

**FINDING OF NO SIGNIFICANT IMPACT
FOR DEVELOPMENT IN PROXIMITY TO THE
WILLIAM R. WILEY ENVIRONMENTAL
MOLECULAR SCIENCES LABORATORY,
PACIFIC NORTHWEST NATIONAL LABORATORY,
RICHLAND, WASHINGTON
(DOE/EA-1958)**

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF ENERGY
OFFICE OF SCIENCE, PACIFIC NORTHWEST SITE OFFICE

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U.S. DEPARTMENT OF ENERGY
OFFICE OF SCIENCE, PACIFIC NORTHWEST SITE OFFICE

AGENCY: U.S. Department of Energy

ACTION: Finding of No Significant Impact

SUMMARY: The U.S. Department of Energy (DOE) has prepared an Environmental Assessment (EA), DOE/EA-1958, to assess environmental impacts associated with the construction and operation of proposed new facilities and infrastructure and/or additions to existing facilities and infrastructure on the DOE Pacific Northwest National Laboratory (PNNL) Site in Richland, Washington. The proposed facilities and/or additions and proposed infrastructure would be located on 12 ha (30 ac) of previously disturbed federal property south of Horn Rapids Road in immediate proximity to the William R. Wiley Environmental Molecular Sciences Laboratory (EMSL). The proposed facilities and/or additions would provide up to 9,000 m² (100,000 ft²) of additional state-of-the-art general-purpose laboratories (i.e., chemistry, instrumentation, and biology laboratories) and supporting facilities as needed. The necessary infrastructure would include water (e.g., fire protection, potable, and irrigation), sanitary sewer, electrical power, communications, natural gas, and a service road.

The notification for the draft EA was published on May 30, 2013. No public comments were received on the draft. During the public comment review for the draft South Federal Campus Development Environmental Assessment (EA), a title change was requested and was implemented in the final EA. This change is administrative in nature and does not affect any technical aspect of the document—the purpose, need, and scope of this final EA are unchanged from those in the draft. No technical changes were made due to public comment review. The new title for the final EA is “Environmental Assessment for Future Development in Proximity to the William R. Wiley Environmental Molecular Sciences Laboratory, Pacific Northwest National Laboratory, Richland, Washington”.

Based on the analyses of environmental impacts in the final EA, 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 of 1969* (NEPA), 42 USC 4321, et seq. Therefore, the preparation of an Environmental Impact Statement is not required.

PROPOSED ACTION: The DOE-Office of Science (DOE-SC) is proposing to construct new facilities and infrastructure and/or additions to existing facilities and infrastructure in immediate proximity to the EMSL on the DOE PNNL Site. The proposed facilities and infrastructure construction or expansion of existing facilities would take place on the DOE PNNL Site, which is DOE-SC owned property

surrounding the EMSL. The proposed facilities and/or additions would enable continued research support for DOE-SC's mission and provide up to 9,000 m² (100,000 ft²) of additional state-of-the-art general-purpose laboratories (i.e., chemistry, instrumentation, and biology laboratories) and supporting facilities as needed. The necessary infrastructure would include water (e.g., fire protection, potable, and irrigation), sanitary and process sewer, electrical power, communications, natural gas, and a service road. The proposed facilities and/or additions may contain chemical, physical, biological, limited radioactive materials, and other moderate hazards. Specifically, radioactive materials that could be located in the proposed facilities and/or additions would be limited to materials that present no foreseeable impacts to public or environment. The types and quantities of radioactive materials that would be used in the proposed facilities and/or additions would be similar to those currently used in the EMSL. These materials include sealed radioactive sources, consumer products containing radioactive materials, naturally occurring radioactive materials (NORM), and low activity research samples. The use would be covered by existing air, waste, or water permitting.

NO-ACTION ALTERNATIVE. Under the No-Action Alternative, DOE-SC would not construct new facilities and infrastructure and/or add to current facilities and infrastructure in immediate proximity to the EMSL on the DOE PNNL Site. Existing research laboratories would continue to function without the benefit of the additional research capabilities.

ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACTS: The EA presents an evaluation of environmental impacts from constructing new facilities and/or additions and proposed infrastructure in immediate proximity to the EMSL, including impacts on land use, air quality, water quality, geological resources, biological resources, cultural and historic resources, socioeconomic, environmental justice, resource commitments, transportation, waste management and pollution prevention, noise, and human health and safety. Cumulative impacts with other past, present, and reasonably foreseeable operations in the vicinity were also considered.

The exact footprint and design of each facility and/or addition has not been finalized; therefore, bounding analyses were used to determine impacts from the Proposed Action. Data from recent construction of new facilities on the DOE PNNL Site and data from operating facilities were used to bound the analyses. The two alternatives assessed for environmental impacts were the Proposed Action and the No-Action Alternative. The No-Action Alternative assumes existing research laboratories would continue to function without the benefit of the additional research capabilities.

Construction Impacts. Construction of the proposed facilities and/or additions and proposed infrastructure would be compatible with existing land-use designations established by DOE, Benton County, and the City of Richland. No adverse impacts to site geology are expected. Temporary noise and air-quality impacts would be anticipated during construction, but would be within regulatory standards for criteria pollutants and particulates. Impacts on surface water and groundwater quality from construction would be expected to be minimal. The area of the Proposed Action houses no historic properties, and protective measures are in place should unknown cultural resources be discovered by site construction workers. The area of the Proposed Action does not contain sensitive biological resources or critical habitats that would be affected by construction. Effluents and wastes generated during construction would be minimized to the extent practicable. Minor positive employment and income impacts would result from construction. Transportation impacts related to the construction of proposed facilities would likely be minor. Approximately 321 m³ (420 yd³) of construction and demolition debris would be generated and disposed of at the Horn Rapids Sanitary landfill. Because construction activities

would be staged over several years, impacts from disposal of construction debris would be negligible. Health and safety risks to the workers and members of the public from construction activities would be small.

Operational Impacts. Operational impacts of the proposed facilities and/or additions and proposed infrastructure would be minimal and similar to the impacts from existing facilities at PNNL. No unique occupational health and safety hazards would be expected. Construction and operation would result in minimal incremental addition to the cumulative impacts of other PNNL operations and other projects in the vicinity and region.

AVAILABILITY OF EA AND FURTHER INFORMATION:

DOE/EA-1958 may be accessed electronically at: <http://science.energy.gov/pnso>.

Requests for single copies of the EA or other related information may be referred to:

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P.O. Box 350 MS K9-42
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Further information regarding the DOE NEPA process is available from:

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DETERMINATION: Based on the analyses of environmental impacts in the final EA, it is concluded that the proposed construction of new facilities and proposed infrastructure and/or addition to existing facilities and proposed infrastructure in the immediate proximity of the William R. Wiley Environmental Sciences Laboratory on the DOE PNNL Site in Richland, Washington, would not constitute a major federal action significantly affecting the quality of the human environment within the meaning of the NEPA. Therefore, an Environmental Impact Statement for the Proposed Action is not required. With this determination, DOE can proceed with the initial phase of development in the immediate proximity of the William R. Wiley Environmental Sciences Laboratory on the DOE PNNL Site.

Issued in Richland, Washington, this 22nd day of July, 2013.



Roger Snyder
Manager, Pacific Northwest Site Office