The Administration’s Budget Request for Fiscal Year 2021 (FY21) for the Lawrence Livermore National Laboratory (LLNL) has been released. The numbers illustrate President Trump’s priorities in action at the Lab.

The FY21 budget detail, contained in the Department of Energy (DOE) Laboratory Tables, requests more than $2 billion for LLNL, up 7% from last year. The increase contains a 13% boost in funding for the budget line called Nuclear Weapons Activities, which includes the development of new and modified nuclear weapons. That increase for nukes comes at the expense of Defense Environmental Cleanup funds needed to Decontaminate & Decommission (D&D) heavily contaminated Lab buildings. This budget request puts workers and the public at risk.

The request for LLNL in FY21 is $2,022,522,000, an increase of $134,713,000 (7%) over what the Lab received for the same programs last year. (Notably, up 45% since Trump.)

Within that top line, here are the big winners and losers:

First, $200 million of the increase is for Nuclear Weapons Activities. As you can see in the pie chart, the FY21 request for Nuclear Weapons Activities is $1,794,430,000 (nearly $1.8 billion). This represents 88.7% of all the money requested for LLNL in FY21.

And, within the Nuclear Weapons Activities budget, the funding for Stockpile Major Modernization - predominantly the development of three major new nuclear weapon designs, the W80-4, W87-1 and W93 - is up 77% over last year. That’s right, a 77% increase for three new nukes. Wow!

Let’s compare the funds for Nuclear Weapons Activities to the Lab’s budget request for (non-weapons) Science, which is a mere 1.7% of the total. And, as you can see from the pie chart, research on Energy Efficiency and Renewables doesn’t even crack 0.5% of the request. And Defense Nuclear Non-Proliferation is struggling at the 8% mark.

This is a budget request that supports and accelerates a new global nuclear arms race, in line with the Administration’s Nuclear Posture Review. The lack of consideration given to public safety and the environment, via cleanup and Decontaminating & Decommissioning (D&D) contaminated buildings, is shocking.

Last year the budget included $128 million to D&D abandoned, heavily contaminated buildings at LLNL (called “High Risk” facilities in a report by the Inspector General). The Lab was in the process of finalizing contracts when this year’s budget request was released. Here is what the FY21 budget states: “Provided further, that of the unobligated balances from prior year appropriations available under this heading for LLNL Excess Facilities D&D, $109,000,000 is hereby permanently cancelled.”

To our dismay, the D&D budget request has been reduced to zero for FY21 despite the fact that much more money is required to finish the job - which has already languished for years.

One of LLNL’s “High Risk” buildings requiring priority D&D is the old, contaminated (with radiation and toxics) nuclear reactor located just within the Lab’s fence line off Vasco Road and Westgate Drive. This old reactor has cracks in the walls and shielding that can be seen with the naked eye. The Lab is using rebar to try and hold the structure together at present.

For some years now, Tri-Valley CAREs members have raised the alarm in Washington, DC and locally about these heavily contaminated, abandoned buildings at LLNL and other sites in the nuclear weapons complex. The government is letting this worker and public risk persist indefinitely while simultaneously throwing money at the development of new nuclear weapons.

We have a long way to go in transforming Livermore into a “Green Lab” dedicated to a civilian science mission and the moral obligation to clean up the environment from decades of nuclear weapons programs. In fact, the FY21 budget request rapidly moves LLNL in the opposite direction. But we will continue to challenge this momentum. Our work in in the coming months and years will seek to change what gets funded at Livermore Lab.

We aim to centrally change Livermore Lab’s mission and, in doing so, achieve ours. Join us!
NNSA’s latest rationale for new plutonium pit production is for a future “W87-1” warhead for the Air Force’s intercontinental ballistic missiles. But whereas the present W87 is an existing type of plutonium pit, according to NNSA budget documents, the agency plans to produce future “W87-like” pits, leaving much room for heavy modification. That could adversely impact national security because newly produced plutonium pits cannot be full-scale tested given the global nuclear weapons testing moratorium, or alternatively could push the U.S. back into testing with serious international proliferation consequences.

