

DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE**Department of the Air Force****HQ USAF Scientific Advisory Board Meeting**

The Science and Technology Panel on Materials and Manufacturing will meet at Wright-Patterson Air Force Base, Ohio on December 13-17, 1999 from 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.

The purpose of the meeting is to review the quality of the Air Force Science and Technology Program.

The meeting will be closed to the public in accordance with Section 552b(c) of Title 5, United States Code, specifically subparagraphs (1) and (4) thereof.

For further information, contact the HQ USAF Scientific Advisory Board Secretariat at (703) 697-8404.

Janet A. Long,

Air Force Federal Register Liaison Officer.

[FR Doc. 99-23251 Filed 9-7-99; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 5001-05-U

DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE**Department of the Air Force****HQ USAF Scientific Advisory Board Meeting**

The Science and Technology Panel on Air Vehicles will meet at Wright-Patterson AFB, Ohio on November 29 to December 3, 1999 from 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.

The purpose of the meeting is to review the quality of the Air Force Science and Technology Program.

The meeting will be closed to the public in accordance with Section 552b(c) of Title 5, United States Code, specifically subparagraphs (1) and (4) thereof.

For further information, contact the HQ USAF Scientific Advisory Board Secretariat at (703) 697-8404.

Janet A. Long,

Air Force Federal Register Liaison Officer.

[FR Doc. 99-23252 Filed 9-7-99; 8:45 am]

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DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE**Department of the Air Force****HQ USAF Scientific Advisory Board Meeting**

The Science and Technology Panel on Information will meet in Rome, New York on December 6-10, 1999 from 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.

The purpose of the meeting is to review the quality of the Air Force Science and Technology Program.

The meeting will be closed to the public in accordance with Section 552b(c) of Title 5, United States Code, specifically subparagraphs (1) and (4) thereof.

For further information, contact the HQ USAF Scientific Advisory Board Secretariat at (703) 697-8404.

Janet A. Long,

Air Force Federal Register Liaison Officer.

[FR Doc. 99-23253 Filed 9-7-99; 8:45 am]

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DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE**Department of the Army****Environmental Assessment (EA) and Finding of No Significant Impact (FNSI) for Disposal and Reuse of the BRAC Property at Fort Greely, AK**

AGENCY: Department of the Army, DoD.

ACTION: Notice of availability.

SUMMARY: In accordance with Public Law 101-510, the Defense Base Realignment and Closure (BRAC) Commission recommended the realignment of the Northern Warfare Training Center (NWTC) and the Cold Regions Test Center (CRTC) from Fort Greely, Alaska, to Fort Wainwright, Alaska. The realignment of Fort Greely could begin no earlier than July 1997 and can end no earlier than July 2001.

The EA analyzes the environmental and socioeconomic effects relating to the disposal and reuse of surplus property at Fort Greely. The day Fort Greely was selected for realignment (February 28, 1995), approximately 747 active duty and civilian personnel were employed on the installation. By July 2001, this number will be reduced to 55 civilians and 11 military. Much of the base infrastructure, including most of the housing units, is surplus to the needs of the Federal Government and is available for transfer to the Local Redevelopment Authority (LRA). The total surplus area is 1,785 acres.

DATES: Public comments should be submitted on or before October 8, 1999.

ADDRESSES: A copy of EA and FNSI may be obtained by writing to the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Alaska District, ATTN: CEPOA-EN-CW-ER (My. Guy McConnell), P.O. Box 898, Anchorage, Alaska 99506-0898.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Mr. Guy McConnell at (907) 753-2625, or by facsimile at (907) 753-2526.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: The EA analyzes the alternatives of no action,

unencumbered disposal, and encumbered disposal. The Army's preferred alternative is encumbered disposal, which places constraints on future use of some parcels. Reuse of the surplus property is also discussed, based on reasonably foreseeable scenarios envisioned in the LRA Final Reuse Plan, Fort Greely, Alaska. Additionally, the EA evaluates the environmental consequences of privatizing certain utilities, a non-BRAC action the Army may or may not exercise in the future. Privatization would facilitate the reuse of the property.

