

decisions regarding approach (i.e., upgrade or construct) and location (i.e., where on the site) for each function or activity. Environmental considerations will be addressed for footprint reduction activities as Y-12 surplus facilities are transitioned into the Environmental Management program consistent with the SSM PEIS and the Department's Lifecycle Asset Management Order. For most major functions or activities, additional NEPA evaluations would be required as more detailed information becomes available in order to make subsequent decisions regarding construction and operation. However, as an exception to this general approach, DOE will analyze the potential impacts of designing, constructing, and operating a new enriched uranium storage facility, for which conceptual design has begun and sufficient information is available.

Under the Upgrade Alternative, the SWEIS will assess impacts from extensive upgrade/retrofit of existing processes and facilities, such as: enriched uranium manufacturing, depleted uranium manufacturing, lithium manufacturing, assembly/disassembly, general manufacturing, office facilities, and other support facilities.

Under the Construction Alternative, the SWEIS will assess the impacts of replacing existing processes and facilities with newly designed and constructed processes and facilities, such as: enriched uranium manufacturing, depleted uranium manufacturing, lithium manufacturing, assembly/disassembly, general manufacturing, office facilities, and other support facilities.

Under the Upgrade/Construction Alternative, the SWEIS will assess the impacts of the combination of extensive upgrades to certain existing processes and facilities and the design and construction of certain new processes and facilities. This alternative will include a combination of both existing upgraded/new processes and facilities, such as: enriched uranium manufacturing, depleted uranium manufacturing, lithium manufacturing, assembly/disassembly, general manufacturing, office facilities, and other support facilities.

The No Action Alternative would continue current facility operations throughout Y-12 in support of assigned missions. NEPA regulations require analysis of the No Action alternative to provide a benchmark for comparison with environmental effects of the other alternatives. This alternative reflects the current nuclear weapons program missions at Y-12, and includes the

manufacture and assembly/disassembly of weapons components, and the continued processing and storage of enriched uranium materials in existing facilities. As specified in the SSM PEIS and the S&D PEIS, these operations would continue in a reduced footprint of consolidated operations. This alternative also includes environmental considerations of footprint reduction activities as Y-12 surplus facilities are transitioned into the Environmental Management program consistent with the SSM PEIS and the Department's Lifecycle Asset Management Order. Limited upgrades of existing facilities are underway and their completion would be included in the No Action alternative.

Other Alternatives Considered

Members of the public have in the past expressed interest in shutting down all operations at Y-12 and deactivating some or all facilities. As discussed in the Background section above, DOE has considered these suggestions in previous PEIS documents. DOE recognizes that Y-12 has unique capabilities and diverse roles supporting a variety of national programs, and that there is an essential near-term need to manage and maintain the safety and stability of the existing nuclear materials inventory. In addition, the *National Security Strategy for a New Century*, issued by The White House in October 1998, emphasizes the need to "ensure the continued viability of the infrastructure that supports U.S. nuclear forces and weapons." Accordingly, the DOE view at this time is that a decision to shut down or further reduce Y-12 missions within the time frame of the SWEIS would be highly unlikely. Therefore, DOE does not plan to analyze an alternative involving an orderly shutdown or further reduction during this period.

The Role of the SWEIS in the DOE NEPA Compliance Strategy

The SWEIS will be prepared pursuant to the NEPA of 1969, 42 USC 4321 et seq., the Council on Environmental Quality (CEQ) NEPA regulations (40 CFR Parts 1500-1508) and the DOE NEPA regulations (10 CFR Part 1021). The DOE has a policy (10 CFR 1021.330) of preparing SWEISs for certain large, multiple-facility sites such as Y-12. The purpose of a SWEIS is to: (1) provide DOE and its stakeholders with an analysis of the individual and cumulative environmental impacts resulting from ongoing and reasonably foreseeable new operations and facilities (and reasonable alternatives) at a DOE site; (2) provide a basis for site-wide

decision making; and (3) improve and coordinate agency plans, functions, programs, and resource utilization. A SWEIS can be used to efficiently and effectively analyze multiple proposals and help establish an efficient, environmentally sound, and cost-effective plan for operating the site and its facilities. Additionally, a SWEIS provides an overall NEPA baseline for a site that is useful as a reference when project-specific NEPA documents are prepared. The NEPA process allows for federal, state, tribal, county, municipal, and public participation in the environmental review process.

In accordance with 10 CFR 1021.330(d), DOE will evaluate the SWEIS at least every five years after its completion to determine whether it remains adequate, should be supplemented, or should be replaced with a new SWEIS.

The Y-12 Site-Wide Analysis

The SWEIS will address operations and activities that DOE foresees at Y-12 for the ten years following the publication of the ROD. The SWEIS is expected to facilitate and streamline subsequent NEPA reviews at Y-12 by allowing DOE to focus on project-specific issues and narrow and simplify the scope of later reviews. This process is called "tiering" (40 CFR 1508.28). DOE believes that the SWEIS analysis will provide adequate NEPA analysis for impacts related to existing and reasonably foreseeable activities and projects covered within the SWEIS.

Preliminary Environmental Analysis

The following issues have been identified for analysis in the SWEIS. The list is tentative and intended to facilitate public comment on the scope of this SWEIS. It is not intended to be all-inclusive, nor does it imply any predetermination of potential impacts. The DOE specifically invites suggestions for the addition or deletion of items on this list.

1. Potential effects on the public and workers from exposures to radiological and hazardous materials during normal operations, construction, and credible accident scenarios.

2. Impacts on surface and groundwater, floodplains and wetlands, and on water use and quality.

3. Impacts on air resources.

4. Impacts to plants and animals and their habitat, including species which are federal- or state-listed as threatened or endangered, of special concern, or economically/recreationally important.

5. Impacts on physiography, topography, geology, and soil characteristics.