

**U. S. DEPARTMENT OF ENERGY
FINDING OF NO SIGNIFICANT IMPACT
SURFACE WATER DRAINAGE SYSTEM AT
ROCKY FLATS ENVIRONMENTAL TECHNOLOGY SITE**

SUMMARY: The Department of Energy (DOE) has prepared an environmental assessment (EA), DOE/EA-1093, of activities proposed to correct deficiencies in, and then to maintain, the surface water drainage system serving the DOE's Rocky Flats Environmental Technology Site (Rocky Flats or Site) near Golden, Colorado. The scope of the EA includes alternatives to the proposed action including the no action alternative and partial implementation of the proposed action. No comments were received during a public comment period from September 1 to October 1, 1995.

The DOE has determined that portions of the surface water drainage system may not be adequate to convey the runoff from a 100-year storm event, thus creating the potential for terminal pond dams to be breached and contaminants to be transported from the individual hazardous substance sites into surface water.

PROPOSED ACTION: To ensure the surface water drainage system at the Site is adequate and to comply with the Clean Water Act §402(p)(1)(B), the Site's National Pollution Discharge Elimination System permit, and DOE Order 6430 requirements for controlling stormwater runoff, the DOE proposes that a management program including repair, upgrade, and maintenance of the Site's surface water drainage system be implemented. The following maintenance programs, projects, and environmental control measures are integral to the proposed integrated program:

- Industrial Area Maintenance Program
- Buffer Zone Maintenance Program
- Pond A-1 Bypass Upgrades Project
- South Interceptor Ditch Repair Project
- Environmental Control Measures
 - Contaminant Transport Control
 - Wetland Impact Minimization
 - Wetland Replacement
 - Spill Prevention, Containment, and Cleanup
 - Biota Protection
 - Erosion Control
 - Revegetation
 - Work Specification
 - Worker Health Protection

The specifics of these programs, projects, and control measures are described in the EA. While the EA analyzes the full scope of the proposed action as described above, the DOE may implement any, all, or none of the actions described.

ALTERNATIVES CONSIDERED: The EA examined the no action alternative which would maintain the status quo by continuing routine maintenance of the drainage system in areas where there are no protected biota or wetland vegetation. This alternative was deemed unacceptable because it did not meet the need to make improvements so that the surface water drainage system is adequate. Partial implementation of the proposed action, consisting of only those parts of the proposed action involving repair or replacement, was the other alternative considered in detail. This alternative would provide some improvements to the drainage system, but was deemed insufficient.

Alternatives initially considered but not analyzed in detail were total upgrade of the surface water drainage system, rerouting of drainage flows to a centralized waterway, and reduction of runoff into the surface water drainage system. The total upgrade alternative was determined to be too expensive given the current Site mission and would cause too much disturbance to Site soil, sediment, wetlands, biota, and daily operations. The rerouting of drainage flows alternative was dismissed for the same reasons. Reducing runoff into the surface water drainage system was also determined to be unfeasible because it, too, would require extensive disturbance to the environment and Site facilities and would not provide sufficient runoff control.

ENVIRONMENTAL EFFECTS: The proposed action would potentially affect biological resources (wetlands and wildlife), physical resources (surface water), and human health. Approximately 0.29 acres of wetlands would be damaged or removed during structure cleanout which is necessary to meet the need for correcting deficiencies in the Site's surface water drainage system identified in the EA. Replacement wetlands from the Site Wetland Mitigation Bank will be utilized to mitigate the loss of wetlands resulting from the proposed action, as agreed to in a Memorandum of Agreement between the DOE, the Environmental Protection Agency, the Army Corps of Engineers, and the Fish and Wildlife Service dated April 16, 1996. The Site's standard procedures for complying with the Endangered Species Act and the Migratory Bird Treaty Act would be followed to minimize effects on Site wildlife.

Construction activities could potentially affect water quality by resuspending sediments and creating turbidity. To avoid these impacts, all final construction plans would be subject to the Site's standard procedures outlined in the Watershed Management Plan for Rocky Flats. Project-specific health and safety plans would be developed and reviewed by the safety organization to ensure that all applicable safety requirements for protection of human health were met.

DETERMINATION: Based on the information and analyses of impacts in the EA, the DOE has determined that the proposed action does not constitute a major federal action significantly affecting the quality of the human environment within the meaning of the NEPA. Therefore, preparation of an environmental impact statement is not required. The DOE is approving this Environmental Assessment and issuing this Finding of No Significant Impact for the proposed action.

Signed in Golden, Colorado, this 21st day of May, 1996.



Mark N. Silverman
Manager
Rocky Flats Field Office
U.S. Department of Energy

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION ABOUT THIS ACTION CONTACT:

John Stover
Ecology Management Team Leader
Rocky Flats Field Office
U.S. Department of Energy
PO Box 928 - 460
Golden, Colorado 80402-0928
Telephone: (303) 966-7460

PUBLIC AVAILABILITY:

Copies of this EA or further information on the DOE NEPA process are available from:

Reginald Tyler
NEPA Compliance Officer
Rocky Flats Field Office
U.S. Department of Energy
PO Box 928 - 460
Golden, Colorado 80402-0928
Telephone: (303) 966-5927