The Army concludes that the disposal and reuse of the BRAC property at Fort Greely does not constitute a major federal action significantly affecting the quality of the natural or human environment. Because no significant impacts would result from implementing the proposed action, an environmental impact statement is not required and will not be prepared.

The EA is also available for review at the Library, Building 652, Fort Greely, Alaska; Delta Public Library, 2288 Deborah Street, Delta Junction, Alaska; and, Noel Wien Public Library, 1215 Cowles Street, Fairbanks, Alaska.

Dated: September 1, 1999.

Raymond J. Fatz,

Deputy Assistant Secretary of the Army, (Environment, Safety and Occupational Health) OASA (I&E).

[FR Doc 99-23291 Filed 9-7-99; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 3710-08-M

DEPARTMENT OF ENERGY**Finding of No Significant Impact in the Environmental Assessment for the Paralex Project Fuel Manufacture and Shipment**

AGENCY: U.S. Department of Energy.

ACTION: Notice of Availability.

SUMMARY: An environmental assessment (EA) has been prepared to assess potential environmental impacts associated with a U.S. Department of Energy (DOE) proposed action to conduct limited mixed oxide (MOX) fuel manufacture and shipment for the purpose of confirming the viability of using MOX fuel in Canadian Deuterium Uranium (CANDU) reactors. The Proposed Action would involve preparation and analysis activities in TA-55 (building PF-4) at Los Alamos National Laboratory (LANL), and shipping of the MOX fuel to the U.S.-Canada border. This EA covers only those activities necessary to manufacture and ship up to 59.2 lb (26.8

kg) of MOX fuel. Based on the analysis in this EA, and after considering comments received, DOE has determined that the proposed action is not a major federal action significantly affecting the quality of the human environment within the meaning of the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) (42 U.S.C. 4321 et seq.). Therefore the preparation of an environmental impact statement is not required.

ADDRESSES: Single copies of the EA and further information concerning the proposed action are available from: Bert Stevenson, NEPA Compliance Officer, Office of Fissile Materials Disposition (MD-4), U.S. Department of Energy, P.O. Box 23786, Washington, DC 20026-3786, telephone (202) 586-5368.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: For further information regarding the DOE NEPA Process, contact: Carol Borgstrom, Director, Office of NEPA Policy and Assistance (EH-42), U.S. Department of Energy, 1000 Independence Avenue, SW, Washington, DC, 20585, telephone (202) 586-4600, or (800) 472-2756.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

Purpose and Need

DOE needs to test and demonstrate the feasibility of using MOX fuel in CANDU reactors, as a potential disposition option¹ for surplus weapons-usable plutonium. The proposed action discussed in this EA is a limited scale test that would provide DOE with information needed to assess that option.

Background

The end of the Cold War has created a legacy of surplus weapons-usable fissile materials both in the United States and the former Soviet Union. The global stockpiles of weapons-usable fissile materials pose a danger to national and international security in the form of potential proliferation of nuclear weapons and the potential for environmental, safety, and health

consequences if the materials are not properly safeguarded and managed. In September 1993, President Clinton issued a "Nonproliferation and Export Control Policy" in response to the growing threat of nuclear proliferation. Further, in January 1994, President Clinton and Russia's President Yeltsin issued a "Joint Statement Between the United States and Russia on Nonproliferation of Weapons of Mass Destruction and the Means for Their Delivery." To demonstrate the United States' commitment to these policies, President Clinton announced on March 1, 1995 that about 224 tons (203 metric tons) of U.S.-origin weapons-usable fissile materials, of which 182 tons (165 metric tons) are highly enriched uranium and 42 tons (38 metric tons) are weapons-usable plutonium, had been declared surplus to the United States' defense needs.