NEPA clearly requires that proposed major federal actions be subject to public environmental review, which federal executive agencies must undertake early in their decision-making processes. Since 2003 NNSA has tried to expand plutonium pit production through two supplemental PEISs and two LANL Site-Wide Environmental Impact Statements. The agency failed each time because of citizen opposition and lack of clear mission need. This perhaps explains why NNSA now refuses to prepare a new supplemental programmatic environmental impact statement for expanded pit production.

Tri-Valley CAREs and our fellow watchdog groups contend that is clearly required for three simple reasons: 1) NNSA must formally raise the pit production cap established in the 1996 PEIS; 2) a second site ~1,500 miles from LANL is now involved (i.e., the Savannah River Site); and 3) more than ample precedent exists for programmatic NEPA review of expanded pit production. Above all is the clear requirement in the 1998 Federal court order (obtained in prior litigation by NRDC on behalf of itself, Tri-Valley CAREs, and additional plaintiffs) that DOE must prepare a supplemental PEIS when it plans to produce more than 80 pits per year.

Together with our colleagues, we will do everything within our power to stop this dangerous plan from coming to fruition. Stay informed via our website and email blasts as we will need to gather public support for our opposition as it develops over the coming months.

♦ Print Bites ♦ All the News That Fits to Print

♦ Coronavirus. Our thoughts are with you, and with the world, right now. As we develop new ways to work while sheltering in place, our efforts to reduce spending on nuclear weapons to meet human needs takes on a special urgency in this time of pandemic. But our methods must change. DC Days had to be canceled. So too was our participation canceled at the UN, including a panel that was to feature Tri-Valley CAREs and allied groups on US nuclear policy. This newsletter has changed to accommodate the cancelations. Yet, on another level, the edition you are holding takes on a deeper meaning as it connects us across physical boundaries. In the coming days, check our website at www.trivalleycares.org. We will post links for teleconferences and other ideas so that we may all “keep on keeping on” with our work for a more peaceful, just and healthy world.

♦ Nuclear Deployment. The U.S. has deployed the new W76-2 warhead, and it is today patrolling on nuclear-armed submarines. The W76-2 is the “low yield” weapon called for in the Trump Nuclear Posture Review. Our regular readers will recall our advocacy to stop its deployment, and if you joined us with calls and letters, we thank you. This new warhead provides a “low yield” option to start a nuclear war. The administration’s theory is called “escalate to deescalate” and if you think that sounds nuts, you are correct. Reports are that the first deployment of this weapon was on a sub leaving Kings Bay Submarine Base in GA at the close of last year.

♦ Doomsday Clock. The Bulletin of the Atomic Scientists moved the hands if its iconic “Doomsday Clock” in January. The hands now stand at 100 seconds to midnight, symbolizing global catastrophe. The clock is 20 seconds closer to midnight than last year, and it’s the closest to midnight ever recorded since the clock’s beginning in in 1947. The magazine’s Nobel Laureates and experts stated: “Civilization-ending nuclear war – whether started by design, blunder, or simple miscalculation – is a genuine possibility.” The Bulletin also noted lack of progress on global climate change and growing cyber threats in its decision.

♦ The Pope. Several years ago Pope Francis broke with the practice of condemning nuclear weapons use while maintaining an awkward ambiguity about their possession by nuclear-armed states. The Pope continues to carry forward the teaching that nuclear weapons possession as well as use must be banned. Following a recent visit to Hiroshima, Francis said: “The use of nuclear weapons is immoral, which is why it needs to be added to the Catechism of the Catholic Church. Not only their use, but also possessing them because an accident or the madness of some government leader, [means] one person’s madness can destroy humanity.” The Pope’s vow to include church policy on nuclear weapons in the catechism marks a major step forward.
Exploding Nuclear Budget: The Just-Released Numbers for New Bombs

National Nuclear Security Administration’s (NNSA) Fiscal Year 2021 Budget Request:

NNSA has just released its detailed budget request for Fiscal Year (FY) 2021, which starts on October 1st of this year. The NNSA will use the requested funding to “modernize,” or redesign, nuclear warheads. The request is 20% higher than last year’s and more than 50% higher than the annual funding level when Trump took office.

