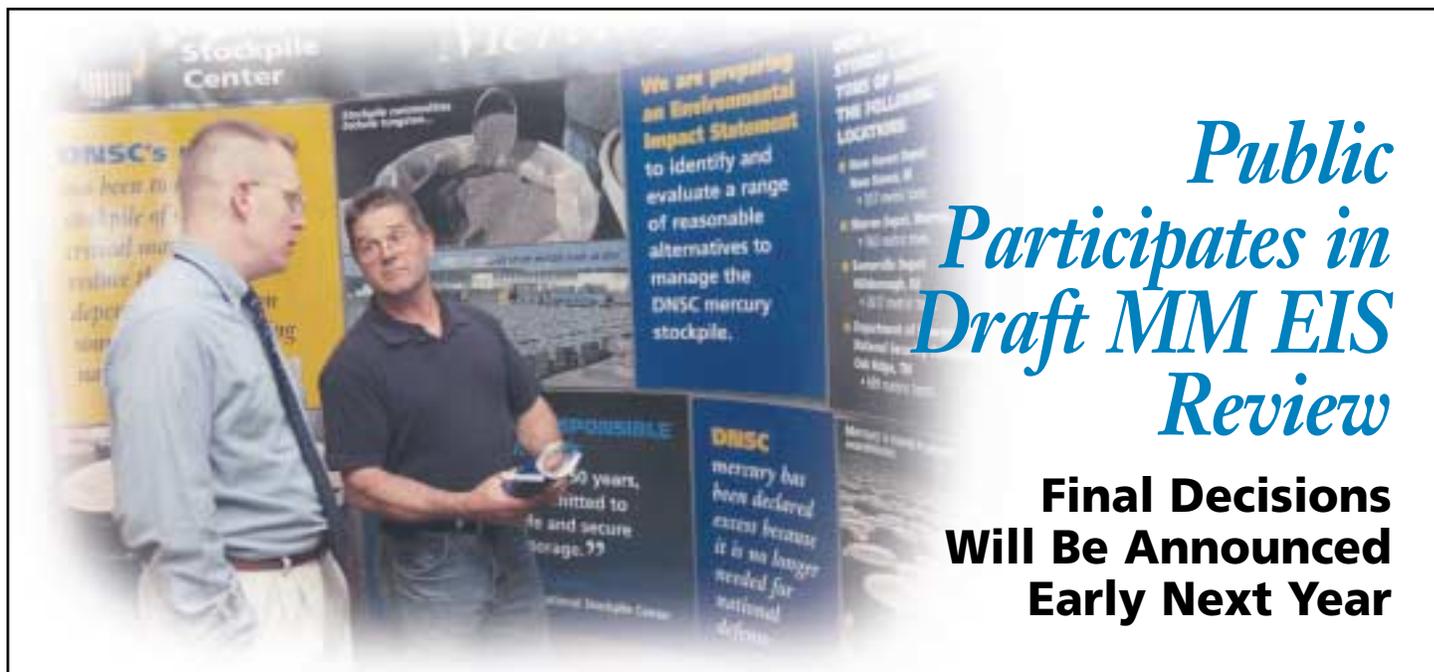


MERCURY

MANAGEMENT *news*

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Public Participates in Draft MM EIS Review

Final Decisions Will Be Announced Early Next Year

▲ DNSC staff explained exhibits and distributed information materials at public meetings in Indiana, Nevada, New Jersey, Ohio, Tennessee, Utah and Washington, DC.

The Defense National Stockpile Center (DNSC) hosted a series of seven public meetings nationwide and received hundreds of comments during the public review period of the Draft Mercury Management Environmental Impact Statement (Draft MM EIS). DNSC is now reviewing the comments and will present responses as part of the Final MM EIS early next year.

DNSC Administrator Cornel Holder described the public's input as "a critically important part of the EIS process." He said, "I appreciate the fact that so many people took the time to study the Draft MM EIS and attend public meetings or send us comments. I was particularly impressed by the thoughtful input we got from the young people in various communities."

More than 800 people received copies of the Draft MM EIS or the Executive Summary. The seven public meetings were held between May and July in Indiana, Nevada, New Jersey, Ohio, Tennessee, Utah and Washington, DC. About 400 people provided DNSC with written or oral comments on the Draft MM EIS.

Mercury Management Alternatives

The Draft MM EIS evaluated the potential environmental, human health, and socioeconomic impacts of three mercury management alternatives: (1) consolida-

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 tion and storage of DNSC mercury at a current mercury storage site or at another location; (2) sale of the mercury inventory with restrictions; (3) no action, i.e., maintaining mercury storage at current DNSC sites. Consolidated storage is DNSC's preferred alternative, because it would have minor environmental impacts, conserve resources by simplifying operations, and support DNSC's future plans for closing some depots.

