



Los Alamos Study Group

Nuclear Disarmament • Environmental Protection • Social Justice • Economic Sustainability

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Future of Lab To Be Discussed Tuesday at Los Alamos Disarmament Center

Study Group Board, Staff, To Be Available at Open House

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LOS ALAMOS – On Tuesday, December 20, at 5:30 pm, the Study Group will host an informal get-together at its new Los Alamos Disarmament Center. The suggested theme of the evening will be the future of Los Alamos National Laboratory (LANL). Light refreshments will be served. Background papers and relevant books will be available for purchase.

The Center is located in downtown Los Alamos at 1362 A-2 Trinity Drive, midway between Trinity Drive and Central Avenue, directly across Central (and about 300 feet south) of the Bradbury Science Museum.

As of this writing, the new operating contractor for LANL has not been announced. “The deeper issue, however, is not just who will run the lab but what the lab will do,” suggested Study Group Director Greg Mello. “On November 7, Congress tentatively directed LANL to make the plutonium cores (“pits”) for the nation’s nuclear stockpile, and approved a roughly billion-dollar new building to facilitate that work at LANL. Will LANL actually do that work, and if so at what scale, for how long, and with what result?”

Other topics of possible interest to the Los Alamos community that might come up Tuesday include:

- Should LANL continue to operate an on-site nuclear waste disposal site? If so, what are the long-term implications for economic development and environmental protection on the Parajito Plateau? Does perceived environmental amenity have economic value? Is there some transcendent reason to permanently pollute the land?
- Should LANL conduct research involving potential biological weapons agents, the preferred alternative in a current environmental impact statement?

Lurking in the background are larger questions still, such as whether the U.S. should develop new kinds of nuclear weapons, as planned and now under way at LANL and the other two nuclear weapons laboratories, and whether the U.S. should attempt to comply with the Nuclear Nonproliferation Treaty (NPT) (which the International Court of Justice has unanimously ruled requires full nuclear disarmament) and if so, how?

Tuesday’s session will just lightly touch on some of these rich subjects. We anticipate an informal, free-flowing discussion in which interested visitors will be able to buttonhole the staff and board of directors of the Study Group, get acquainted, and flag subjects of common interest for future discussions. Come one, come all.

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