 3 (or BSL-3) Facility. This is the proposed lab at Los Alamos that will work with such serious pathogens as anthrax and plague, potentially lethal if contacted or inhaled.

**...and keep the letters, calls and e-mails going to your elected representatives!**



**nuclear watch new mexico**

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