U.S. DEPARTMENT OF ENERGY
FINDING OF NO SIGNIFICANT IMPACT

ACTIVITIES USING BIOLOGICAL SIMULANTS AND RELEASES OF CHEMICALS AT THE NEVADA TEST SITE

The United States Department of Energy, National Nuclear Security Administration (NNSA) has prepared an Environmental Assessment (DOE/EA-1494) (EA) which analyzes the potential environmental effects of conducting tests, experiments, training, and other similar activities using biological simulants (non-infectious bacteria, fungi, viruses, and similar materials) and controlled releases of various chemicals at the Nevada Test Site. The EA evaluates the potential impacts of using six biological simulants and unspecified chemicals. Three alternatives were evaluated. Two of the alternatives were subsets of the proposed action: (1) Conduct chemical releases only, and (2) Conduct only activities using biological simulants. The third alternative addressed in the EA is No Action. The purpose and need for the proposed action are addressed in Chapter 1.0 of the EA. A detailed description of the proposed action and alternatives is in Chapter 2.0. Chapter 3.0 describes the affected environment and the environmental consequences, including cumulative impacts, of the proposed action and alternatives. Chapter 4 addresses mitigation measures and monitoring requirements. Statutes, regulations, consultations, and other requirements are addressed in Chapter 5.0 of the EA. Cumulative effects are addressed in Section 5.0. Mitigation measures are addressed in Section 6.0.

The NNSA determined that the proposed action as described in the EA, i.e., undertaking activities using biological simulants and releases of chemicals in the environment, best meets the needs of the agency in accomplishing its mission of supporting national security while maintaining adequate controls to protect worker and public health and safety and protect the environment.

FINDING:

Based on the information and analysis in the EA, the NNSA finds that neither the proposed action nor the alternatives would constitute a major federal action significantly affecting the quality of the human environment within the meaning of the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969 (42 U.S.C. 4321 *et seq.*). Thus, an environmental impact statement is not required.

Signed in Las Vegas, Nevada, this 30th day of June, 2004

for Kathleen A. Carlson, Manager
NNSA Nevada Site Office