To safeguard and manage this material, DOE has decided to implement a program to provide for safe and secure storage of weapons-usable fissile materials and a strategy for the disposition of surplus weapons-usable plutonium, as specified in the ROD for the S&D PEIS. The fundamental purpose of the program is to maintain a high standard of security and accounting for these fissile materials while in storage, and to ensure the plutonium produced for nuclear weapons and declared surplus to national security needs is never again used for nuclear weapons.

The Final S&D PEIS ROD, issued January 14, 1997, established a hybrid strategy to irreversibly dispose of the Nation's surplus plutonium and to reduce from seven to three the number of sites that store nuclear weapons materials. The strategy would immobilize some (and potentially all) of the surplus plutonium in glass or ceramic formulations and allow the use of some of the surplus plutonium as MOX fuel. The option of dispositioning some of the weapons-usable surplus plutonium as MOX fuel in heavy-water-moderated reactors, such as CANDU reactors, was retained as an option in the event of future multilateral agreement among Russia, Canada, and the United States. As explained in the ROD for the S&D PEIS, DOE proposes to engage in a test and demonstration program for CANDU MOX fuel consistent with ongoing and potential future cooperative efforts with Russia and Canada, and based on appropriate NEPA review. The test and demonstration activities would occur at LANL, New Mexico, and at Chalk River Laboratories (CRL), Ontario, Canada.

Proposed Action

To meet the purpose and need for Agency action, DOE proposes to fabricate and transport up to 59.2 lb (26.8 kg) of MOX fuel as part of the Parallax Project. DOE has already fabricated a portion of this MOX fuel at LANL, and DOE proposes to fabricate additional MOX fuel at LANL if needed. MOX fuel would be fabricated in building PF-4 in TA-55 at LANL. This test and demonstration project has been named Parallax (parallel experiment) because of the roles of the United States and Russia in supplying test material. The Parallax Project would be a joint agreement between Russia, Canada, and the U.S. to demonstrate the irradiation of U.S. and Russian MOX fuel in parallel in the Atomic Energy of Canada, Limited (AECL)-owned National Research Universal (NRU) reactor. This international project would use MOX fuel made in the U.S. (specifically LANL) and Russia (specifically from Bochvar) from surplus weapons-usable plutonium out of both countries' nuclear stockpiles.

Research and development of MOX fuels has already been conducted at LANL as part of its ongoing mission relating to the development of energy sources for experiments and research reactors. However, these various MOX fuel forms were not made with weapons-grade plutonium. In contrast, the MOX fuel fabrication process involved in the Parallax Project would use weapons-grade plutonium (in an unclassified form) obtained from decommissioned nuclear weapons.

The MOX fuel fabricated at LANL would be transported to the Canadian border. At the border the AECL, per prior agreement, would take possession of the fuel. The fuel would remain on the same truck and the AECL would complete the shipment to the reactor site. At Chalk River, Ontario, the MOX fuel would be delivered to CRL for testing in the NRU reactor. The AECL would be responsible for conducting all subsequent tests of the fuel's performance and the function of the reactor.

Fueling the NRU reactor with MOX fuel would be part of a feasibility test to determine MOX fuel performance in converted CANDU reactors. The NRU test reactor is the only available reactor specifically designed to test MOX fuel performance for CANDU reactors. Positive test results could support subsequent decisions on the dispositioning of surplus weapons-usable plutonium in CANDU reactors. All spent fuel resulting from the tests

¹ As described in the Record of Decision (ROD) for the Storage and Disposition of Weapons-Usable Fissile Materials Final Programmatic Environmental Impact Statement (S&D PEIS), DOE's strategy for disposition of surplus plutonium is to pursue an approach that allows immobilization of surplus plutonium in glass or ceramic materials for disposal in a geologic repository pursuant to the Nuclear Waste Policy Act, and burning of some of the surplus plutonium as MOX fuel in existing, domestic, commercial reactors, with subsequent disposal of spent fuel in a geologic repository pursuant to the Nuclear Waste Policy Act. The ROD stated that DOE would retain the option of dispositioning some of the weapons-usable plutonium as MOX fuel in heavy-water-moderated reactors, such as CANDU reactors, in the event of a future multilateral agreement among Russia, Canada, and the United States.

would be managed under the Canadian spent fuel program.