This is the President’s funding request, yet the power of the purse ultimately lies with Congress. Therefore, it is important to note that the money request has to be authorized and appropriated. The budget will go through “markups” in the Senate and House Energy and Water Appropriations subcommittees. Then, it will be marked up in the full Senate and House Appropriations committees. The House and the Senate will seek to resolve differences between their two versions of the bill. Then, each chamber will vote on the resultant bill. A similar process happens in the House and Senate Armed Services Committees, which authorize nuclear spending limits. When final bills are passed by both chambers, they will be sent to the President to sign into law.

This process will likely take months - and in some years a stalemate has resulted in a “continuing resolution” to fund the government. The budget request can be altered substantially by Congress before it goes to the President to sign it into law.

Troubling Trends Behind the FY21 Budget Request:

This budget request represents three dangerous trends in U.S. nuclear weapons policy. First, every nuclear weapon in the U.S. arsenal is undergoing modifications, lifetime extensions, or alterations. The U.S. is also seeking to expand the arsenal by building two novel warheads, unlike anything in the existing stockpile.

Second, NNSA wants to build a new nuclear weapons production infrastructure, including plutonium pit production and a uranium processing facility. The U.S. does not currently possess all of the capabilities required to build wholly new nuclear warheads on a large scale, an activity that we have not done since 1989. Re-establishing these capabilities will enable the U.S. to speed the pace of a new global arms race.

Third, the NNSA is steadily devoting more and more money to nuclear weapons testing capabilities. While the FY21 budget does not state that the NNSA is seeking to resume full scale nuclear explosive testing in Nevada, additional money is being directed toward enhancing hydrodynamic and subcritical explosive testing, and computational modeling of nuclear explosions.

Five Nuclear Warhead Development Programs:

The current scope of the US warhead “modernization” is immense. The NNSA has 5 major warhead programs occurring simultaneously. This workload is unprecedented since the end of the Cold War. In 2019, the NNSA concluded work on two warheads, the W76-1 and the W76-2, which is the “low yield” weapon called for in the Trump Nuclear Posture Review.

The U.S. nuclear force structure consists of three “legs” - sea, air, and land. The sea leg includes the aforementioned W76-1 and W76-2. The air leg includes the B61-12. The land leg includes the Minuteman III and the Pershing II. The NNSA is also working on a new ground-based intercontinental ballistic missile, known as the GMLRS.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Warhead</th>
<th>B61-12 LEP</th>
<th>W76 LEP</th>
<th>W76-2 Mod</th>
<th>W88 Alt</th>
<th>W80-4 LEP</th>
<th>W87-1 Mod</th>
<th>W93</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Requested in FY 2021</td>
<td>$815,710</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>$256,922</td>
<td>$1,000,314</td>
<td>$541,000</td>
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<td>Approved in FY 2020</td>
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<td>0</td>
<td>$65,000</td>
<td>$304,186</td>
<td>$888,511</td>
<td>$112,011</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Approved in FY 2019</td>
<td>$794,049</td>
<td>$48,888</td>
<td>$10,000</td>
<td>$304,285</td>
<td>$645,766</td>
<td>$53,000</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Corresponding Weapon</td>
<td>B61-12 Gravity bomb</td>
<td>D5 Trident Sea launched ballistic missile</td>
<td>Low-Yield D5 Trident Sea launched ballistic missile</td>
<td>LGM-30 Minuteman Intercontinental ballistic missile</td>
<td>Long Range Standoff Weapon Air launched cruise missile</td>
<td>New warhead for the Ground Based Strategic Deterrent</td>
<td>Follow-on Trident Submarine Launched Ballistic Missile</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
and W76-2. These warheads sit atop Trident submarine launched ballistic missiles, launched out of the Navy’s Ohio Class subs.

The Navy’s W88 “refresh” (alteration) is in the FY21 request. Additionally, a novel sea based warhead is revealed, the W93, and funding is requested for the initial development stages. This warhead will sit atop a new submarine launched ballistic missile that will replace the Trident.

The air leg consists of a new W80-4 and an upgraded B61-12 warhead. The W80-4 warhead, which is presently being designed by Livermore Lab (LLNL), will be launched on a new long-range standoff air-launched cruise missile. The B61-12 is a gravity bomb with new “smart” capabilities, to be dropped out of an airplane.