DNSC Decisions

No final decisions have been made. DNSC's decisions will be based on a combination of environmental, economic and technical factors, policy considerations, and public input. If consolidated storage is the alternative selected in the Record of Decision, the Draft MM EIS analysis of potential

sites would allow DNSC to select one of those analyzed for mercury storage. If other sites are considered, they would be subject to additional environmental documentation, public notification, and review.

DNSC Stewardship

"We like to remind people that DNSC has been a responsible steward of the mercury stockpile for more than 50 years," Holder observed. "It bears repeating because DNSC will continue to be responsible for the government's mercury, no matter how we decide to manage it over the long-term. If consolidated storage is the alternative selected, we will partner with the selected storage facility and work with local regulators, emergency response teams, and fire departments to ensure that mercury storage remains safe and secure."

location. Some commentators opposed sales, saying that mercury sold on the open market would increase the mercury in the global environment. Others were concerned that sales of large quantities of mercury would depress mercury prices and result in increased use of mercury.

Many commentators said they were worried about the potential for adverse environmental and human health effects from spills and leaks of mercury, and larger releases due to fire or other natural disasters such as weather-related incidents. Some were concerned that adequate emergency response capability would not be available to respond to an accident involving mercury.

Others were concerned about the potential for sabotage at mercury storage facilities, alluding to attacks on the World Trade Center and the Pentagon.

"Most people expressed understandable concerns," Holder said. "Some may be based on perception rather than reality, but we want to let people know that they have been heard and the issues they raised will be considered as we complete the EIS process. We are reviewing every comment offered orally, by comment response form, letter, email, phone message and fax. The Final MM EIS will include our response to every pertinent issue raised by the public."

To obtain a copy of the Final MM EIS: Paper copies and computer disks (CD) of the Final MM EIS will be available in early 2004 and can be obtained by writing to: Attention: Project Manager, Mercury Management EIS; DNSC-E; Defense National Stockpile Center, 8725 John J. Kingman Road, Suite 3229, Fort Belvoir, VA. 22060-6223 or calling toll free at 1-888-306-6682.

For more information:

Requests for information can be made by: leaving a voice message at 1-888-306-6682; faxing a message to 1-888-306-8818; e-mailing a request to information@mercuryeis.com; or accessing the Mercury Management EIS website at www.mercuryeis.com. ■

EPA Gives MM EIS TOP RATING

The Draft MM EIS received the Environmental Protection Agency [EPA]'s highest rating, LO (Lack of Objections). In a May 28 letter, EPA stated that it did not identify "any significant environmental concerns related to DNSC's preferred alternative..."

DNSC has worked closely with other federal agencies in the preparation of the MM EIS. Shortly after the project was undertaken, DNSC invited representatives of the Department of Energy, EPA, the Department of Commerce, the U.S. Geological Survey, and the Department of Health and Human Services to participate in an Interagency Working Group. The purpose of the group was to ensure that DNSC had sufficient environmental and health information to address all pertinent issues in a timely manner. Because of their special expertise on mercury management issues, the Department of Energy and EPA are also "Cooperating Agencies" on the MM EIS. ■

Public Comments Focus on Consolidation, Safety, and Security Issues

The majority of public comments addressed various aspects of the Consolidated Storage Alternative, especially potential impacts on human health and safety, the environment, and the local economy.

Transportation issues were also a matter of concern to some commentators, while others said they worried about the possibility of leaks, accidents, or terrorist acts, particularly in populated areas.

A number of commentators expressed support for the Sales Alternative, and some suggested a hybrid alternative that would call for consolidated mercury storage followed by sales from the consolidated storage

Frequently Asked Questions

■ Why is consolidated mercury storage DNSC's Preferred Alternative?

Consolidated storage at one site is the Preferred Alternative because it meets all DNSC objectives: safe, long-term mercury management; no significant impact on the environ-

ment; economies of scale associated with management at one site; and future plans to close depots.

■ If the preferred alternative, consolidated mercury storage is selected for implementation, could storage occur at one of the potential sites analyzed in the Draft MM EIS?

Yes, although DNSC does not have a preference for one of the consolidated storage locations evaluated in the Draft MM EIS at this time. The sites analyzed in the Draft MM EIS represent a wide range of environ-

mental and socioeconomic settings. The environmental and socioeconomic analyses are sufficient to allow DNSC to select one of the sites in the Record of Decision. If a site not evaluated in the EIS is identified for consideration, additional environmental evaluation and public notification and review would be required.

■ If consolidated long term storage turns out to be DNSC's selected alternative, what factors will be used to choose the consolidation location?

In addition to new criteria or issues that may arise as result of public comment, the following areas analyzed in the DEIS may be applied:

- ▶ Potential environmental impacts
- ▶ Regional issues such as availability of transportation
- ▶ Socio-economic issues such as population and the availability of public support services
- ▶ Potential long-term storage costs
- ▶ DNSC long term goals for the sale of most of DNSC's commodities and planned closure of depots by 2020 or earlier

■ How would DNSC ensure safe transport of mercury?

DNSC mercury shipments would comply with all applicable U.S. Department of Transportation requirements. For security reasons, specific routes and shipment dates would not be made public.

■ What is DNSC doing to ensure that the mercury storage depots are protected against terrorist attacks?

In addition to armed security, perimeter fencing, and closely controlled access at our depots, we are working closely with state and local emergency authorities to ensure that even the most unlikely scenarios would be handled properly. DNSC

Local Area Public Meeting TRANSCRIPTS AND DRAFT MM EIS AT INFORMATION REPOSITORIES

Transcripts of meetings in local areas and the Draft MM EIS are available for review at the following locations:

- ▶ **Allen County Public Library**
435 Ann Street
New Haven, IN 46774
- ▶ **Bridgewater Branch Library**
N. Bridge Street and Vogt Drive
Bridgewater, NJ 08807
- ▶ **Fairfax County Public Library**
12000 Government Center Parkway, Suite 324
Fairfax, VA 22035
- ▶ **Ford Memorial Library**
7169 North Main Street
Ovid, NY 14521
- ▶ **Hillsborough Public Library**
379 South Branch Road
Hillsborough, NJ 08844
- ▶ **Martin Luther King Jr. Library**
901 G Street NW
Washington, DC 20001
- ▶ **Mineral County Public Library**
P.O. Box 1390
Hawthorne, NV 89415
- ▶ **Oak Ridge Public Library**
1401 Oak Ridge Turnpike
Oak Ridge, TN 37830
- ▶ **Raritan Valley Community College**
Evelyn S. Field Library,
North Branch, Route 28
and Lamington Road
Somerville, NJ 08876
- ▶ **Seneca Army Depot**
5786 State Route 96
Building 123
Romulus, NY 14541
- ▶ **Somerville Public Library**
35 West End Avenue
Somerville, NJ 08876
- ▶ **Tooele City Public Library**
128 West Vine Street
Tooele, UT 84074
- ▶ **Warren-Trumbull County Public Library**
444 Mahoning Ave., NW
Warren, OH 44483
- ▶ **Waterloo Library and Historical Society**
31 East Williams Street
Waterloo, NY 13165
- ▶ **West End Branch Library**
1101 24th and L Street, NW
Washington, DC 2003

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mercury storage depots are safe and secure, and DNSC has conducted vulnerability assessments to ensure that they stay that way. Although the mercury stockpile is not considered a likely target for terrorists, the issue has been considered in a report completed in conjunction with the MM EIS Risk Analysis.

■ **Why did DNSC decide not to analyze Treat and Store and Treat and Dispose Alternatives in the Mercury Management EIS?**

Initially, DNSC considered evaluating Treat and Store and Treat and Dispose Alternatives that would have involved processing the mercury to a

stabilized form before storing or disposing it. They were eliminated for three reasons:

- ▶ Mercury can be safely stored in its elemental form; all DNSC mercury is in that form and has been safely stored for more than 50 years.
- ▶ If beneficial, industrial uses for mercury are identified in the future, the elemental form would be the desired starting point.
- ▶ Treatment technologies for elemental mercury now in development are not ready for full-scale application.

Input from EPA was also considered. EPA has studied the treatment of mercury and the results of those

studies helped DNSC decide to eliminate its treatment alternatives from full evaluation in the MM EIS.

■ **What is the value of DNSC's mercury?**

The total estimated value of the mercury is between \$7.5 million and \$25 million dollars.

■ **How are mercury management costs evaluated in the Draft MM EIS?**

The cost estimate for each alternative is determined by measuring anticipated costs against anticipated benefits. For the storage alternatives, this means estimating the annual management costs including

personnel, facilities, maintenance, utilities, transportation, and repackaging. For the sales alternative, the value is based on the quantity and quality of the mercury, the price, and the proposed rate of sales. ■

TO OBTAIN MORE INFORMATION:

*U.S. mail: Attention: Project Manager,
Mercury Management EIS
DNSC-E*

*Defense National Stockpile Center
8725 John F. Kingman Road
Suite 3229*

Ft. Belvoir, VA 22060-6223

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toll free fax: (888) 306-8818

e-mail: information@mercuryeis.com

website: www.mercuryeis.com

SCHEDULE UPDATE

■ **Final MM EIS**—Spring 2004

■ **Record of Decision**—at least 30 days after the Final MM EIS is published The Final MM EIS is currently scheduled for publication in early 2004 and the Record of Decision (ROD) will be published no sooner than 30-days later. If the preferred alternative (Consolidated Storage) is selected, the ROD could also reflect DNSC's decision to consolidate at one of the potential locations analyzed in the Draft MM EIS. If one of previously analyzed locations is not selected, additional time would be required to identify another potential storage location and conduct additional environmental reviews and public notification. ■

*Defense National Stockpile Center
8725 John F. Kingman Road
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