

Department of Energy

Finding of No Significant Impact for the Proposed Strategic Computing Complex

Los Alamos National Laboratory

Los Alamos, New Mexico

U.S. Department of Energy
Los Alamos Area Office
528 35th Street
Los Alamos, NM 87544

FINAL ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT: The *Environmental Assessment* (EA) for the Proposed Strategic Computing Complex at Los Alamos National Laboratory, Los Alamos, New Mexico (DOE/EA-1250) provides sufficient evidence and analysis to determine that a finding of no significant impact is appropriate for this action. The EA documents the evidence and analysis in the following chapters: 1. Purpose and Need for Agency Action; 2. Description of Alternatives; and, 3. Affected Environment and Environmental Consequences (see attached EA).

The EA analysis for the proposed Strategic Computing Complex indicates that potential adverse effects of the proposed action under normal conditions would be minimal. There are corrective actions and similar activities or considerations that serve to lessen any potential for adverse environmental effects, which have been incorporated into the project description for the development and operation of the Strategic Computing Complex and are considered to be integral parts of the proposal vital to defining it. These actions are discussed in the EA document (see Chapter 2.1). Examples of these types of defining corrective project activities are: the inclusion of measures to recycle sanitary wastewater effluent for cooling water use; the reduction of existing effluent amounts by about 35 percent; and the expansion of vehicle parking areas to compensate for parking lost due to building construction within an existing parking area. Storm water runoff prevention measures, such as the use of curbs, silt fencing and other best management practices, would be employed during construction and post-construction to minimize siltation into adjoining flood plains. Construction activities would include the use of standard dust suppression methods (such as use of water spraying) to minimize the generation of dust during all phases of construction activities. Electric power constraints, common to all parts of Northern New Mexico, would be dealt with through mutual LANL/LOs Alamos County power pool "shedding procedures" to balance the peak demand with load capabilities.

The EA considered the type of potential accidents that might occur during the construction and operation of the Strategic Computing Complex. The EA additionally considered the potential for adverse accident-related effects relative to the proximity of the Strategic Computing Complex to laboratory and test facilities constituting Los Alamos National Laboratory. The EA analysis indicates that potential adverse effects of

the proposed action are associated only with severe and extremely unlikely accident conditions involving the LANL Chemistry and Metallurgy Research Building and the chemical receiving and distribution facility. For both facilities, accidents could affect the Strategic Computing Complex workers; however, the probability of major chemical or radiological release effects to the Strategic Computing Complex workers is low.

PREDECISIONAL DRAFT REVIEW & COMMENT: On November 24, 1997, the Department of Energy invited review and comment on the predecisional EA from the State of New Mexico; the Mescalero Apache Tribe; and four nearby American Indian Pueblos: Cochiti, Jemez, Santa Clara and San Ildefonso (sometimes referred to as the Four Accord Pueblos because each tribe has entered into an accord with the Department of Energy and with the University of California [the management and operations contractor for LANL]); and the Mescalero Apache Tribe. In addition, the Department of Energy made the predecisional draft EA available to the general public at the same time it was provided to the State and Tribes by placing it in the Department of Energy Public Reading Rooms within the Los Alamos National Laboratory's Outreach Center and Reading Room in Los Alamos, and the TVI-Main Campus Library in Albuquerque. The predecisional draft EA was also placed on the World Wide Web Computer Internet System. Additionally, known local stakeholder groups were notified of the availability of the predecisional draft on November 24, 1997, and copies of the EA were provided to all interested parties for their review.

Comments were received from two stakeholders: the New Mexico Environment Department and Los Alamos Study Group. Their comments were addressed in the final EA, as appropriate, and individual letters with responses to the comments was sent to the respondents.

AGENCY CONSULTATIONS: Construction activities within LANL's Technical Area-3 for the Strategic Computing Center would be located within already disturbed and highly developed areas. No effect to individuals of threatened or endangered species, or their habitat is anticipated. Therefore, consultation with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (Service) under Section 7 of the Endangered Species Act provisions is not required. Review of the land in and around the site selected for the Strategic Computing Complex and the associated parking lots by archeologists indicated that construction of these facilities would not likely result in any adverse affect on cultural resources. During the subsequent process of complying with requirements of the National Historic Preservation Act, the State Historic Preservation Officer concurred with our determinations of effects.

FINDING: The United States Department of Energy finds that there would be no significant impact from proceeding with its proposal to construct and operate the Strategic Computing Center at Los Alamos National Laboratory. This finding is based on the EA that analyzes the consequences of the relevant issues of environmental concern of the proposed project, which incorporates certain actions so as to render the proposed project not significant. The Department of Energy makes this Finding of No Significant Impact pursuant to the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969 [42 U.S.C. 4321 et

seq.], the Council on Environmental Quality (CEQ) Regulations for Implementing the Procedural Provisions of the National Environmental Policy Act [40 CFR 1500] and the Department of Energy National Environmental Policy Act Implementing Procedures [10 CFR 1021]. Therefore, no environmental impact statement is required for this proposal.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION: For further information on this proposal, this Finding Of No Significant Impact (FONSI), or the Department of Energy's National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) review program concerning proposals at Los Alamos National Laboratory, please contact:

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Copies of this FONSI (with the Environmental Assessment attached) will be made available for public review at the DOE Public Reading Rooms located in Los Alamos at 1619 Central Avenue, Los Alamos, New Mexico, 87544 at (505) 665-2127 or (800) 543-2342. Copies will also be made available in the Government Information Department, Zimmerman Library, University of New Mexico Government Information Department, Zimmerman Library, University of New Mexico, Albuquerque, New Mexico, 87106 at (505) 224-3000.