The land leg of the U.S. nuclear arsenal currently consists of the W87 and the W78. Both of these warheads now sit atop the minuteman intercontinental ballistic missile. The NNSA plans on building a fully-new warhead to replace the W78, called the W87-1. This W87-1, also being designed by LLNL, will sit atop the next generation intercontinental ballistic missile, called the Ground Based Strategic Deterrent.

**Nuclear Infrastructure:**

In addition to expanding work on nuclear warheads, the budget request also greatly increases investment in nuclear weapons infrastructure, which is the name NNSA gives to what are, in fact, new bomb plants. The increases for infrastructure development are startling. Plutonium pit operations, the program that is intended to annually produce 80 or more bomb cores (also called primaries), is pegged at $1.4 billion, a twofold increase from FY2020.

Los Alamos Lab is slated to produce 30 or more plutonium pits annually at its PF4 facility, while the Savannah River Site, which has never made plutonium pits, is supposed to make 50 or more plutonium pits per year by renovating its trouble-plagued, unfinished Mixed Oxide (MOX) Fuel Fabrication Facility. This industrial-scale pit production is supposed to be fully operational at both sites by 2030.

NNSA’s uranium operations also get an increase of $140 million in the request. Much of this money will go to the Uranium Processing Facility at Y12, intended to build new secondaries (the H-bomb component) for U.S. nuclear weapons at essentially the same planned production rate as for the plutonium primaries. If you are picturing these twin capabilities as enabling wholly new U.S. nuclear weapons, you are correct.

These programs are bound to miss deadlines, blow up budget projections and compromise worker and public safety, in part because the goals are unrealistic. A Department of Defense-funded study by the Institute for Defense Analyses on the National Nuclear Security Administration’s plutonium pit production plans concluded that “no available option can be expected to provide 80 [plutonium pits per year] by 2030.” Yet the NNSA FY 2021 budget request blithely assumes otherwise.

Another alarming addition in the FY 2021 budget is an increase of $70 million for subcritical experiments. These tests simulate aspects of nuclear explosions using chemical compounds. They involve nuclear material (i.e, plutonium) in an underground chamber but stop just short of producing a nuclear yield. These tests have resulted in radioactive contamination. Last year, a subcritical test in Nevada cracked a fastener in a containment vessel and blew out plutonium.

Much of the $215 million that is slated for subcritical nuclear testing will be spent designing and assembling new experimental devices at the U1a testing complex in Nevada. These diagnostic materials will help inform future manufacturing choices for nuclear weapons modifications, new designs, and lifetime extension programs.

**Conclusion:** For FY2021, NNSA seeks $15.6 billion in nuclear weapons activities, a $3.1 billion (25%) increase from the 2020 request. Much of this increase is going toward building new nuclear weapons capabilities, increasing nuclear weapons production infrastructure, and enhancing U.S. ability to conduct subcritical nuclear weapons tests.

The NNSA is establishing pit production capabilities and a uranium processing facility in order to build new types of nuclear weapons. Taken together, these budget figures and trends reveal that the United States is engaging in a global nuclear arms race.

According to the Congressional Budget Office this new arms race will be enormously costly, easily exceeding a trillion dollars over the next decade alone. What is $1 trillion? Imagine taking $100 billion and stacking them in a tower that is 631 miles high. (Now imagine doing that again the following decade.)

Throughout the coming year, Tri-Valley CAREs and allies will be working to curb this dangerous escalation in nuclear weapons spending.
Dear friends,

I know that you recognize that Tri-Valley CAREs is remarkably effective. But have you thought lately about how your support truly enables our accomplishments?

We cannot do all we do without you! Our work for peace, justice and a healthy environment is a collaborative endeavor between our staff, board, community members and donors. Together we are challenging nuclear weapons, leveraging cleanup of the damage caused by their development, and moving ever closer to the day of their total elimination.

As I write this, we are “sheltering in place” in a time of escalating spread of the coronavirus. We are doing all we can to carry out our social responsibilities and fully live our love of humanity by flattening the curvature of the spread of COVID-19. I hope this letter finds that you and yours are safe, secure and in good health. And, please accept this heartfelt, long-distance, group hug from all of your friends at Tri-Valley CAREs.

