

2300 W. Alameda St. #D3
Santa Fe, New Mexico 87507
October 21, 2010

The Honorable Dr. Steven Chu, Secretary
Department of Energy
1000 Independence Ave SW
Washington, DC 20585

Dear Secretary Chu,

The proposed Chemistry and Metallurgy Research Replacement Nuclear Facility (CMRRNF) at Los Alamos National Laboratory would have a large environmental impact on its region. The last Environment Impact Statement (EIS) done on the concept was in 2003 when the project was much much smaller. The environmental impacts of the current concept are much greater and the appropriate alternatives different than those considered in the 2003 Statement. I request you place a moratorium on investment in the CMRRNF until a full environmental impact statement is completed on the current concept.

Although there apparently is no established preliminary design and project cost yet, the current concept is seven or more times expensive than that in 2003 (now at least \$4 Billion!), the time to construct four times greater, the amount of concrete fifty times greater, and the amount of steel and heavy truck traffic much greater. Green house gas emissions and the radioactive and hazardous chemical waste generated would be much greater also. Post 2003 features with environmental impacts include worker housing, road relocations, a warehouse and an electrical substation. The huge amount of excavated material, due to increasing the depth from 50 to 125 feet, may be placed on existing waste sites of nuclear, toxic and hazardous materials. Eventual decommissioning raises environmental concerns since there would be a large amount of radioactive material to dispose of.

A major accident at this greatly expanded facility would be an environmental disaster for the area including the cities of Espanola and Santa Fe and the many villages and pueblos in the region. Local governments are generally not well aware of the greater impacts.

Clearly, a supplement to the 2003 EIS would not be adequate for the greatly expanded impacts of the current CMRRNF concept nor address more appropriate alternatives that have arisen since 2003. Also clearly, further funding the project before a full EIS is completed does not make sense. With participation of local governments, technical experts and public participation in a full EIS, better choices can be made.

Therefore, I respectfully request that the Department of Energy prepare a new EIS for the CMRRNF and its alternatives in keeping with the National Environmental Policy Act regulations.

Sincerely,

John M. Otter