

and international consensus standards, research and analytical studies, and processes for implementing licensing reviews, inspection programs, and enforcement oversight. "The technical information and operational experience collected and evaluated both internationally and nationally on dry cask storage continues to support the adequacy of 10 CFR Part 72 to provide reasonable assurance of adequate protection of public health and safety and to promote the common defense and security," the NRC said.

Notice of the denial of the petition for rulemaking was published in the January 23 *Federal Register*.

#### FY 2021 BUDGET

### White House eliminates Yucca Mountain funding

President Trump released his fiscal year 2021 budget request on February 10. The request is notable in that it does not contain funding for the Yucca Mountain repository project in Nevada. The president had telegraphed his intentions four days earlier when he wrote in a tweet, "Nevada, I hear you on Yucca Mountain and my Administration will RESPECT you!" In the 2016 election, Trump lost Nevada's six

electoral votes by 2.4 percentage points.

The White House had asked for \$120 million for Yucca Mountain in its FY 2018 and FY 2019 budget requests, and \$116 million in its FY 2020 request. Congress, however, has so far declined to approve funding for the project.

The president's budget does include a request of \$27.5 million for an interim storage and nuclear waste fund oversight program. The funding will support the "implementation of a robust interim storage program and R&D on alternative technologies for the storage, transportation, and disposal of the nation's nuclear waste, with a focus on systems deployable where there is a willingness to host."

The budget request also includes \$6.1 billion for the Department of Energy's Office of Environmental Management (EM) for the cleanup of Manhattan Project and Cold War legacy radioactive waste. The request is \$1.4 billion less than the FY 2020 enacted budget, a decrease of nearly 19 percent.

Funding for several EM cleanup sites would decrease under the FY 2021 budget request, including the Hanford Site in Washington, which would see a nearly 34 percent decrease for its Richland Operations Office, to \$655 million, \$347 million less than the amount enacted in FY 2020, while the Office of River Protection budget

would decrease by 22 percent to \$1.3 billion, \$358 million less than FY 2020. Other sites that are facing budget decreases include Idaho National Laboratory (down 39 percent), Oak Ridge National Laboratory (down nearly 37 percent), Los Alamos National Laboratory (down over 45 percent), and the Paducah Site in Ohio (down 10 percent). The Portsmouth Site in Kentucky would remain relatively flat, with a decrease of only about a half percent.

Sites that would see an increase in their EM budgets include the West Valley Demonstration Project (up 16 percent), the Savannah River Site (up 4.5 percent), and the Moab Site in Utah (up nearly 6 percent). The budget for Sandia National Laboratories would nearly double, from \$2.7 million in FY 2020 to \$4.9 million in FY 2021.

Also under the budget request, the DOE's Office of Legacy Management, which provides for the long-term protection of human health and the environment after site cleanup is completed, would see its budget increase by 96 percent, from the \$162 million enacted in FY 2020 to \$317 million in FY 2021. Much of that increase (\$150 million) will go to support the administration's proposal to transfer the management of the Formerly Utilized Sites Remedial Action Program from the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers to the Office of Legacy Management. **IN**



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