

LOOKING BACK; PROVIDING A FRAMEWORK TO MOVE FORWARD

A SUMMARY ANALYSIS OF THE PAST 12 MONTHS

- *Goals and program priorities from our 2015 Strategic Planning Retreat*
- *Victories enjoyed and objectives yet to be achieved*

Introduction:

Our activities over the past 12 months have focused on changing U.S. policy regarding nuclear weapons, nuclear materials, cleanup and health – at the Lawrence Livermore National Laboratory (LLNL) and throughout the U.S. Department of Energy (DOE) National Nuclear Security Administration (NNSA) nuclear weapons complex.

Moreover, 2015 also saw Tri-Valley CAREs play a significant role internationally at the United Nations during the Non-Proliferation Treaty Review Conference and through our *Amicus* briefs to support the “Nuclear Zero” litigation filed in the U.S. courts by the Republic of the Marshall Islands.

In sum, Tri-Valley CAREs has continued to serve as an effective “watchdog,” monitoring nuclear weapons policy, the DOE, NNSA, and, in particular, Livermore Lab. Our influence often leads to visible outcomes. These pages contain some examples.

In winning on many of our issues, we used the Freedom of Information Act and other means to force public disclosure. Then, we shared the information with decision-makers and the public. To succeed, we also produced detailed analyses, comments and reports on nuclear issues to influence policy.

We met with members of Congress, the Obama Administration and other decision-makers. We spoke with members of the press. We organized rallies. We made common cause with numerous groups and individuals to amplify our message. Our community organizing and public involvement activities also led to many victories.

Overall, we have achieved considerable progress on the issues we chose at strategic planning in 2015.

What we said we would prioritize at last year’s retreat (in rank order):

These six were chosen to be the group’s program priorities for 2015-2016.

1. Ensure the cleanup of pollution at the Livermore Lab Main Site & Site 300.
2. Cut the nuclear weapons budget to stop new bombs and bomb plants.
3. Curtail the National Ignition Facility’s role in weapons development & promote its removal from NNSA.
4. (tie) Promote global nuclear disarmament, non-proliferation & the “rule of law.”
4. (tie) Obtain justice for sick workers with a focus on Livermore & Sandia Lab workers.
6. Advocate a “green lab”; transform Livermore & Sandia to civilian science.

Measuring our progress over the past 12 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?

Here is our look back, which is foundational to our July 16, 2016 strategic planning retreat in particular - and to our collective ability to “look forward” as an organization in general.

1. ENSURE THE CLEANUP OF POLLUTION AT THE LIVERMORE LAB MAIN SITE & SITE 300.

This is about leaking toxic and radioactive waste cleanup.

We have:

- a. Conducted regular daylong meetings with the Lab, DOE, EPA, State Dept. of Toxic Substances Control and Regional Water Quality Control board on both the Main Site and Site 300. These meetings ensure that we are kept apprised of Livermore Lab and agency thinking and plans and that we have a method of tracking (and restating when necessary) the perspectives of the affected communities.
- b. Sponsored a community meeting in Tracy on the Site 300 cleanup in October. It was covered by media, including Central Valley Business Times.
- c. Published Letters to the Editor, *Citizen's Watch* newsletter articles, blogs, fliers and factsheets (including translating materials into Spanish) throughout the period, and also issued a new report on the Main Site & Site 300 Superfund cleanup in October.
- d. Arranged special community tours of the Main Site and Site 300 in November.
- e. Set up an advisory committee of Tracy residents to provide input on our future Site 300 cleanup activities. Note that our grant proposal to Cal EPA's 2016 Environmental Justice Small Grants Program was not funded to hire a p/t bi-lingual organizer to help conduct outreach in Tracy, meaning we will need to creatively reconsider how we will continue to move forward on our Tracy outreach tasks in the coming year.
- f. Circulated a sign-on letter re: criteria for the Superfund cleanup at Site 300 and submitted letters to EPA.
- g. Conducted a Youth Video Contest (second year) and garnered twice the submittals as in its first year. Awards took place at our holiday party December 8, and winning videos are on our website.
- h. Continued to play a leadership role in the statewide Calif. Environmental Justice Coalition.
- i. Brought the issue of leaking, contaminated abandoned buildings at DOE NNSA sites to public attention, including assisting in preparation of a major story in the Wall Street Journal.
- j. Provided comments to the State Dept. of Toxic Substances Control on the Lab's hazardous waste permit, and then appealed the DTSC decision to issue a [deficient] hazardous waste permit for the Livermore Lab Main Site and for hazardous wastes trucked to the Main Site from Site 300.
- k. Tracked the cleanup budgets in 2015 and 2016, and helped assure appropriate funding for the Main Site and Site 300 Superfund cleanup programs.
- l. Wrote an article in *Citizen's Watch*, created talking points and participated in the state Dept. of Toxic Substances Control public hearing in Tracy on a permit for three high explosives waste facilities (a storage facility, a thermal treatment facility [i.e., incinerator], and a firing [i.e., explosive] facility).

- m. Requested and obtained a 45-day extension to the public comment period for the DTSC Site 300 high-explosive wastes permit. Submitted extensive technical comments and facilitated submittal of more than 100 community comments.
- n. Toured the Site 300 facilities covered in the pending high-explosives/hazardous waste permit, and met with Tracy residents regarding our findings.
- o. Met with EPA in San Francisco and Washington, DC about the TAG grants and the Superfund cleanup at the LLNL Main Site and Site 300. Note that EPA is not planning to fund TAGs for federal sites, at least for the foreseeable future, and so this must be seen a challenge for how we proceed in the coming year.
- p. Appeared on *Democracy Now!* on the anniversary of the Chernobyl accident speaking on the health and environmental dangers of nuclear facilities in general and Livermore Lab in particular.
- q. Conducted education and advocacy during “DC Days 2016” by meeting with the Obama Administration and Congress regarding the Superfund cleanup and also the issue of abandoned “high-risk” contaminated facilities at the LLNL Main Site and Site 300. The TVC team advocated for funds to D&D the “high-risk” facilities.

2. CUT THE NUCLEAR WEAPONS BUDGET TO STOP NEW BOMBS AND BOMB PLANTS. *This is about stopping new and modified U.S. nuclear weapons and the new bomb plants that would be used to build them.*

We have:

- a. Continued to play a lead role scuttling the new Long-Range Stand Off warhead (also called the W80-4), slated to be developed at Livermore Lab, including but not limited to producing sections on LRSO for reports, publishing multiple Letters to the Editor, conducting key meetings, and more.
- b. Collaborated with more than two-dozen groups and several hundred participants to create a powerful rally and nonviolent direct action on August 6 at Livermore Lab on the 70th anniversary of the atomic bombing of Hiroshima.
- c. Supported the Republic of the Marshall Islands’ #NuclearZero litigation against the US with *Amicus* (“friend of the court”) briefs in both the U.S. District and Ninth Circuit Courts (the latter filed in December).
- d. Supported the monthly vigils at Livermore Lab.
- e. Continued throughout the period to track the nuclear weapons budget process, including the Omnibus appropriations bill in December. Also provided extensive analysis o the Fiscal Year 2017 budget request for nuclear weapons, released in February 2016.
- f. Brought to Senators Feinstein and Boxer’s attention a letter to President Obama opposing the new Long-Range Stand Off weapon (LRSO; aka the new nuclear tipped cruise missile). Both Senators signed on.
- g. Helped get Senator Boxer and others signed on to a [second] Feinstein LRSO letter to colleagues in Defense Appropriations (i.e., Pentagon budget request) in March 2016.
- h. Continued writing in *Citizen’s Watch* and other publications about the LRSO and other Livermore Lab new nuclear weapons programs; spoke at the Good Friday demonstration at Livermore Lab.

- i. Attended the annual strategic planning retreat of arms control groups in Washington, DC and advocated for a focus on LRSO and other new nuclear weapons programs.
- j. Met with select agency offices and Congress in March, in advance of DC Days in April.
- k. Served on the DC Days committee and wrote sections for the ANA report, “Trillion Dollar Trainwreck.”
- l. Appeared live on *Democracy Now!* to speak on the nuclear weapons “modernization” program, highlighting the “Trillion Dollar Trainwreck” report and LRSO. Also conducted other media interviews.
- m. Conducted DC Days in April 2016. TVC team members met with the Obama Administration and Congress regarding nuclear weapons programs, with a focus on the LRSO. We also introduced Senator Feinstein at the DC Days awards ceremony and presented her with an award for her ongoing work to question and constrain the LRSO (video clip including her acceptance speech is on our website).

3. CURTAIL THE NATIONAL IGNITION FACILITY’S ROLE IN NUCLEAR WEAPONS DEVELOPMENT & PROMOTE ITS REMOVAL FROM NNSA. *This is about stopping the use of plutonium in NIF, cutting its budget and redirecting it to unclassified experiments.*

We have:

- a. Collaborated with the Natural Resources Defense Council to raise public awareness of the environmental and nuclear proliferation dangers of conducting plutonium experiments in the National Ignition Facility.
- b. Filed Freedom of Information Act requests for information not being released by Livermore Lab and the DOE NNSA (ongoing).
- c. Submitted notices of potential violation to NNSA for its non-responsiveness to our Freedom of Information Act request (see above).
- d. Continued to track its budget and raise questions about its efficacy.
- e. Spoken with current and former LLNL NIF personnel about the program; searched the unclassified literature for more information on current operations (which, by the way is lacking!).
- f. Continued our budget analysis of NIF in the FY 2017 budget request; plan to do some blogging and other writing in the near future.

4. (tie) PROMOTE GLOBAL NUCLEAR DISARMAMENT, NON-PROLIFERATION & THE “RULE OF LAW.” *This is about the global elimination of nuclear weapons.*

We have:

- a. Planned, sponsored and/or spoken at major demonstrations for disarmament at Livermore Lab, particularly the Hiroshima-Nagasaki events and supporting our faith community friends on Good Friday.
- b. Presented at and supported numerous venues about U.S. nuclear weapons policy, budget and disarmament, including presenting at a daylong forum hosted by Pax Christi and a Nuclear Free Future panel discussion hosted by the Women’s International League for Peace and Freedom.
- c. Played a leadership role with other groups in planning the major demonstration at LLNL for this coming August 9 with Tony deBrum from the Marshall Islands, Nobuaki Hanaoka and others.

4. (tie) OBTAIN JUSTICE FOR SICK WORKERS WITH A FOCUS ON LIVERMORE & SANDIA LAB WORKERS MADE ILL BY ON THE JOB EXPOSURES. *This is about justice for workers exposed to toxic and radioactive materials.*

We have:

- a. Published a newsletter edition in October and hosted a support group meeting in November for workers made ill by on the job exposures.
- b. Assisted numerous individual workers with their compensation claims under the Energy Employees Occupational Illness Compensation Program Act.
- c. Continued to assist numerous individual workers with their compensation claims under the Energy Employees Occupational Illness Compensation Program Act.
- d. Conducted advocacy to expand the Special Exposure Cohort at LLNL and SNL, Livermore in order to make obtaining compensation easier for more employees.

6. ADVOCATE A “GREEN LAB”; TRANSFORM LIVERMORE & SANDIA LABS TO CIVILIAN SCIENCE. *This is about removing Livermore and Sandia Labs from the nuclear weapons complex.*

We have:

- a. Offered comments to the Commission to Review the Effectiveness of the National Energy Laboratories (CRENEL). Consolidation and re-missioning recommendations were within this commission’s scope of work, but the commissioners largely rubber-stamped business as usual.
- b. Continued to promote a transformation of mission for Livermore Lab and Sandia, Livermore. However, we have not had the time/budget/personnel to launch additional activities.
- c. Spoken on this in select meetings during DC Days, especially where the member of Congress was on the Science Committee, including Rep. Swalwell.

NOTE: In addition to specific priority program work, we have pursued multi-program activities by our participation in the Alliance for Nuclear Accountability (weapons, disarmament and cleanup) and through other venues such as the California Environmental Justice coalition. We have also supported multi-programmatic goals through numerous local activities, including monthly meetings, LTE parties and much more. Moreover, we have done significant “ally” work to support initiatives, such as the Iran Nuclear Deal.

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 wants is an informed public exercising these rights. Many of DOE’s 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 meetings and events are well attended, and we continue to play an important role in catalyzing a wide range of groups to come together and influence decisions. The Livermore community, including many who work at the Livermore Lab, value the information and education services we provide. This can be seen in supportive letters to the editor, appreciative phone calls to our office and even in the receipt by our office of info from Livermore Lab employees who want to share what they know but are afraid of DOE reprisal.

Further, our ability to monitor DOE activities and influence policy can be seen in instances where DOE 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.

We help pierce through DOE’s veil of secrecy and bring nuclear weapons policy to a level that the community can understand. To this end, Tri-Valley CAREs has continued to use community right to know laws to involve the public and curtail nuclear weapons, including but not limited to the Freedom of Information Act and our current litigation under that law.

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