U. S. DEPARTMENT OF ENERGY
NATIONAL NUCLEAR SECURITY ADMINISTRATION
FINDING OF NO SIGNIFICANT IMPACT

EXPANSION OF PERMITTED LAND AND OPERATIONS AT THE 9940 COMPLEX AND THUNDER RANGE
at
SANDIA NATIONAL LABORATORIES, NEW MEXICO

The United States Department of Energy (DOE) National Nuclear Security Administration (NNSA) has prepared an environmental assessment (EA) for the Expansion of Permitted Land and Operations at the 9940 Complex and Thunder Range at Sandia National Laboratories, New Mexico. The EA analyzes the potential effects of a proposal to increase testing and training activities and expansion of operations. Currently DOE activities occur on approximately 540 acres at the 9940 Complex and Thunder Range and would increase by approximately 1,140 acres under the proposed action. Explosives testing would increase in frequency and size. The maximum number of explosive events would be 2470 annually with almost two thirds of testing utilizing up to just one pound of explosives per event. Up to 15 tests are proposed annually with a maximum limit of 2,000 pounds of explosives per event. The no-action alternative would be to continue testing and training activities on the existing 540 acres with up to 996 explosive events annually with a maximum explosive limit of 350 pounds. The EA analyzes impacts to air quality, noise, water quality and biological resources resulting from the increased testing and training activities and associated cumulative effects. A detailed description of the proposed action and its environmental consequences is presented in the EA.

Based on the analysis presented in the EA and the concerns of interested stakeholders, the NNSA finds that there would be no significant impacts associated with the proposed action. NNSA makes this Finding of No Significant Impact pursuant to the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) of 1969 (42 U.S.C. 4321 et seq.), the Council on Environmental Quality implementing regulations (40 CFR 1500), and the DOE NEPA regulations (10 CFR 1021). The proposed action does not constitute a major federal action that would significantly affect the human environment within the mandate of NEPA. Therefore, no environmental impact statement is required for this proposal.

Signed in Albuquerque, New Mexico this 17 day of April, 2008

Patty Wagner

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