

Prepared for Tri-Valley CAREs'  
October 16, 2021 Strategic Planning Retreat

**LOOKING BACK; PROVIDING A FRAMEWORK TO MOVE FORWARD**

**A SUMMARY ANALYSIS OF THE PAST 15 MONTHS**

- *Goals and program priorities from our July 2020 Virtual Strategic Planning Retreat*
- *Victories enjoyed and objectives yet to be achieved*

**Introduction:**

Our Strategic Planning virtual retreat in July 2020 did not contemplate that an ongoing pandemic would continue to impact our work into the fall of 2021. Some of the challenges we face have grown since our last planning retreat - yet our work has continued apace, our organization is strong, and we have much to celebrate this year. Our programs continue to change U.S. policy and budgets regarding nuclear weapons, nuclear materials, cleanup and health. And, we continued to maintain our dual focus on the Livermore Lab at the community level and, at the national level, on the U.S. Department of Energy (DOE) National Nuclear Security Administration's (NNSA) weapons complex, of which Livermore Lab is an integral part.

Our influence in shaping operations at the Lab and public policy nationally often leads to visible outcomes. These pages contain some examples.

During this period, we have produced detailed, yet readable analyses, comment letters and issue briefings. We have met with members of the U.S. Congress, the former Trump Administration, the Biden Administration, the California State legislature, and other decision-making bodies using Zoom, WebEx and similar tools. We held virtual press conferences and gave interviews to local and national reporters. We organized virtual and hybrid rallies. We made common cause with numerous groups and individuals to amplify our message. Our virtual community organizing and public involvement activities have contributed directly to some of our victories.

Three of the watch-phrases that have guided us since our last Strategic Planning Retreat are: (1) be flexible and adapt new methods in a changing environment; (2) stay strategic and keep our mission and goals front and center; and (3) be open, collaborative and connected to our membership, funders and allied groups despite communication challenges posed by the pandemic.

Overall, we have achieved considerable progress on the issues we chose at our strategic planning retreat in July 2020.

**What we said we would prioritize at last year's retreat:**

**1st Place: STOP NEW NUCLEAR BOMBS AND BOMB PLANTS**

This is about preventing the development of new and modified nuclear weapons – and the new factories that would produce them. Under this priority, Tri-Valley CAREs will focus on Livermore

Lab's warhead development programs, with a particular focus on the novel-design W87-1. This priority also addresses other new warheads and the plutonium bomb factories that are slated to produce the fissile cores for them. Through this priority, Tri-Valley CAREs will influence national nuclear policy and the federal budget process.

### **2nd Place: SAFEGUARD COMMUNITY HEALTH AND SAFETY**

This is about achieving a publicly accepted, comprehensive cleanup under the Superfund law of toxic and radioactive contamination in soil, groundwater and some surface waters at the Livermore Lab Main Site and Site 300. This priority also encompasses preventing bigger bomb blasts from being conducted in the open air at Site 300. Through this priority, Tri-Valley CAREs will increase public involvement in environmental decision-making.

### **3rd Place (Tie): SAFEGUARD WORKER HEALTH AND SAFETY**

This is about justice for Livermore Lab, and Sandia, Livermore, workers exposed to toxic and radioactive materials. Through this priority, Tri-Valley CAREs will assist nuclear workers, and families of deceased workers, obtain compensation under the Energy Employees Occupational Illness Compensation Program Act (EEOICPA). With this priority, we will also act to preserve ongoing worker health and safety measures, including through the Defense Nuclear Facilities Safety Board.

### **3rd Place (Tie): INVESTIGATE LIVERMORE LAB FACILITIES AND PUBLICIZE FINDINGS**

This is about "watchdog" activities to investigate key nuclear facilities at Livermore Lab. With this priority, Tri-Valley CAREs will use the Freedom of Information Act and other community right-to-know laws alongside other means to monitor Livermore Lab activities. Through this priority, Tri-Valley CAREs will exercise its watchdog capabilities and increase public knowledge of the connection between weapons activities and environmental contamination.

### **5th Place: PROMOTE GLOBAL NUCLEAR DISARMAMENT**

This is about contributing to the global abolition of nuclear weapons. Under this priority, Tri-Valley CAREs will promote entry into force of the UN Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons. This priority also addresses our participation at the UN in other proceedings such as the Non-Proliferation Treaty Review Conference.

### **Measuring our progress over the past 15 months:**

This section speaks to our "accountability" in doing strategic planning. Did we do what we said we would at the last retreat? How faithfully did we hew to the priorities we chose in expending our collective time, energy and resources over the course of the year? Did we address each one? Did we make good use of our strategic "toolbox" and employ the appropriate methods to achieve our goals? Was our work plan strategic? What did our work accomplish? How well did we do overall? Where did we fall short? And, how did we handle any unforeseen events?

Here is our look back, which is foundational to our 2021-2022 strategic planning retreat in particular - and to our collective ability to “look forward” as an organization in general.

### **STOP NEW NUCLEAR BOMBS AND BOMB PLANTS**

#### **For example:**

a. Throughout the period, we tracked the nuclear weapons budget process. We provided extensive 2020 analysis of the Trump Administration’s Fiscal Year 2021 budget request for nuclear weapons. That was followed earlier this year with our multiple analyses of the Biden Administration’s Fiscal Year 2022 budget request. We are one of only a few groups in the country to focus on NNSA and, specifically, its spending on nuclear weapons activities (read as funding for new warheads and bomb plants). TVC’s analyses covered both the overall NNSA budget request and the specific LLNL budget request. These were done by Marylia Kelley (NNSA) and Scott Yundt (Livermore Lab). In prior years, TVC also had the part time services of expert analysts in Washington, DC (Kathy Crandall-Robinson and then Joseph Rodgers). One challenge during this last 15 months was that our Executive Director needed to simultaneously find new ways to disseminate our budget analyses and recommendations to Congress and other offices - and to do so without staff support on-the-ground. Our Executive Director also presented on budget issues (and promoted our recommendations) at multiple venues hosted by colleague groups across the country. Indeed, TVC is often called on by others groups for its budget expertise. And, our materials, including Spanish language translations done by Raiza Marciscano-Bettis, continue to be used by decision-makers and non-governmental groups alike. *(Note: while the who-did-which-tasks will not be reproduced for each subsection, it is offered here as one example of staff division of labor within TVC.)*

b. Throughout the 15-month period, Tri-Valley CAREs played a leadership role in challenging new weapons development, particularly the W87-1 (Livermore design) to sit atop a new land-based missile, the W80-4 and its SLCM modification (Livermore design) to sit atop new air launched and sea launched missiles. We have also played a leadership role in challenging the new W93 (which the UK wants us to pursue; no lead design lab assigned yet) and in promoting retirement of the B83 (Livermore design), which is the last megaton class warhead in the stockpile.

c. During this period, Tri-Valley CAREs also played a leadership role in challenging the new bomb plants that would produce the new warheads; in particular we focused on the NNSA plans to expand plutonium pit production more than 4-fold and to do it at two locations, in NM and SC. We ferreted our information on Livermore Lab’s role in this scheme, including that all new pits for at least the first 8 years of production will be for the W87-1, that Los Alamos Lab will send plutonium to Livermore as part of expanded pit production and that there is money in the Fiscal 2022 budget request for new plutonium glove boxes at Livermore to enable its role in production (though the full pits would not be made here). In addition to our analysis of multiple documents, we commented on the NNSA’s compliance (or lack thereof) with the National Environmental Policy Act and, with colleagues, filed litigation in June of 2021. We continue to do work on pit production, on the one hand assisting our lead attorney at the South Carolina Environmental Law Project with the litigation and, on the other hand, interacting with congressional offices, other decision-makers, and the public about the multiple risks and dangers posed by expanded pit production.

d. The NNSA and Livermore Lab published a Notice in the Federal Register outlining the Lab's preparation of a new Site Wide Environmental Impact Statement (SWEIS). The TVC team swung into action and (1) analyzed the Notice and disseminated a detailed, reader friendly series of articles for our members and the public, (2) wrote letters to the editor to alert community members, (3) organized the public for an initial NNSA/Livermore Lab public "scoping" meeting, (4) demanded – and won - a second "scoping" meeting, (5) created and disseminated sample public comments for community members, allied groups and others to use, and (6) presented TVC's public comment, among other actions. A portion of our overarching SWEIS "scoping" analysis involved what appear to be increases in nuclear materials use at the Lab in service on new weapons and bomb plants, including expanded pit production. Perhaps as a direct result of our work, NNSA and Livermore Lab announced a change in the schedule for release of the draft SWEIS (which would illuminate many important details). That draft has yet to be released, though we are anticipating it in the near future.

e. We collaborated with Bay Area groups in 2020 on the 75<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the U.S. atomic bombing of Hiroshima and Nagasaki to create our first ever-virtual rally at Livermore Lab. The initial release of event attracted more than 300 viewers, with 20,000 people seeing some or all of it in the days that followed. Integral to our success was our participation in a special national coalition of groups under the hash tag #StillHere. With this coalition, we helped put together two days of programming (August 6 and 9), a website and a social media campaign (1) to center the voices of those affected by nuclear weapons and (2) to ensure that the historic anniversary did not pass without media and public attention in the pandemic. Our efforts garnered media around the world. Our Livermore Lab-centered rally was covered by news media ranging from the Independent to Channel 5 (CBS) News.

f. Then we collaborated with Bay Area groups in 2021 to conduct a hybrid Hiroshima-Nagasaki rally, beginning in-person at Livermore Lab and then moving to virtual footage and speakers. On August 6 our opening ran into difficulties with transmission connectivity and with the Lab's deliberate positioning of lawn cutting and weed-whacking equipment in our proximity. Still, several hundred people hung in with it! Then, with the addition of noise suppression technology and strategic captioning for initial speakers, the August 9 repeat broadcast was flawless and was enjoyed by many hundreds more on that morning and in subsequent days.

g. Notably, during the past 15 months, we have shifted from an emphasis on disseminating nuclear weapons info in our quarterly postal newsletters to more frequent electronic newsletters instead. E-news now goes out monthly with additional event and action notices sent electronically whenever needed. While this shift was initially pandemic related, in the coming year we will reevaluate our ratio of e-news to postal newsletters as e-news is much less expensive but more than a thousand of our members have, over time, said that they prefer postal.

h. While we did not go to DC in person this past 15 months, we have maintained our relationships with colleague groups in virtual space. For example, we participate in weekly strategy meetings with our DC allies (at 6:30 am pacific time each Wednesday). Additionally, we have conducted numerous Biden Administration and congressional meetings with our DC allies; some have been set up by TVC while others were set up by our DC colleague organizations.

i. In spring 2021, Tri-Valley CAREs played a leadership role in organizing the Alliance for Nuclear Accountability’s first all-virtual DC Days. In addition to key roles we played in assuring its success overall, we served on the editorial committee that produced a special report, “Safety, Security and Savings: Recommendations from communities across the U.S. nuclear weapons complex.” Moreover, we wrote the section on new warheads. We have continued our leadership in this coalition throughout the past 15 months, and we are currently planning ANA’s virtual fall meeting on November 3, 4, and 5.

### SAFEGUARD COMMUNITY HEALTH AND SAFETY

#### For example:

a. We sponsored a virtual community meeting in December 2020 on the Lab’s Site 300, including presentations on the Site 300 Superfund cleanup, Lab’s permit request to detonate larger open-air bomb blast there, and opportunities for public engagement. The meeting attracted some new people and helped cement relationships with individuals and groups in the Central Valley, including by inspiring a letter to the editor and a City Council resolution sponsored by meeting attendees in Manteca. During the community meeting, we formulated two action letters – one to the Air District and one to the NNSA to oppose the bigger bomb blasts. We then finalized, posted and disseminated both sample letters in our e-news alerts for our allies and community members to use throughout the month.

b. Tri-Valley CAREs continues to oppose the Lab’s proposal to increase the strength and frequency of open-air bomb blasts at Site 300. Our work on this issue is incorporated into the outreach, Tracy community meeting and “DC Days” items above. The decision on whether to issue an air permit and exempt the project from the CA Environmental Quality Act - *or* - to conduct the appropriate CEQA review *prior* to any permit decision is still pending before the Valley Air District.

c. TVC continued to play a leadership role in the statewide Calif. Environmental Justice Coalition. To offer a couple specifics, Raiza Marciscano-Bettis participated in two Facebook Live events highlight CEJC groups’ missions and activities. More recently, board Treasurer Inga Olson spoke at a CEJC-led rally at the CalEPA Headquarters in Sacramento. TVC has participated in monthly conference calls and in numerous joint actions with CEJC over the past 15 months.

d. We tracked the cleanup budgets for Fiscal Year in 2021 and 2022, and helped assure appropriate funding for the Main Site and Site 300 Superfund cleanup programs. TVC has “gone to bat” for more cleanup funding over the past 15 months, advocating in virtual meetings with Congressional staff and agency officials, including during DC Days 2021 with the acting head of the Department of Energy’s Environmental Management (EM) program. Subsequently, TVC drafted a letter on behalf of the Alliance for Nuclear Accountability calling for change at that position and decrying “business as usual” at EM. Like many of the actions we implement, this garnered media coverage and we were quoted, for example, in the Aiken Standard newspaper.

e. Our work on Livermore Lab’s new SWEIS, noted in the weapons and bomb plants section above, also belongs in this section. Our analysis of the Notice in the Federal Register covered key

environmental issues, from abandoned “high risk” contaminated buildings to the worker and public health hazards of raising emission levels (as planned). Thus our work to “safeguard community health and safety” was prominent in our SWEIS comments and in all the related outreach and work products we undertook.

f. Our environmental activities since the last strategic planning retreat have centrally included Spanish language translation of key materials. During the pandemic, however, it has been more difficult to measure our impact in Latinx communities because so much of that work had been done through in person contacts, including through neighborhood walks in Tracy and participation in cultural festivals like Cinco de Mayo, prior to the pandemic.

### **SAFEGUARD WORKER HEALTH AND SAFETY**

#### **For example:**

a. TVC has assisted numerous individual workers with their compensation claims under the Energy Employees Occupational Illness Compensation Program Act (EEOICPA). This work has included properly masked meetings in our office when necessary with individual sick workers. Prior to the pandemic, we partnered with health care providers to offer workshops on EEOICPA in Livermore, Tracy and other nearby communities. That has not taken place since some months prior to our last strategic planning retreat, but is expected to resume when safe.

b. Another way we support worker and public safety and prevent more toxic spills at the Lab is by meeting with – and advocating for - the Defense Nuclear Facilities Safety Board (DNFSB). Our meetings were more frequent before the pandemic, but have been ongoing in a virtual environment.

### **INVESTIGATE LIVERMORE LAB FACILITIES AND PUBLICIZE FINDINGS**

#### **For example:**

a. We continued to track the Lab’s budget with specific attention to: the NIF budget; the cleanup budget generally along with the budget for decontaminating and decommissioning of the “high-risk” buildings; and the budget for several specific new nuclear weapons for which LLNL is the “lead” laboratory. As noted in the bombs and bomb plants section above, we combed through the budget request documents and found the funding request for new plutonium glove boxes at Livermore Lab as well as the notation in a table buried in a NEPA document that plutonium would come here from Los Alamos for unspecified activities in support of pit production.

b. Reported on subcritical testing, its increased funding and LLNL’s role in the push for subcritical testing in blogs and e-news articles. We also led a coalition of three-dozen nuclear watchdog organizations in sending an urgent message to Congress declaring resumption of nuclear weapons testing by the United States “absolutely unacceptable” and “dangerously destabilizing.” We were successful in getting that funding removed from the Republican-led bill during the closing days of the Trump Administration.

c. Due to a lack of available staff time, we did not pursue litigation against NNSA for noncompliance with our Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) requests as we had discussed at our 2020 strategic planning retreat. Nor did we file as many fresh FOIA requests as we would have liked.