I would tell you, too, that we are challenged daily to become very creative in how we carry out our work right now. As you have read here, our “DC Days 2020” team will not be traveling to our nation’s capital next month. Instead we are climbing a learning curve in order to set up videoconference or teleconference meetings with key congressional and administration offices. In future newsletters, I’ll report on how that goes!

Similarly, we are expecting to hear any day now that the Non-Proliferation Treaty Review Conference, slated to open in April, will be postponed one full year. What I can say with total certainty is that your Tri-Valley CAREs team will seek new avenues to meet remotely with diplomats and put our on-the-ground knowledge of the U.S. nuclear weapons complex and budget at their disposal. By doing this, we help other countries hold the U.S. government accountable to its disarmament obligations under the NPT. Moreover, we will continue our advocacy for the entry into force of the U.N. Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons. Here, too, we will keep you updated throughout the year.

Locally, we are busy fomenting a powerful, peaceful mobilization on this historic 75th anniversary of the U.S. atomic bombing of Hiroshima and Nagasaki. If it’s safe to gather in person, on August 6 at 8 am, there will be a rally, march and action at the gates of Livermore Lab – with amazing speakers and musicians. Check out the flyer in this newsletter, and stay tuned for more information as it unfolds.

In all of this, your support, like glue, binds together our collaborative work for a more just and peaceful future. Please give as generously as you can. Thank you!

For peace,

Marylia Kelley
Executive Director

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**4 Ways to Donate to Tri-Valley CAREs**

1. **Send in your check today.** Why put off until tomorrow the activism you can support today?

2. **Donate on-line at www.trivalleycares.org.** Click the secure portal for “PayPal” or “Network for Good” (your choice). Make a one-time contribution or set up a regular giving program.

3. **Make a gift of stock.** Donating stock can bring you significant tax benefits. We have an E-trade account set up to process your donation.

4. **Make a bequest and include Tri-Valley CAREs in your will.** Nuclear weapons are leaving a toxic legacy in our community. Will you leave a positive legacy so that we can continue the struggle?

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Tri-Valley CAREs
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Livermore, CA 94551

I prefer to donate by check at this time...

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Name ____________________  Phone ____________________

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“Never Again”
On the 75th Anniversary of the Atomic Bombing of Hiroshima and Nagasaki.
Abolish Nuclear Weapons

Save the Date
Thursday morning, August 6, 2020
Livermore Nuclear Weapons Lab

8 am Rally with speakers and music  ❖  9:30 am March to the Lab gates, followed by peaceful direct action to stop new warheads
Info: Tri-Valley CAREs, 925.443.7148  ❖  Western States Legal Foundation, 510.839.5877  ❖  Full list of cosponsors is available  ❖  Join us!

Photo: Annual August 6 lantern ceremony for nuclear abolition in Hiroshima, Japan
The event: Tri-Valley CAREs and the Union of Concerned Scientists co-hosted a congressional briefing in November that illuminated the risks associated with expanding U.S. plutonium pit (bomb core) production. The event was held in a hearing room in the Rayburn Building of the U.S. House of Representatives. The room was packed with about 45 staffers from house and senate offices as well as representatives from think tanks, academia, and administration offices.

The panel was composed of nuclear weapons and policy experts from a variety of backgrounds; Christopher Hanson from the Senate Energy and Water Appropriations Committee, Marylia Kelley from Tri-Valley CAREs, Stephen Young from the Union of Concerned Scientists, and Kingston Reif from the Arms Control Association. Kathy Crandall Robinson from the Arms Control Association moderated the event.

The proposal: The National Nuclear Security Administration (NNSA), the semi-autonomous branch of the U.S. Department of Energy that manages the nuclear weapons complex, is seeking congressional funding and authorization to expand plutonium pit production. Pits are the fission explosive cores in nuclear weapons that trigger the thermonuclear component. Since the Rocky Flats Plant was shut down following an FBI raid in 1989, the government has produced 11 or fewer pits per year at the Los Alamos Lab in New Mexico. No pits have been required for the stockpile, or produced, in the past decade. The current plan would radically change this status quo.

The briefing: The experts on our panel generally agreed that NNSA’s pit production project is likely to spiral billions of dollars over budget and fall far behind schedule. Panelists cited the unclassified summary of a 2019 report conducted for the Defense Department that recommended that DoD find a way to “best respond” to the near certainty that the NNSA plan to produce 80 pits per year by 2030 will not succeed.

