

these analyses as part of the decisionmaking process for: (1) Programmatic (nationwide) decisions regarding the management of DOE and Navy spent nuclear fuel; and (2) site-specific decisions regarding the future direction of the environmental restoration and waste management programs at the INEL. DOE's programmatic decisions will determine the locations for managing existing and projected quantities of spent nuclear fuel from now until the year 2035. DOE's site-specific decisions for INEL will determine how to manage environmental restoration and waste management activities and spent nuclear fuel during the next 10 years. DOE's objectives are to mitigate, through environmental restoration, the impacts of previous operations, and to treat, store, and dispose of waste at INEL in a safe and efficient manner.

#### Alternatives Considered

Programmatic management alternatives for spent nuclear fuel discussed in Volume 1 include: Alternative 1, No Action—perform minimum activities required for safe and secure management at or close to the generation site or current storage location; Alternative 2, Decentralization—storage and stabilization of most spent nuclear fuel at or near the generation site with limited shipments from university and non-DOE facilities; Alternative 3, the 1992/1993 Planning Basis—transport to and store newly generated spent nuclear fuel at INEL or the Savannah River Site and consolidate some existing spent nuclear fuel at INEL; Alternative 4, Regionalization—distribute existing and projected spent nuclear fuel among DOE sites based on fuel type or geographic location (an eastern regional site and a western regional site); and Alternative 5, Centralization—manage all existing and projected spent nuclear fuel at one site until ultimate disposition. Five DOE sites have been analyzed for roles in the management of DOE spent nuclear fuel: (1) the Hanford Site at Richland, Washington; (2) the Idaho National Engineering Laboratory in southeastern Idaho; (3) the Savannah River Site in Aiken, South Carolina; (4) the Oak Ridge Reservation in Oak Ridge, Tennessee; and (5) the Nevada Test Site near Mercury, Nevada. In addition, four Naval shipyards and the Kesselring site (near West Milton, New York) are being considered for management of Naval spent nuclear fuel only. The four Naval shipyards are: (1) Norfolk Naval Shipyard, Portsmouth, Virginia; (2) Portsmouth Naval Shipyard, Kittery, Maine; (3) Pearl Harbor Naval Shipyard,

Honolulu, Hawaii; and (4) Puget Sound Naval Shipyard, Bremerton, Washington.

The INEL site-specific alternatives related to environmental restoration and waste management discussed in Volume 2 include: Alternative A, No Action—complete all identified near-term actions and continue to operate most existing facilities; Alternative B, the 10-Year Plan—complete all identified actions and initiate new projects to enhance cleanup, manage laboratory wastes and spent nuclear fuel; Alternative C, Minimum Treatment, Storage, and Disposal—minimize treatment, storage and disposal activities to the extent possible, conduct minimum cleanup and decontamination and decommissioning activities prescribed by regulation and transfer spent nuclear fuel and waste from environmental restoration activities to another site; and Alternative D, Maximum Treatment, Storage, and Disposal—maximize treatment, storage and disposal functions at INEL to accommodate waste and spent nuclear fuel from the DOE complex and conduct maximum cleanup and decontamination and decommissioning.

#### Preferred Alternatives

DOE's preferred alternatives are identified in the final EIS. The identification of the preferred alternatives for Volume 1 and Volume 2 was based on consideration of environmental impacts, regulatory compliance, DOE and Navy spent nuclear fuel programmatic missions, Idaho National Engineering Laboratory environmental restoration and waste management programs, public comments, national security and defense, and cost.

#### Preferred Alternative for Programmatic Spent Fuel Management (Volume 1)

The DOE's preferred alternative for programmatic spent nuclear fuel management is Regionalization-By-Fuel-Type (Alternative 4A). Under this alternative, aluminum clad fuel would be consolidated at the Savannah River Site, non-aluminum fuel (including spent nuclear fuel from the Fort Saint Vrain reactor in Colorado) would be consolidated at the Idaho National Engineering Laboratory, and defense production fuel would be retained at the Hanford Site.

The Navy would continue to conduct refueling and defueling of nuclear-powered vessels and prototypes, and to transport spent nuclear fuel to the Idaho National Engineering Laboratory for full examination at the Expanded Core Facility and interim storage. Following

examination, fuel would remain in storage at the Idaho National Engineering Laboratory. The DOE preferred alternative is consistent with the Navy's preferred alternative identified in the draft EIS.

Under the preferred alternative, facility upgrades, replacements, and additions would be undertaken as necessary, and research and development activities would be conducted. Spent nuclear fuel processing might also occur. Other forms of stabilization might be needed to provide for safe storage and/or transport. Site-specific spent nuclear fuel management decisions will be made after further site-specific or project-specific NEPA evaluations, as appropriate, have been prepared.

The final EIS also states that for planning purposes, DOE assumes that some or all of the SNF in its inventory that satisfies a geologic repository's acceptance criteria, could be placed in the first repository developed under the Nuclear Waste Policy Act, as amended. While sufficient quantity and quality of information are still not available to determine whether the Yucca Mountain site is a suitable candidate for geologic disposal of SNF and high-level radioactive wastes, DOE is in the early planning stages of a repository EIS which will be prepared pursuant to the directives of the Nuclear Waste Policy Act, as amended. Until the repository EIS is complete, no final decision could be made concerning what DOE SNF would be accepted in a geologic repository.

#### Preferred Alternative for Environmental Restoration and Waste Management Programs at the Idaho National Engineering Laboratory (Volume 2)

The DOE's preferred alternative for INEL environmental restoration and waste management programs is the Ten Year Plan (Alternative B) enhanced to include elements from other alternatives. Under the preferred alternative, ongoing spent nuclear fuel management, environmental restoration, and waste management activities would continue and be enhanced to meet current and anticipated spent nuclear fuel management and waste handling needs. These enhanced activities, related to acceptance of additional offsite-generated materials and waste, would be needed to comply with applicable regulations and agreements. Existing environmental restoration and waste management facilities and projects would continue to operate. Waste generation from onsite sources would increase, as a result of regulatory