Alternatives Considered

The EA describes several alternatives to the proposed action as well as the No Action Alternative.

No Action: The No Action alternative provides an environmental baseline to compare to the potential effects of the Proposed Action. Under this alternative, LANL would continue to store the existing MOX fuel at TA-55. No additional fuel pellets or additional fuel rods would be made for the Parallex Project. The AECL would have no source of U.S. MOX fuel rods and, therefore, would have to cancel its testing program at the NRU reactor in parallel with Russian MOX fuel, or if Russian fuel were made available, operate the testing program in the absence of U.S. supplied MOX fuel.

Other Transportation Routes: Seven routes were analyzed for the shipment of MOX fuel from LANL to the Canadian border. Each route involves a separate point of entry into Canada. In accordance with standard transportation planning practices, all routes use available interstate highways and city bypasses, where available, to go around high-population areas, and meet Department of Transportation routing requirements. For very specific reasons, DOE has decided not to use two of these routes. The Port Huron, MI route would not be used because of construction on the Blue Water Bridge, and the Detroit, MI route would not be used because the Ambassador Bridge currently does not allow placarded (i.e., carrying hazardous material) vehicles. Other possible interstate highway routes, such as via Sweetgrass, Montana and Champlain, New York were not evaluated because of excessive travel distances.

MOX Fabrication at Other DOE Facilities: Under this alternative, MOX fuel would be fabricated at other DOE facilities and then shipped to CRL. No DOE site other than LANL presently has the ability to fabricate MOX fuel. Furthermore much of the raw materials that would be used in the demonstration are already located at LANL. The time required to upgrade other sites to produce MOX fuel would delay the further fabrication and shipment of MOX fuel such that the Parallex Project schedule would not be met. Therefore, this alternative was dismissed from further analysis.

Other Technologies for MOX Evaluation: This alternative would use other methods such as computer simulation or surrogate fuels to evaluate the MOX fuel fabrication process. The

use of computer simulation is not developed to the point where it can be applied to MOX fuel fabrication. The use of surrogate fuels in the Parallex Project would not produce the irradiation data required for verifying reactor performance. Therefore, this alternative was dismissed from further analysis.

Transport of MOX Fuel by Air: Federal regulations under 10 CFR 71.88 (Air Transport of Plutonium) explicitly prohibit the transport of plutonium by air or the delivery to a carrier for air transport unless the plutonium is in a form with a specific activity no greater than 0.002 $\mu\text{Ci/g}$, and shipped in a single package with no more than a specified quantity. The restrictions imposed for transportation of plutonium by air prohibit this alternative for shipment of the MOX fuel quantities needed for the Parallex Project. Therefore, this alternative was dismissed from further analysis.

Transport of MOX Fuel by Rail: Rail shipment is an allowable mode for the transport of radioactive materials and is regulated by the U.S. Department of Transportation (DOT) under 49 CFR 174.700. However, there is no direct rail service from Los Alamos, New Mexico. Moreover, this mode of transport would not be feasible because of the lack of dedicated rail routes, and long layovers for railcar transfers. Cumulatively, all these factors negate use of this transport mode.

Shipment of MOX Fuel by Safe Secure Transport (SST): The SST fleet is a DOE owned and operated transportation system that consists of armored tractor-trailers and special escort vehicles. The added security and expense of the SST system is not needed because the MOX fuel would be in small quantities, would have a negligible radiation dose to the public, and could not easily be converted into weapons-usable form.

Environmental Impacts

The results of evaluations in key impact areas are summarized in the following section; other types of consequences were determined to be negligible and are not discussed in detail.

Human Health: The potential threat to workers from MOX fuel fabrication would come from penetrating radiation. No excess fatal cancers would be expected in the involved workers from penetrating radiation exposures. Noninvolved workers, those performing other jobs as well as the usual PF-4 building personnel, would not be expected to receive a dose from the proposed operation. MOX fuel

fabrication is not expected to measurably increase the airborne radioactive material emissions from PF-4 associated with routine operations; therefore, no effects to the public are expected.

Facility Accidents: Abnormal events or accidents are hypothetical incidents that are not a planned part of routine operations. A fire in the MOX fuel fabrication line was chosen for the accident analysis. The likelihood of this accident occurring was categorized as "unlikely." The small amount of material that would be released within PF-4 and the reduction of that release by the two-stage high-efficiency particulate air (HEPA) filtration system would result in a negligible dose to the offsite maximum exposed individual (MEI) and no latent cancer fatalities (LCFs) within the offsite population. The radiological dose to involved workers from such an accident was estimated at 1.8 rem, with calculated LCFs of less than one.

Transportation: No changes to the existing highway infrastructure would be required to allow passage of the MOX fuel shipment(s), nor would roads need to be closed. The normal traffic flow along the MOX fuel transportation routes would not be expected to change with the added presence of one to three commercial truck(s). The shipment(s) of MOX fuel by commercial truck from LANL to the Canadian border would not be expected to adversely affect the health of the truck crew or the public along any of the analyzed routes.

Transportation Accidents: Two transportation accident scenarios were analyzed for the shipment of MOX fuel to the Canadian border. One accident would involve the release of radioactive materials and the other would not involve the release of radioactive materials.

The first accident relates to an event that leads to the MOX fuel package container breaking open, igniting, and releasing plutonium dioxide particles into the air. The probability of such a severe accident occurring and adversely affecting the public is extremely unlikely. The accident scenario could occur anywhere along the transportation corridors, and could have transboundary effects on Canadian populations. The population and individual doses would be very small. Therefore, no LCFs would be expected from an accident during the shipment(s) of MOX fuel to Canada.

Under the second accident scenario for MOX fuel transportation to the Canadian border, no radioactive material would be released by the vehicular collision. This scenario

analyzed potential fatalities from the force of a collision. Results of the accident analysis indicated that no driver or public fatalities would be expected.

Air Quality: Air emission from the fabrication of MOX fuel pellets and rods for the Paralex Project would be a very small percentage of the overall LANL annual air emissions. The MOX fuel pellets and rods would be made inside sealed gloveboxes that have negative air pressure and a primary air system fitted with HEPA filtration. PF-4 laboratories also have negative air pressure and a separate HEPA filtered air system. The filters would prevent any measurable release of particles into the atmosphere. Therefore, no MOX fuel powder particles would be expected to be released from PF-4 into the environment.

No change to the air quality along the route(s) to Canada would be expected since the MOX fuel would be sealed in rods and package container(s) during transportation. A commercial truck carrying MOX fuel would be one out of thousands of trucks on the road at any one time. The overall contribution of nonradiological air pollutants from a single vehicle to the air quality within a given airshed would be immeasurable.

Waste Management: The small quantities of low-level radioactive waste (LLW) and transuranic (TRU) waste produced from MOX fuel fabrication would not appreciably increase waste generation rates at LANL. No mixed waste, hazardous waste, or additional nonhazardous solid waste would be generated from MOX fuel fabrication. MOX fuel fabrication would not measurably increase the volume of sanitary wastewater generated. No radioactive or hazardous waste would be generated during the shipment of MOX fuel to the Canadian border.

Environmental Justice: Executive Order 12898, Federal Actions to Address Environmental Justice in Minority Populations and Low-Income Populations, requires that Federal agencies identify and address, as appropriate, disproportionately high and adverse human health or environmental effects of their programs and activities on minority and low-income populations. Because no adverse effects are anticipated as a result of the proposed actions during both normal operations and accident conditions, there would be no opportunity for disproportionately high and adverse consequences on minority, or low-income populations.

Other Environmental Impacts: The consequences of the proposed action are expected to be negligible for other types

of impacts, including those on land use, socioeconomic, cultural resources, aesthetic or scenic resources, geologic resources, water resources, ecological resources, noise, or site services.

