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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
August XX, 2002**

**DOE ISSUES LOS ALAMOS TECHNICAL AREA 18 RELOCATION
FINAL ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT STATEMENT**

Washington, D.C.— The Administrator of the National Nuclear Security Administration (NNSA), a separately-organized agency within the Department of Energy, has issued the Technical Area 18 Final Environmental Impact Statement (TA-18 Final EIS). The TA-18 Final EIS evaluates the environmental impacts associated with relocating the TA-18 capabilities and materials to the following alternative locations: (1) a different site at Los Alamos National Laboratory (LANL) at Los Alamos, New Mexico; (2) the Nevada Test Site (NTS) near Las Vegas, Nevada; (3) the Sandia National Laboratory (SNL) at Albuquerque, New Mexico; and (4) the Argonne National Laboratory-West (ANL-W) near Idaho Falls, Idaho.

Currently, the TA-18 facilities at LANL are the Nation's only facilities capable of performing general-purpose nuclear materials handling and criticality experiments. These experiments provide unique training to DOE and NNSA personnel in areas such as nuclear materials safety, emergency response in support of counterterrorism activities, and safeguards and arms control in support of programs aimed at controlling excess nuclear materials.

In the Final EIS, the Administrator designated the NTS alternative as the preferred alternative for activities involving Security Category VII materials, which comprise most of the activities conducted at TA-18. The NTS alternative, which would house the TA-18 experiments in the existing Device Assembly Facility (DAF), was designated the preferred alternative based upon cost, technical, environmental, and mission factors. The DAF, which was constructed in the late 1980s when nuclear weapons testing was still in progress, was originally designed to provide high-explosive and nuclear explosive assembly operations. A Record of Decision on the TA-18 Final EIS is expected in September 2002.

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