Department of Energy
National Nuclear Security Administration
Finding of No Significant Impact
for the
Construction and Operation of a New Office Building
and Related Structures within TA-3
at
Los Alamos National Laboratory,
Los Alamos, New Mexico

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

DEPARTMENT OF ENERGY,
NATIONAL NUCLEAR SECUIRTY ADMINISTRATION
FINDING OF NO SIGNIFICANT IMPACT

Construction and Operation of a New Office Building and Related Structures withinTA-3 at Los Alamos National Laboratory, Los Alamos, New Mexico

FINAL ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT: The Environmental Assessment (EA) for *Construction and Operation of a New Office Building and Related Structures within TA-3 at Los Alamos National Laboratory, Los Alamos, New Mexico (DOE/EA-1375)* (attached) provides sufficient evidence and analysis to determine that a Finding Of No Significant Impact (FONSI) is appropriate for the Proposed Action. The EA documents the evidence and analysis in the following chapters: 1. Purpose and Need for Agency Action; 2. Description of the Proposed Action and Alternatives; and 3. Affected Environment and Environmental Consequences. Analyses performed in the EA conclude that potential adverse effects of the Proposed Action, under normal conditions, would be minimal. No short-term or long-term adverse effects are expected to occur to air quality, visual resources, water quality, soil erosion, waste management, human health, socioeconomics, or utilities and infrastructure. Only cultural resources would be affected long-term through the demolition of the existing Administration Building (Building 3-43), which has been identified as a historical building eligible for listing on the National Register of Historic Places. Mitigations to resolve this adverse effect would be negotiated with the New Mexico State Historic Preservation Officer (SHPO) and a treatment plan would be established. Mitigations could include a variety of elements, including archival of large format photographs, architectural blueprints, preparation of a set of "as-built" drawings, preparation of a detailed report on the building's history and interviews with past and present workers. Additional elements may be added during the negotiations with the SHPO and from comments provided by the Advisory Council on Historic Preservation (such as virtual tours of the structure posted on the internet system or construction and display of a scale model of the structure at another site such as the proposed new office building or its related lecture hall). A Memorandum of Agreement for the resolution of adverse effects would be executed for the implementation of the treatment plan for the property.

Beneficial effects to a variety of resources including visual resources, human health, socioeconomics, and parking space availability within TA-3 are expected. Engineering and administrative controls or considerations that serve to lessen any potential for adverse environmental effects have been incorporated as integral features of the Proposed Action. Examples of these types of features include: the recycling and reuse of materials (such as cooper wiring and pipe, glass, concrete and asphalt) resulting from the demolition of Building 3-43 at LANL or off-site so that no disposal of these materials as wastes is required; the use of building materials produced from reclaimed and recycled materials (such as finish materials and carpeting), the use of low-flow lavatory fixtures and energy-efficient lighting fixtures and equipment to reduce water and electricity consumption; and the use of reused and recycled materials in landscaping, along with captured precipitation and the planting of native species.

The Environmental Assessment (EA) has analyzed the potential environmental consequences of one additional alternative besides the Proposed Action, namely, the No Action alternative. The No Action alternative would result in slow deterioration of the existing Administration Building (Building 3-43) through benign neglect. The building would be vacated and funding would not be available at the current level to provide for continued upkeep and support. While the building would not be demolished outright, it would result in an adverse effect on a historic structure and the eventual loss of the structure. No waste would be generated under the No Action alternative in the short term, and no additional parking would become available at TA-3 in the long term.

The EA considered the cumulative effects of the Proposed Action with past, present and reasonably foreseeable future actions, regardless of what agency or person undertakes them. Several new office and laboratory structures are being built at TA-3 at LANL. Parking space availability will change beneficially as a result of the Proposed Action and the completion of the other construction activities by nearly 800 additional parking spaces. Other cumulative effects include beneficial effects to the overall visual quality within TA-3, to worker health; adverse effects include noise generation heard primarily by the involved and nearby workers for a long period of time as construction projects phase in and out; and the increase in risk of construction worker injuries with additional construction and demolition activities. Other activities at or nearby to TA-3 over the next 10 years include: potential construction actions taken by the Incorporated County of Los Alamos on tracts of land conveyed to them by the DOE; reconstruction of housing units lost

during the May 2000 Cerro Grande Fire within Los Alamos townsite on privately held lands; the implementation of wildfire hazard reduction activities, including forest thinning actions, on LANL and neighboring properties; some minor construction and demolition actions scattered over LANL; the generation of large amounts of waste by LANL through decontamination and demolition of buildings and environmental restoration efforts; and the gradual demolition of structures and buildings of the Cold War period at LANL and nearby.

PREDECISIONAL DRAFT REVIEW & COMMENT: On June 29, 2001, the Department of Energy invited review and comment on the predecisional draft EA from the State of New Mexico; four nearby American Indian Tribes: 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); the Acoma Pueblo 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. The availability of the EA to the public was accomplished by placing it in the Department of Energy Public Reading Rooms located within the Los Alamos National Laboratory's Community Outreach Center and Reading Room, and in the University of New Mexico's Zimmerman Library in Albuquerque. A notice was placed in three local newspapers announcing the availability of the draft EA for review. The predecisional draft EA was also placed on the World Wide Web Computer Internet System. Additionally, over 50 local stakeholder groups and individuals that have identified themselves as interested parties with regards to LANL activities, were notified by letter of the availability of the predecisional draft EA. Copies of the EA were provided to all interested parties for their review upon their requests. The review and comment period was 21 days long and ended on July 19, 2000. No comments have been received on the predecisional draft EA.

AGENCY CONSULTATIONS: No effects to Federally-listed threatened and endangered species or their habitat are anticipated during the implementation of the Proposed Action and, therefore, DOE is not required to engage in consultation with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service according to section 7 requirements under the Endangered Species Act. DOE implemented a Threatened and Endangered Species Habitat Management Plan (HMP) for LANL in March 1999; all project portions implemented under the Proposed Action would comply with the HMP. Adverse

effect to a historic property by demolition of that property requires the NNSA to take mitigative actions of a kind and sort agreed upon through consultation with the New Mexico SHPO. NNSA has started consultative discussion with the SHPO and expects to enter into a Memorandum of Agreement to implement agreed an upon treatment plan.

FINDING: The United States Department of Energy, National Nuclear Security Administration finds that there would be no significant impact from proceeding with its proposal to implement the project to construct and operate a new office building, lecture hall and parking garage, together with the demolition of two buildings, at Los Alamos National Laboratory as described in the Proposed Action alternative. This finding is based on the EA, which analyzes the consequences of the relevant issues of environmental concern. The Department of Energy, National Nuclear Security Administration 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.

Signed in Los Alamos, New Mexico this 26 day of July 2001, 2001.

David A. Gurulé, P.E.
Area Manager
Los Alamos Area Office

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:

Elizabeth Withers, NEPA Compliance Officer

Los Alamos Area Office

U.S. Department of Energy

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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 Room within the Los Alamos National Laboratory Community Relations Office, 1619 Central Avenue, Los Alamos, New Mexico, 87544 at (505) 665-4400 or (800) 508-4400. Copies will also be made available within the DOE Public Reading Room at the Zimmerman Library, University of New Mexico, Albuquerque, New Mexico, 87131 at (505) 277-5441.