

**FOR FURTHER INFORMATION ON GENERAL DOE FLOODPLAIN/WETLANDS ENVIRONMENTAL REVIEW REQUIREMENTS, CONTACT:**

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**SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:**

**I. Project Description**

DOE proposes to improve its treatment of wastewater from HE research and development activities at the Los Alamos National Laboratory (LANL). The proposed HEWTF project would focus on greatly reducing the amount of HE-contaminated wastewater needing treatment prior to its discharge to the environment. This would entail extensive facility and process modifications, including installation of new equipment and improvements in existing systems. The thrust of these modifications would be to prevent hazardous chemicals and HE from entering the wastewater stream and to curtail water use in the HE operations. The result would be an approximately 90 percent decrease in wastewater volume from the current level of 5,539,700 L/mo (1,463,598 gal./mo) to 535,549 L/mo (138,206 gal./mo). LANL would use two vacuum trucks to transport wastewater from HE processing facilities to one new treatment building.

A new treatment plant would be built to handle all HE wastewater. The proposed location of the treatment plant is on a mesa top in Technical Area (TA) 16. The treated wastewater would be discharged into an existing National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) permitted outfall at TA-16. The number of NPDES outfalls for HE contaminated wastewater would be reduced from 16 to 1. All effluent would meet or exceed effluent quality standards in the recently revised NPDES permit, which took effect on August 1, 1994.

**II. Floodplain/Wetland Effects**

In 1990, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) mapped wetlands at LANL in accordance with the National Wetlands Inventory standards. The USFWS survey identified one wetland area in the project area. This is an engineered pond in TA-16 behind Building 90 and is classified as a "palustrine, unconsolidated shore, seasonally flooded, and diked/impounded (PUSCh) wetland area." The pond received liquid waste sometime between the 1940s and 1980s. It now

receives only seasonal rain and snowfall and may dry up for approximately four weeks each year.

In addition to the USFWS-described wetlands, there are 27 NPDES outfalls within the area, 15 of which are classified as HE-contaminated. Of these, eight (05A-052, 05A-053, 05A-054, 05A-058, 05A-061, 05A-069, 05A-071, and 05A-072) support hydrophytic vegetation. These are man-induced wetlands. A man-induced wetland is an area that has developed characteristics of naturally-occurring wetlands due to human activities.

Implementation of the HEWTF project would not involve construction within the boundaries of any wetlands. However, the HEWTF would stop the flow from over one-half of the outfalls in the area and inevitably eliminate some wetland areas. At the same time, it may enhance the wetland at the new treatment facility as a result of a four-fold increase in effluent volume. However, total discharge volume would be reduced.

Cañon del Valle and Water Canyon, both affected by HE wastewater outfalls, contain small floodplains. Floodplains in Los Alamos County have been mapped using the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers' computer-based Flood Hydrograph Package to define the 100-year frequency, 6-hour design storm events. None of the proposed HEWTF falls within this floodplain.

In accordance with DOE regulations for compliance with floodplain and wetlands environmental review requirements (10 CFR Part 1022), DOE will prepare a floodplain and wetlands assessment for this proposed DOE action.

The assessment will be included in the EA being prepared for the proposed project in accordance with the requirements of the National Environmental Policy Act. A floodplain statement of findings will be included in any finding of no significant impact that is issued following the completion of the EA or may be issued separately.

Issued in Los Alamos, New Mexico on August 14, 1995.

**Joseph C. Vozella,**

*Assistant Area Manager for Environment and Projects.*

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**Noncompetitive Financial Assistance**

**AGENCY:** U.S. Department of Energy (DOE).

**ACTION:** Notice of intent.

**SUMMARY:** The U.S. Department of Energy, Idaho Operations Office,

announces that it intends to award a noncompetitive financial assistance grant to the Oregon Institute of Technology, Geo-Heat Center (OIT). The purpose of this grant is to provide continued services to state and federal agencies, engineering consultants, planners and developers who request assistance for the development of geothermal direct uses. The award of this noncompetitive assistance is justified under sub-paragraphs (A) and (B) of the DOE Financial Assistance Rules 10 CFR 600.7(b)(2)(i) as follows: (A) The activity to be funded is necessary for the satisfactory completion of research and the continuation of direct use assistance presently being funded by DOE under Grant No. DE-FG07-90ID13040, and for which competition for support would have a significant adverse effect on continuity of the activity; (B) The activity would be conducted by the applicant using its own resources or those donated or provided by third parties; however, DOE support of the activity would enhance the public benefits to be derived.

**FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:**

Carol Bruns, U.S. Department of Energy, Idaho Operations Office, 850 Energy Drive, MS 1221, Idaho Falls, Idaho 83401-1563, (208) 526-1534.

**SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:** The statutory authority for the proposed award is Public Law 93-40, Geothermal Research, Development, and Demonstration Act of 1974. The overall program objective is to obtain increased utilization of the large direct-heat resource base by providing users with: (1) direct-use geothermal project technical and development assistance, (2) research to aid in resource and technical development problems, and (3) information, educational materials and services to stimulate development. These activities will further advance the knowledge to meet the public need to help reduce dependence upon foreign energy sources and help reduce atmospheric pollution. The anticipated grant will cover an award period of five years with an estimated total cost of \$1,600,000.

**R. Jeffrey Hoyles,**

*Director, Procurement Services Division.*

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