Moreover, several panelists noted that NNSA intends to place its new pits into a new warhead with additional novel features that would, in turn, be placed atop a new intercontinental ballistic missile (ICBM). The resultant wholly new nuclear weapon system will pour gasoline on the flames of a rapidly-growing global arms race, they warned.

Christopher Hanson spoke first, providing an overview of the status of plutonium pit production in Congress, including in the House and Senate versions of the National Defense Authorization Act. The House bill would limit plutonium pit production to 30 pits per year by 2030 at one facility, the Los Alamos National Laboratory in NM. The Senate bill fully supports the current Administration and NNSA budget request by authorizing production of 80 plutonium pits per year at two facilities, with 30 to be manufactured annually at Los Alamos Lab and 50 at the Savannah River Site in SC. (Note: The final NDAA later approved the higher numbers.)

Kingston Reif then provided a detailed analysis of U.S. nuclear weapons modernization, of which expanded pit production is a significant part. He explained that NNSA’s plans for a novel warhead and pits are both elements of a new weapon system that would replace the Minuteman III intercontinental ballistic missile.

Stephen Young proffered an alternative whereby the U.S. would forewear the new-design warhead and pits, relying instead on a previously tested, refurbished design already in the stockpile.

Marylia Kelley discussed the cost, safety and proliferation implications of making new plutonium cores, highlighting that NNSA plans to create pits that are different from anything in the arsenal. She noted that the financial cost for the resultant new weapon would top $120 billion, including the missile. Kelley shared information that the novel-design pits and warhead may present certification and other challenges that could lead to U.S. resumption of nuclear explosive testing in Nevada, which ended in 1992. Such an event, she warned, would result in other nuclear armed states likewise resuming explosive testing.

Tri-Valley CAREs is grateful to Representative John Garamendi (D-CA-3) for reserving the hearing room in Rayburn for the briefing. The event was a major success, including the lively Q & A that followed the formal presentations. We are thankful to all who spoke, attended, and participated.

Citizen’s Watch
The National Nuclear Security Administration (NNSA) has formally announced that it is proceeding with plans to expand the production of plutonium pits without the required nation-wide “programmatic” public review. Tri-Valley CAREs is joining with the Natural Resources Defense Council, Nuclear Watch New Mexico, and Savannah River Site Watch to hold the agency’s proverbial feet to the fire by publicly asserting that this failure is in direct violation of the legal requirements of the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA). Additionally, it violates a 1998 court order that requires the DOE to prepare a “programmatic environmental impact statement” (PEIS) when it plans to produce more than 80 pits per year, which they are now planning.

As background, plutonium pits are the radioactive cores or “triggers” of nuclear weapons. U.S. industrial-scale plutonium bomb core production ended in 1989 when the FBI raided the Rocky Flats Plant near Denver for its environmental crimes. In 1997, the Department of Energy formally relocated the pit production mission to the Los Alamos National Laboratory (LANL) in northern New Mexico after completing the Stockpile Stewardship and Management Programmatic Environmental Impact Statement. At that time, the agency explicitly capped production at 20 pits per year, a number it has never actually reached.

Fast forward to May 2018 when the Defense Department and NNSA announced that they plan to increase pit production at LANL to at least 30 pits per year. In addition, the agency plans to establish redundant production of at least 50 pits per year at the Savannah River Site (SRS) in South Carolina by repurposing the partially built MOX Fuel Fabrication Facility, a boondoggle that has already cost American taxpayers ~$7 billion. Both sites would have additional surge capacity to give the U.S. the ability to build 125 pits in a year total (far exceeding the 80 pit threshold established by the 1998 court order).

Crucially, there is no pit production scheduled to maintain the safety and reliability of the existing nuclear weapons stockpile. Instead, proposed future pit production is for speculative new-design nuclear weapons. In the past, this was for a “Reliable Replacement Warhead” and more recently an “Interoperable Warhead” that NNSA claimed to Congress was the centerpiece of a transformed nuclear weapons stockpile and production complex. Both proposed new-design nuclear warheads were subsequently canceled.

Continued on Page 2...