Cumulative Impacts: Because the contributions from the Proposed Action would be extremely small, the proposed action is not expected to contribute substantially to the overall cumulative impacts from past or anticipated operations at LANL and along the transportation corridors.

Determination

Based on the analysis in this EA, and after considering the preapproval review comments, I have concluded that the proposed action does not constitute a major federal action significantly affecting the quality of the human environment within the meaning of NEPA. Therefore, an EIS for the proposed action is not required.

Issued at Washington, DC, this 13th day of August 1999.

Laura Holgate,

Director, Office of Fissile Materials Disposition.

[FR Doc. 99-23331 Filed 9-7-99; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 6450-01-P

DEPARTMENT OF ENERGY

[FE Docket No. 99-48-NG]

Office of Fossil Energy; Milford Power Company, LLC; Order Granting Long-Term Authorization To Import Natural Gas From Canada

AGENCY: Office of Fossil Energy, DOE.

ACTION: Notice of order.

SUMMARY: The Office of Fossil Energy (FE) of the Department of Energy gives notice that it has issued an order granting Milford Power Company, LLC (Milford) long-term authorization to import up to 75,000 Mcf per day of natural gas from Canada, in accordance with the "Fuel Purchase Agreement" between Milford and El Paso Gas Marketing Company. The authorization is for a 20-year term beginning on the date of first delivery pursuant to this Order. This gas may be imported from Canada at Niagara Falls or Waddington, New York.

This Order may be found on the FE web site at <http://www.fe.doe.gov>, or on our electronic bulletin board at (202) 586-7853. It is also available for inspection and copying in the Office of Natural Gas & Petroleum Import & Export Activities Docket Room, 3E-033, Forrestal Building, 1000 Independence Avenue, S.W., Washington, D.C. 20585, (202) 586-9478. The docket room is

open between the hours of 8:00 a.m. and 4:30 p.m., Monday through Friday, except Federal holidays.

Issued in Washington, D.C., September 1, 1999.

John W. Glynn,

Manager, Natural Gas Regulation, Office of Natural Gas & Petroleum Import & Export Activities, Office of Fossil Energy.

[FR Doc. 99-23332 Filed 9-7-99; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 6450-01-P

DEPARTMENT OF ENERGY

Federal Energy Regulatory Commission

[Docket No. CP99-607-000]

Central New York Oil and Gas Company, LLC; Notice of Petition

September 1, 1999.

Take notice that on August 26, 1999, Central New York Oil and Gas Company, LLC (CNYOG), One Leadership Square, 211 North Robinson, Oklahoma City, Oklahoma 73102, filed in Docket No. CP99-607-000, a petition, pursuant to Rule 207(a)(5) of the Commission's Rules of Practice and Procedure (18 CFR 387.207(a)(5)), and section 7(c)(1)(B) of the Natural Gas Act, seeking approval of a temporary exemption from certificate requirements, all as more fully set forth in the petition which is on file with the Commission and open to public inspection. This filing may be viewed on the web at <http://www.ferc.us/online/rims.htm> (call 202-208-2222 for assistance).

Specifically, CNYOG seeks authorization to drill up to eight stratigraphic test wells in a producing natural gas field (Stagecoach Field) located in Tioga County, New York. CNYOG states that the test wells and related experimental well tail placement and data collection efforts are necessary to enable CNYOG to conduct additional research and development to verify the suitability of the Stagecoach Field reservoirs to storage development using Salternatives™ Technology being developed by eCORP, LLC, an affiliate of CNYOG.

Any questions regarding this petition should be directed to Jay C. Jimerson, eCORP, LLC, c/o Central New York Oil and Gas Company, LLC, One Leadership Square, 211 North Robinson, Oklahoma City, Oklahoma 73102 at (405) 235-0993 (Voice) or (405) 235-0992 (FAX).

Any person desiring to be heard or making any protest with reference to said petition should on or before September 13, 1999, file with the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission,