

LLNLSWEIS@nnsa.doe.gov

Ms. Fana Gebeyehu-Houston, NEPA Document Manager
National Nuclear Security Administration (NNSA),
Lawrence Livermore National Laboratory (LLNL)
P.O. Box 808, L-293
Livermore, CA 94551-0808

REQUEST FOR EXTENSION OF PUBLIC COMMENT PERIOD AND A SECOND PUBLIC MEETING ON THE LLNL SITE-WIDE ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT STATEMENT

The National Nuclear Security Administration and Livermore Lab have begun a public process to receive input on the scope of a new Lawrence Livermore National Laboratory (LLNL or Livermore Lab) Site-Wide Environmental Impact Statement (SWEIS), which is being prepared pursuant to the National Environmental Policy Act.

The Notice of Intent to prepare a new SWEIS was published in the Federal Register on August 5, 2020. The Federal Register Notice states that the public comment period is for a scant 45-days and will close on September 21, 2020.

Further, the Federal Register Notice does not publicize the date and time for an online public scoping meeting, but states only that *when* such a meeting is scheduled a note will be placed on the NNSA website at www.energy.gov/nnsa/nnsa-nepa-reading-room. The NNSA web site later announced an online meeting, scheduled very soon after it was posted, specifically on Wednesday, September 2, 2020.

Livermore Lab is a more than \$2 billion dollar a year enterprise involving two physical locations, a Main Site in Livermore in Alameda County and a "Site 300" High Explosives Testing Range near Tracy in San Joaquin County.

For the coming fiscal year 88.7% of Livermore Lab's budget is for nuclear weapons activities, which are inherently complex and controversial.

Controversial as well is the proposal published in the August 5, 2020 Federal Register Notice to use this Site-Wide Environmental Impact Statement process to increase the amount of plutonium and other nuclear bomb grade materials that can be used (and stored) at Livermore Lab.

In "normal" times, this Federal Register Notice would establish a public comment period that is far too short (for 45-days) - with a public meeting that is being held far too close to its announcement (on September 2).

And, these are far from "normal" times.

The public meeting on September 2 is virtual, to be held online via a WebEx link. The technology itself limits the people who can participate. For example, low-income families and others who are technology challenged for a variety of reasons may not be able attend, and certainly not on short notice.

If NNSA and Livermore Lab would agree to post a easily accessible recording of the September 2 public meeting – along with a written transcript – then those who were not able to attend via WebEx link would be able to obtain its content. With a second public meeting that is publicized well in advance, these and other members of the public could make arrangements to participate. And, with a longer public comment period, they could submit written comments more readily.

This “hurry up” schedule is happening at the very time we the public must deal with the health risks of the Covid-19 pandemic, high unemployment, a faltering economy on “Main Street,” and, often, children who are doing distance learning from home.

Further, some of the people most directly affected by Livermore Lab operations have had to flee their homes due to the still ongoing fires, and the Livermore Lab’s Site 300 High Explosives Testing Range near Tracy had to be evacuated due to fire danger.

All of these things and more and severely limit the public’s capacity for civic engagement unless there is sufficient time for people to schedule it well in advance.

Therefore, I request:

- 1. That the public comment period be extended to 120-days from publication of the Notice of Intent on August 5, 2020 and,*
- 2. That a second online public meeting be set for the Livermore Lab Site-Wide Environmental Impact Statement Scoping process later this fall, and*
- 3. That the second online public meeting will be publicized well in advance of the date it will be held, and*
- 4. That the NNSA and Livermore Lab advise me of any action they are taking pursuant to my request.*

Signed,

Name:

Email and/or postal address: