



Department of Energy
Office of Science
Berkeley Site Office
Lawrence Berkeley National Laboratory
1 Cyclotron Road, MS 90-1023
Berkeley, California 94720

DEC 01 2009

Ms Cynthia Bryant
Director
Office of Planning and Research
State of California
1400 Tenth St.
Sacramento, CA 95814

Subject: Notice of Preparation of a National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) Environmental Assessment (EA) for Computational Research and Theory (CRT) Facility Project at The Lawrence Berkeley National Laboratory (LBNL) Alameda County, California

Dear Ms. Bryant:

In accordance with the U.S. Department of Energy (DOE) NEPA regulations, DOE is preparing an EA for the subject project.

DOE may soon have a need to move its National Energy Research Scientific Computing Center (NERSC) from its present location in a leased building in downtown Oakland, California, to a new location, due in part to potentially insufficient electrical power availability at the present location as future generations of NERSC supercomputers are acquired. One possible site for the relocation of NERSC is a new facility proposed to be constructed by the University of California (UC) at LBNL in Berkeley, Alameda County, California.

In 2008 The Board of Regents of the University of California approved the construction and operation of a CRT project that would be located on UC property at the western edge of LBNL. The project includes an approximately 140,000-gross-square-foot building and associated infrastructure. This facility would be designed to house new advanced computational equipment and provide office space to support research and academic programs and the needs of computer scientists, mathematicians, and theoreticians at LBNL and UC Berkeley who are currently engaged in high performance computing and high performance production computing and computational research, collectively referred to as "CRT operations." The CRT facility could accommodate the NERSC should DOE elect to utilize it for that purpose.

This NEPA review will assess the environmental impact of relocation of the NERSC, including the impacts of UC's proposed construction and operation of the CRT Facility at the LBNL site; of relocating NERSC and/or the CRT operations to a facility at alternative sites (either in existing facilities or a facility to be built); and a no action alternative. DOE will provide the public an opportunity to review and comment on the EA prior to approval of the EA.

The NEPA review will also satisfy the requirements set out in an Order issued in *Save Strawberry Canyon v. DOE*, 2009 U.S. Dist. LEXIS 72431 (N.D. Cal. Aug. 17, 2009) in which the District Court held that "[t]he CRT project, including the construction of the CRT facility at LBNL, is subject to NEPA. The construction of the CRT will remain enjoined until proper NEPA review is completed by the Department of Energy." (Emphasis in the original.)

The NEPA Compliance Officer for this document is Mr. Gary S. Hartman (Oak Ridge Office of Science Integrated Service Center at 865-576-0273); the NEPA Document Manager is Mr. Kim Abbott (DOE Office of Science, Berkeley Site Office). If you have any questions regarding the NEPA document or process for this project, please contact the undersigned at (510) 486-7909.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "K. Abbott", written in a cursive style.

Kim Abbott
NEPA Document Manager
Berkeley Site Office

cc:

Carol Borgstrom, GC-20, HQ/FORS
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