## **PROMOTE GLOBAL NUCLEAR DISARMAMENT, NON-PROLIFERATION AND THE “RULE OF LAW.”**

### **For example:**

- a. We planned, sponsored and spoke at major demonstrations for disarmament at Livermore Lab, particularly the aforementioned Hiroshima-Nagasaki events at the “virtual” Good Friday events hosted by our colleagues at the Ecumenical Peace Institute.
- b. We planned, sponsored and spoke at rallies to publicize and support the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons (TPNW). We conducted two events, socially distanced, at the Livermore Lab West Gate, one to celebrate the 50<sup>th</sup> states party (Honduras) to ratify the treaty, triggering its entry into force in 90 days. Then we returned to the Lab for a rally to celebrate the day of its entry into force (January 22, 2021). We also blogged, got letters to the editor published and conducted considerable outreach in support of the TPNW.
- c. In addition to the local activities, TVC was instrumental within Alliance for Nuclear Accountability in putting forth the idea of 6’ banner-holdings and hangings at nuclear weapons sites across the country. Then, as other groups asked about doing a coordinated action also at U.S. military bases, institutions that “bank on the bomb” and other relevant sites, we participated in a series of virtual meetings to plan more broadly for TPNW’s entry into force day. The result was banner and sign holdings in more than 100 U.S. towns and cities. TVC participates in that ad hoc coalition to this day, serving on its “actions” and “policy” subgroups.

**Note:** In addition to specific priority program work, we have pursued multi-program activities through our participation in the Alliance for Nuclear Accountability (weapons, disarmament and cleanup) and through other coalitions such as the California Environmental Justice Coalition. We have also supported multi-programmatic goals through numerous local activities, including monthly meetings, LTE parties and more. Moreover, we have done significant “ally” work to support initiatives in clean energy and climate change, to cite but two examples.

You can also see among our achievements above that there are objectives yet to be realized, from big picture global nuclear disarmament and national policy change on nuclear weapons to local objectives such as preventing bigger open-air bomb blasts at Site 300, among others. It is intended that this progress report will be one of multiple elements employed in determining our goals for the coming year.

### **Conclusion:**

At Livermore Lab and other DOE NNSA sites, the continued development, testing and production of U.S. nuclear weapons is both proliferation-provocative and hazardous to human health and the environment. We who live around U.S. nuclear weapons facilities have the fundamental moral, legal and democratic right to participate in decision-making. Moreover, the broader public at large also has a right and responsibility to participate in these important policy decisions.

That said, it appears that the last thing DOE and its NNSA want is an informed public exercising these rights. Many of the agencies’ most controversial program details and decisions are shrouded

by techno-speak and buried in the middle of complex technical planning documents, if they are made public at all.

Tri-Valley CAREs serves as a unique watchdog and “counterweight” in Livermore. Our events are generally well attended, and we continue to play an important role in catalyzing a wide range of groups to come together and influence decisions. The residents of Livermore, Tracy and surrounding communities, including many people who work at the Livermore Lab, value the information and education services we provide. This can be seen in many ways, including in the receipt by our office of info from Livermore Lab employees who want to share what they know but are afraid of reprisal.

Further, our ability to monitor DOE and NNSA activities and influence policy can be seen in instances where government officials have modified decisions based on public pressure we have generated. Tri-Valley CAREs’ combination of research, public education and grassroots advocacy is designed to help affected communities – here in Livermore and across the country – become better informed and exercise their rights.

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